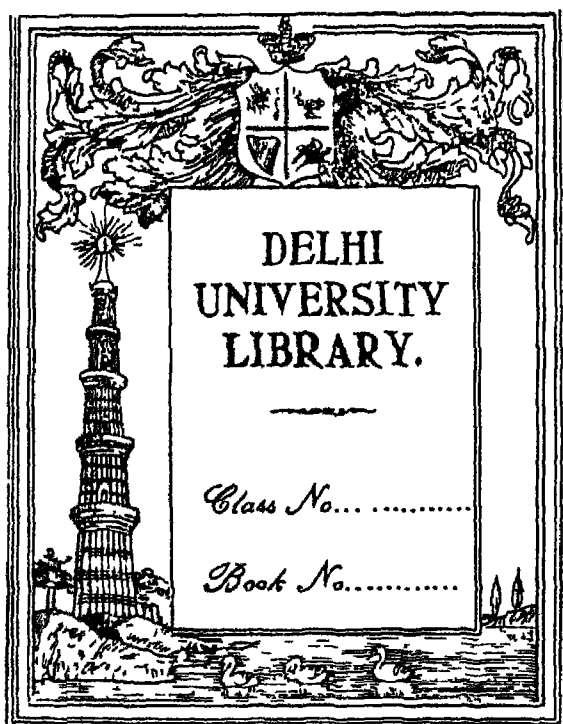




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ELIZABETH'S ARMY

BY
C. G. CRUICKSHANK

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PREFACE

THE credit for any merit which this study may possess is to be shared by Professor J. B. Black, who introduced me to Elizabeth, Mr. R. B. Wernham, who fostered the acquaintanceship, and Professor G. N. Clark, who has been generous with advice and encouragement.

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∴ C. G. C.

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ABBREVIATIONS

a. PRINTED SOURCES

- A. P. C.* *Acts of the Privy Council of England.* (New Series.)
Carew Cal. *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts.*
Dom. Cal. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth.*
E. H. R. *English Historical Review.*
For. Cal. *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, Elizabeth.*
Irish Cal. *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Elizabeth.*
H. M. C. *Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports.*

b. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

- Add. MSS.* *British Museum Additional Manuscripts.*
Cott. MSS. *Cottonian Manuscripts.*
Harl. MSS. *Harleian Manuscripts.*
S. P. Dom. *State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth.*
S. P. Holl. *State Papers, Holland, Elizabeth.*
S. P. France. *State Papers, France, Elizabeth.*

INTRODUCTORY

THE historian cannot classify his subject-matter with the facility enjoyed by students of more exact sciences: but at least he can crave indulgence for his pigeon-holing. This book is primarily about the organization of the military expeditions which left England between 1585 and 1603, although it is obviously impossible to avoid reference to the militia and to earlier developments in organization. If it should seem that the pigeon-hole contains too little of the home guard and too much of the later years of the century, it must be remembered that the partitions are probably justified by the comparative inactivity of the domestic forces during the whole reign and by the comparatively great activity overseas in the 'war' period after 1585.

That year was a turning-point in the reign of Elizabeth. It saw the adoption by the government of an anti-Spanish foreign policy and the substitution of Spain for France as England's traditional enemy. It ended a period in which peace had been interrupted only by brief military intervention in Scotland and France and occasional rebellion in Ireland. And it marked England's entry into a war in which ever-increasing numbers served in expeditions overseas.

A survey of existing records reveals the extent of overseas activity after 1585. There appears to be no comprehensive information about the levies for the first official expedition to the Netherlands.¹ The privy council register covering this period (which almost certainly contained the figures) is missing, and the records in the state papers are incomplete. According to the final agreement with the United Provinces the expedition was to consist of a field

¹ Existing records give the following figures, which are obviously inadequate, as they total only 3,910: from each of Hereford, Worcester, and Cheshire, 50 men for Ireland; and for the Netherlands, 310 masterless men: 500 from London; 300 from each of Gloucestershire and Yorkshire; 250 from Warwickshire; 200 from each of Wiltshire, Kent, Norfolk, Suffolk, Devon, and Somerset; 200 from the six south shires of Wales; 150 from each of Lincolnshire, Hampshire, Sussex, and Essex; 100 from Cornwall; and unspecified numbers from Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Middlesex. (S.P. Dom. 271, nos. 1, 3; *Dom. Cal.* 1581-90, 226-64; *For. Cal.* xix. 691.)

force of 5,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 1,150 men for garrison duty in Flushing and Brill—in all 7,150. The actual strength of the expedition was, however, probably slightly greater.¹

The political situation in France in 1589 was very similar to that in the Netherlands four years earlier and induced England to send a force to that country as well. There was a danger that Philip of Spain would take advantage of the religious discord in France to possess himself of the ports in Normandy and Brittany, which he might then use as a base for an attack on England. Lord Willoughby was therefore sent to France with 3,600 men in September 1589.² He conducted a three-months' campaign in which he lost about three-fourths of his troops.³

Throughout 1590 Henry IV besought Elizabeth to help him with a second expedition, but the queen refused to do anything until the Duke of Parma led one Spanish force into France from the Netherlands and another landed in the west, so that there was a danger that the entire coast might fall into Spanish hands. Elizabeth was on the point of sending an expedition to prevent this when Brittany, which had thrown its lot in with Henry rather than with the invaders, appealed to England. As the French would now share the expenses, the queen was all the more ready to embark on the enterprise. In June 1591 Sir John Norreys took to Brittany a force 2,700 strong, comprised half of recruits from England and half of veteran troops from the Netherlands.³ These were reinforced periodically, the principal occasions being in November 1592 when Norreys took 4,000 new levies from England and the Netherlands,⁴ and in August 1594 when he brought a further 2,050 men.⁵ In addition a force of 2,700 was commanded in Normandy by the Earl of Essex from

¹ J. E. Neale, *E.H.R.* xlv. 374. Certain changes were made from the numbers agreed upon: 250 more infantry were sent, and it seems that only 800 cavalry were sent in 1585. In September Walsingham said that only about 500 horse could be sent from England (*For. Cal.* xx. 8), but in November Leicester stated that 650 horses and 450 riders had been shipped (*ibid.* 178); and in the following month Leicester reported that in all 800 horse had left the country (*ibid.* 202).

² *H.M.C. Lancaster*, xxv; *A.P.C.* xviii. 86-9; *Dom. Cal.* 1581-90, 615-17.

³ *A.P.C.* xxi. 74-7.

⁴ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 280.

⁵ *Ibid.* 539, 551.

August to September 1591.¹ These expeditions, the last of which was withdrawn in October 1597,² with their reinforcements must have numbered close on 20,000 men, of whom, according to one estimate, perhaps half died on active service.³

There were three major 'amphibious' expeditions. The first went to Portugal in 1589, under Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norreys, and was designed to harass Spain and possibly win back Portugal for Don Antonio, the pretender to the throne the Duke of Alba had secured for Philip ten years previously. It beat off a Spanish force and did some damage at Corunna, but by remaining there for two weeks sacrificed any chance of making positive achievements in Portugal. The strength of this expedition has been estimated at 12,000 men,⁴ but probably not more than 6,000 of these were new levies.⁵ 1,500 infantry and 600 cavalry from the Netherlands were included in the force.⁶

The second expedition combining land and sea forces went to Cadiz in 1596 under the command of Essex, Howard, and Sir Francis Vere, and succeeded in taking Cadiz and raiding Faro and Loulé. Probably about 6,000 soldiers were employed,⁷ of whom 2,300 were drawn from the Netherlands.⁸

Spanish preparations for a new attack on England were responsible for a third 'amphibious' expedition in the following year. On this occasion the fleet carried 5,000 soldiers—4,000 from England and 1,000 from the Netherlands—under the command of the same leaders, but the force saw little fighting.⁹ The original intention of attacking the new armada was abandoned, when it was learned that

¹ *A.P.C.* xxi. 220, 228.

² *Ibid.* xxviii. 55 6.

³ E. P. Cheyney, *History of England*, i. 304.

⁴ Lansdowne MSS. 60, f. 1. But see M. A. S. Hume, *The Counter Armada of 1589*, 25-6 n., where figures ranging from 12,500 to 23,375 are quoted for the total personnel: Cheyney, who estimates 18,000 (i. 165), and A. Wingfield (*Discourse*, p. 479), who states that there were 11,000 soldiers and 2,500 sailors, of whom 6,000 returned to England.

⁵ *S.P. Dom.* 217, no. 79.

⁶ *S.P. Holl.* xxxi, f. 100; *A.P.C.* xvii. 103-5.

⁷ *S.P. Dom.* 257, no. 107.

⁸ *A.P.C.* xxv. 273, 289.

⁹ *Ibid.* xxvii. 132-3, 162-4.

it would not sail that year, and instead an unsuccessful attempt was made to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet off the Azores.¹

Lastly, there was always a large garrison in Ireland which increased from time to time as the situation demanded. Ireland had been the scene of considerable military activity in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign. Shane O'Neill's rebellion, which ended with his death in 1567, is reputed to have cost the lives of 3,500 Englishmen.² The rising under James Fitzmaurice and the Desmond war of 1579-81 were more serious. These were in turn dwarfed by Tyrone's rebellion, which broke out in 1595 and lasted until near the end of the reign, being eventually suppressed by the largest expeditionary force to leave England in Elizabeth's time. At first it was commanded unsuccessfully by Essex, but Mountjoy took over the leadership with complete success.³ At its greatest strength this force numbered over 17,000 men, and in its organization many of the lessons of the past twenty-five years were applied.

¹ S.P. Dom. 263, no. 123.

² R. Bigwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, ii. 118.

³ *Ibid.* iii. 294-397.

LEVYING THE FORCES

ELIZABETH had to rely on a military organization which at first was largely medieval in character, although elsewhere in Europe regular modern armies had already made their appearance. The English version of the feudal host, that unstable pyramid of loyalty, was long obsolete. It had never been wholly reliable, for at home the power which its loose structure gave to tenants in chivalry was a potential threat to the authority of the Crown, and the short period for which it was available for service abroad—less than six weeks at a spell—made it of little use as a fighting force outside the country. Although the military tenures out of which the feudal army was built were not finally abolished in law until the reign of Charles II, the structure of the army began to crumble when Henry II encouraged his vassals to commute for a money payment the military service they owed the Crown. This disintegration continued under succeeding monarchs, and by the time of Elizabeth the feudal levy was no more than a name.

There remained the even older national militia, the *fyrð*, service in which had been part of the threefold duty of the Anglo-Saxon freeman. Eight months before she died Mary gave her royal assent to two bills dealing with the militia. The first, 'An Acte for the having of Horse, Armour, and Weapon',¹ set forth the provision of warlike equipment to be made by each citizen. The community was divided into ten classes, ranging from men worth five to ten pounds a year, who were required to keep a coat of plated armour, a bill or halberd, a long-bow, and a steel helmet, to those worth a thousand pounds or over, who had to provide 16 horses, 80 suits of light armour, 40 pikes, 30 long-bows, 20 bills or halberds, 20 arquebuses, and 50 steel helmets. Proportionate demands were made on citizens with goods and chattels valued at ten pounds and upwards. It was also laid down that men whose wives were in the habit of wearing velvet kirtles or silk petticoats were to keep a

¹ 4 & 5 Philip and Mary, c. 2.

light cavalry horse with the requisite harness and equipment for the rider.

The second statute, 'An Acte for the taking of Musters',¹ was little more than a re-enactment of a statute of Edward VI.² The preamble recited the offences which had been common in the militia—men had not troubled to train, and officials had connived at their absence in return for bribes or for the sake of friendship. An attempt was now made to stop bribery by imposing a fine of three times the amount taken. Captains selling their discharge to soldiers on active service were subject to a similar penalty. If they withheld money due to a man for wages or equipment they had to pay three times the amount retained—a third to each of the Crown, the soldier, and the informer. And a clause in the act of Edward VI making desertion a felony, which had been repealed in the first year of Mary, was now revived.

These two acts hardly did more than give a new expression to the idea of the national militia, which had been organized by Henry II through the Assize of Arms in 1181, and adapted in 1285 by the Statute of Winchester. Modifications were made in the burdens laid on different classes of the community, and the new fire-arms were allowed for, as well as pikes and bills; yet in the main little advance was made on the earlier legislation. There was no attempt to define the country's obligations regarding foreign service, although it was a fundamental principle in the national levies that they could not be compelled to serve beyond the boundaries of their own shire except in the case of invasion. This had been established in the first year of Edward III, when the frequency with which Edward II had levied troops by means of commissions of array led to the statutory declaration 'that no man be compelled to go out of his shire, but where necessity requireth, and sudden coming of strange enemies into the realm'.³

It is perhaps surprising that neither Mary nor Elizabeth attempted to clarify the question of foreign service, especially as some members of the community remembered their

¹ 4 & 5 Philip and Mary, c. 3.

² 2 & 3 Edward VI, c. 2.

³ 1 Edward III, st. 2, c. 5.

constitutional rights. Sir John Smythe, an authority on military affairs, appeared at the musters at Colchester in 1596 and made a speech to the effect that parliamentary sanction was necessary before troops could be levied for service abroad. He was arrested forthwith, and spent the next two years in the Tower as a reward for his boldness.¹

He pleaded in his defence that he had been drunk and had spoken without thinking, but a letter from the Tower shows how much thought he had in fact given the matter. He told the privy council that he had discussed with some lawyers the sovereign's right to levy men for service abroad. He had pointed out that it was difficult for the king of Spain to levy troops to use against England, as by the law of Spain only those who came as volunteers at the sound of the drum could be enlisted. The lawyers agreed, adding that in England the Crown had been bound by a similar law: in former times the king could enlist only volunteers for foreign service. Smythe went on to mention a meeting with Sir Roger Manwood when they talked of levies sent to the Netherlands. Manwood said that it had not been usual to levy men by commission of array, unless they were volunteers: the armies of Edward III and other kings who had led expeditions abroad had consisted of volunteers and men hired out by the nobility.²

The position in the latter part of the sixteenth century may be summarized thus: the feudal army, which had never been of much value for foreign service, had virtually ceased to exist. The national militia, which had been reincarnated from time to time, was given by Mary a new lease of life in an almost unchanged form. Finally, although the Crown was not constitutionally entitled to send the militia abroad, it did so regularly, despite the objections of a small section of the community.

All able-bodied men between the ages of sixteen and sixty were liable for service with the militia, but for foreign service there were certain exceptions. These did not arise from the constitutional position: they were made rather as a matter of expediency.

¹ E. P. Cheyney, *History of England*, ii. 30; *A.P.C.* xxv. 459-60, 506-7.

² S.P. Dom. 259, f. 65.

A distinction was occasionally drawn between the trained and untrained men in a county. While all fit men between sixteen and sixty were liable for service at home, not all were kept fully trained and armed. In 1591, for example, there were some 42,000 men trained and equipped, 54,000 equipped but not trained, and 6,000 neither trained nor equipped.¹ Clearly those in the first category would make the most efficient fighting men, and it was for this reason considered unwise to risk sending them out of the country. They were the backbone of national defence, and if possible they were exempted from service with the foreign expeditions.²

This practice had an unfortunate result. There was a tendency for the trained bands to become a refuge for men reluctant to go overseas. Towards the end of the reign it was reported that they were full of worthless creatures trying to escape foreign service.³ They were originally intended to be recruited from gentlemen, farmers, and better-class yeomen and labourers, but in practice they were full of servants and other members of the poorer classes, who had always been regarded as more suitable for service abroad.⁴ From time to time, however, the urgent needs of the expeditionary forces made it necessary to enlist even trained men for service outside the country,⁵ while on one occasion their recruitment was justified on the ground that it would save burdening a county with the provision of new equipment.⁶

The trained men, however, constituted only a small proportion of the troops sent abroad in Elizabeth's reign. The great majority were untrained, and may be classified as ordinary volunteers, gentlemen volunteers, and men conscripted more or less against their will. The gentlemen volunteers were the smallest group. It is uncertain what their precise position was in the company organization, but there is little doubt that they served in the hope of eventually becoming captains. Their numbers varied, but

¹ G. S. Thomson, *Lords Lieutenants in the Sixteenth Century*, 85-6.

² *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iv. 468.

³ *Ibid.* xii. 181.

⁴ *Ibid.* 478.

⁵ *S.P. Dom.* 102, no. 16; *Harl. MSS.* 703, f. 75b.

⁶ *S.P. Dom.* 218, no. 22.

under Leicester allowance was made for 4 in a company of 150.¹ The ordinary volunteers were men who joined up as privates of their own free will, by answering the call of the drum on a recruiting campaign.² As might be expected, they made much better soldiers than the conscripts, and captains were advised to release pressed men and fill their places with volunteers whenever possible.³

The conscripts formed by far the largest group. They may be further subdivided into two classes: those who had been in employment, and the so-called 'masterless men', rogues and vagabonds who were a menace to the peace of the country. The levy of masterless men was an expedient resorted to by the government when it was necessary to raise troops quickly. Its history stretches back to the reign of Edward I, who gave a free pardon to all outlaws and malefactors joining his expedition against Scotland in 1296.⁴ Despite its manifest drawbacks it persisted throughout the reign of Elizabeth and, indeed, for the next two hundred years.⁵ It was first seen in Elizabeth's time when prisoners in Newgate were set at liberty to supplement Warwick's forces at Le Havre,⁶ but cases where the contents of a prison were emptied into the army were comparatively rare.⁷ The government preferred to levy rogues and vagabonds, although there was probably little distinction, so far as military efficiency was concerned, between them and criminals. Rogues and vagabonds formed part of the force which went to the Netherlands in 1585. The privy council instructed Lord Howard to call up all able-bodied unemployed in Surrey and Sussex. The men were apprehended at fairs and popular meeting-places all on the same day, so that few were able to escape, and were escorted to Rye by the constables.⁸

From the nature of official pronouncements on this question it is obvious that military recruiting was not the only object the Crown had in mind. Domestic peace was probably as near Elizabeth's heart as an efficient army,

¹ A.P.C. xvii. 442.

² Ibid. xiv. 110.

³ S.P. Dom. 239, no. 60.

⁴ J. S. D. Scott, *The British Army*, i. 282.

⁵ C. M. Clode, *The Military Forces of the Crown*, ii. 11.

⁶ S.P. Dom. 28, no. 63.

⁷ H.M.C. Salisbury, ix. 127; xii. 243.

⁸ Harl. MSS. 703, f. 41b.

and if it were possible to achieve that peace at the expense of the troops she was quite prepared to make the sacrifice. The menace of vagrants was great in the vicinity of London, and local authorities stressed the benefits that would accrue on their departure into the forces, especially towards the end of the reign. In 1597 the council authorized the levy of vagabonds to reinforce the expedition then in Picardy. In and around London there were large numbers who stole for a living, and 700 were rounded up, principally because the country would be well rid of them.¹

About the same time the council informed the lord mayor that conscription of vagabonds had considerable advantages, and asked that 200 should be apprehended and offered the difficult choice between statutory correction and service with the forces at Ostend.² Barnaby Rich scathingly criticized this practice when he said: 'In England when service happeneth we disburthen the prisons of thieves, we rob the taverns and alehouses of tosspots and ruffians, we scour both town and country of rogues and vagabonds.'³

Although the levy of men of doubtful character persisted long after Elizabeth's death, the unwisdom of the practice did not pass unnoticed in her reign. Sir John Norreys assured the queen that the enlistment of rogues reduced the efficiency of the troops.⁴ His advice seems to have fallen on good ground for in 1596 instructions to raise a hundred men for Ireland insisted that they must not be rogues, who usually deserted. To encourage a better type of man to enlist it was announced that the recruits would be well looked after.⁵ Two years later the order not to recruit vagabonds was repeated, and about the same time the local authorities in Oxfordshire were reprimanded for levying vagrants with an eye to ridding the county of idle people rather than helping the queen's service.⁶ It seems clear that the privy council was beginning to be aware of the disadvantages of recruiting masterless men.

A.P.C. xxvii. 290.

A Pathway to Military Practice, 23-4.

A.P.C. xxviii. 585.

² *Ibid.* xxxii. 145.

⁴ *S.P. Dom.* 242, no. 102.

⁶ *Ibid.* xxxi. 94-5.

The levy of rogues and vagabonds made for domestic peace at the expense of the efficiency of the troops, but the enlistment of men in steady employment was not an unmixed blessing. If an efficient force were built up from men in regular employment, a serious problem was liable to arise when it was disbanded and the men tried to get back to their civil jobs. On one occasion a number of working-men were levied for Ireland. As it was known that their employers would be unwilling to take them back when their military service was over, the council decided to substitute freeholders' sons, who would make good soldiers without aggravating the unemployment problem on their return.¹

Sir John Smythe touches on this aspect of recruiting in a letter written after he had overheard two gentlemen boasting that they had earned considerable sums in fines paid by tenants replacing those killed on the Portugal expedition. A third gentleman then said that some landlords in the west country were trying to organize a force to go to the aid of Henry IV, purely to enable them to collect fines on incoming tenants. If this were true, said the worthy Smythe, it was scandalous, when one thought of the thousands of brave men who had in recent years given their lives on land and at sea—men who were not rogues, cutpurses, horse-thieves, or burglars, as some captains said, but young gentlemen, yeomen, yeomen's sons and craftsmen, who offered their services most willingly and who were the force and flower of the kingdom.²

Smythe's complaint was twofold: first, that landlords should have an ulterior motive in sending their tenants to the wars; and secondly, that recruiting should be indiscriminate. He condemned the enlistment of criminals, who got the benefit of clergy in the courts, though they could not read a word, and urged that if the forces were to be fully efficient there must be an improvement in the type of recruit. If the army continued to be recruited from the dregs of the nation anything might happen:

I will only make mention of the *bellum servile* that gave the Romans so much to do in the time they flourished most, the Jacquerie

¹ *A.P.G.* xv. 99-100.

² *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iv. 4.

of France, and the dangerous rebellion of the peasants of Hungary: and last of all the revolt of the disarmed Moors of Spain, very little more than twenty years past, that cost the lives of above 40,000 Spaniards, and continued two years and more. Commonly the beginnings are very small, and therefore lightly regarded, but once begun, they suddenly grow great, and then they turn all to fire and blood.

The composition of the forces in Ireland presented a special difficulty. This was the question whether or not Irishmen should be allowed to serve there, which troubled the council throughout the reign. It was dangerous to include too many Irishmen, for if they outnumbered the English there was no guarantee of their good behaviour. On the other hand, it was worth while enlisting a few, if only because it prevented their serving with the rebels. This, however, was not the reason why captains tried to fill their companies with Irishmen: native troops were a good investment, for they were content with very little in wages.¹ In practice, the inclusion of Irishmen probably did more harm than good. One captain, who recommended that their number should be limited to six in a hundred, reported that in his own company he had eight, all of whom ran away, and enticed some Englishmen with them. This was quite common, and not only did deserters to the enemy take their equipment but also what they had learned of English drill and tactics.²

Lord Burgh seems to have been responsible for the introduction of large numbers of natives into the troops in Ireland.³ In 1597 Sir Thomas Norreys reported that in some companies the Irish outnumbered the English by three to one. The privy council said that to discharge these men would merely swell the ranks of the rebels and give them the benefit of the superior training of the English troops.⁴ But in the same year an attempt was made to solve the problem. The council in Ireland suggested that the Irish soldiers should be drafted to the Netherlands or France and their places taken by levies from England.⁵ The privy council concluded that this was impracticable and decided instead that the Irish element in the forces should be allowed

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iv. 567.

² *Irish Cal. 1599-1600*, 349.

³ *Ibid.* 1598-9, 217.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1596-7, 450.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1598-9, 156.

to decay through natural processes, and that consequent gaps should be filled with recruits from England.

For many years the clergy had shared the burden of maintaining the national forces, their particular service being to equip light cavalry. In 1585 the council announced that a thousand horse were required for the Netherlands, and that as no further call could be made on the lay population for the time being, the church was now expected to do its bit.¹ The clergy were ordered to contribute 25,000 pounds, at the rate of 25 pounds a horse. The bishops were told that, so long as the contributions were made, it mattered not where they came from. Each was given a quota: the bishop of Chester, for example, had to find thirteen horses—three from himself, one from the dean, two from the chapter, and seven from parsons.²

Twenty-five pounds a horse remained the sum taxed on the clergy for the levy and equipment of cavalry until 1598, when it was raised to thirty. In that year the archbishops of Canterbury and York were required to find twenty and ten horses respectively, and smaller contributions were ordered from the bishops.³

It was usually necessary to remind the clergy of their duty, but not always. In 1587 the bishop of Winchester offered on behalf of the diocese to raise a company of horse and one of foot. The queen expressed her gratitude, for the offer showed that the clergy were alive to the dangers of the time and were not wanting in loyalty. As a reward for the bishop's patriotism the privy council agreed to grant his request that the levy of the men and the appointment of captains should be left in his hands. It was carefully stressed, however, that the bishop's offer had been made voluntarily, and that the whole cost of the levy was to be borne by the diocese, perhaps in case the concession might be regarded as a precedent for the private appointment of officers. The council added that it hoped the bishop's good example would inspire others of his calling to similar efforts.⁴

This sort of thing was the exception, however, and not infrequently the clergy pleaded inability to pay the tax. In

¹ S.P. Dom. 183, no. 72.

² Tanner MSS. 78, f. 80.

³ *A.P.C.* xxviii. 583.

⁴ *Ibid.* xv. 413.

1597 the archdeacon of Bangor was eleven pounds short, and the archdeacon of Merioneth five pounds. The privy council took a serious view of these shortcomings and summoned the offenders to hear its displeasure.¹ In the following year the bishop of St. David's embezzled 120 pounds raised for the equipment of troops for Ireland.² But on the whole it seems that the clergy were as willing to share in the work of raising troops as the rest of the country.

The recusants were also expected to play their part in finding troops for foreign service. This illustrates the versatility of the government: it acquired troops through the faithful as a token of loyalty and through the unfaithful as a punishment for disloyalty. So long as the recusants paid up—on the same lines as the clergy—they were left in peace. The sheriffs and justices of the peace were told that the queen was graciously pleased, because of the readiness with which recusants had provided cavalry, to grant them immunity from the pains and penalties to which they were liable, on condition that they continued to pay reasonable compensation annually.³ If necessary, sterner measures could be taken against them than against the clergy. The financial position of those who failed to comply with the council's demands was carefully investigated, and if they were able to pay they were summoned before the council to explain their failure.⁴

Towards the end of the reign it became necessary to levy cavalry outside the clergy and recusants, and many members of the legal profession were required to make contributions ranging from ten to thirty pounds,⁵ while a number of gentlemen had to supply a light cavalry horse.⁶ An appeal was made to the public spirit of the contributors, and the queen's favour was promised if they gave readily. But no attempt was made to conceal the fact that those who did not pay would regret it.

The queen and council decided which counties were to supply the men for foreign service, and in what numbers. Their instructions were sent to the local authorities in one of the following ways: by means of a warrant under the

¹ *A.P.C.* xv. 14-15.

² *Ibid.* 339-40.

³ *Dom. Cal.* 1581-90, 307.

⁴ *A.P.C.* xiv. 87.

⁵ *Ibid.* 125.

⁶ *Ibid.* xxx. 414-5; xxxii. 275-86.

sign manual;¹ by directions from the queen or the council;² through a private individual holding a licence or commission from the council or queen;³ or by a combination of two or more of these methods. Occasionally instructions were supplemented by a royal proclamation.⁴

Of the various methods of levying troops one at least can be traced back to medieval times. This was the commissioning of a private individual to find soldiers, which originated in the reign of Edward I. A volunteer force was raised in this way in 1586 when six captains of recognized ability were sent into the counties to levy definite numbers of men. The method had the advantage that the men gathering the troops were professional soldiers and knew the best men to enlist; moreover, they could give expert advice on the choice of weapons and other equipment.⁵

The Crown's representative in the shires was, of course, the lord lieutenant. His office was not an original creation of Elizabeth's government, but it was developed to such an extent during her reign that it may reasonably be regarded as an Elizabethan institution. In the past commissions of lieutenancy had been issued in emergency as the quickest means of rallying the forces of the shire, but as soon as the danger was past the lieutenancy had ceased to exist. The temporary nature of the commission naturally handicapped the lieutenant: it was more satisfactory to let his control be permanent, so long as his activities were carefully supervised. The effect of the rebellion in the north was to encourage the Crown to make the lieutenancies permanent, and by 1585 the lieutenants had become its recognized agents.⁶

In the earlier part of the reign the sheriffs and justices of the peace, acting as commissioners of musters, played an important part in raising levies for foreign service, but their tasks were largely taken over by the lords lieutenant. Indeed, Lord Cobham maintained that he should not even be associated with mayors and sheriffs, who were inferior

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, v. 262.

² *Dom. Cal. 1581-90*, 615.

³ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, x. 271; ix. 48.

⁴ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 325.

⁵ *A.P.C.* xiv. 55-6.

⁶ G. S. Thomson, *Lords Lieutenants in the Sixteenth Century*, ch. iii.

officials, and should have had nothing to do with the levy of troops except in a very minor capacity.¹ It was probably wise to minimize the work of these other local representatives, for it was coloured by much shady dealing. The justice of the peace was only human, said a speaker in the House of Commons, and for half a dozen chickens would gladly dispense with half a dozen statutes. If he were asked by the privy council to levy a hundred men, he would levy twice that number, and by selling their discharge to the extra hundred would pocket a hundred pounds.² According to Barnaby Rich those who were on good terms with the constable had nothing to fear from him; but if any had incurred his displeasure, woe betide him when the next levy was made.³

The Crown could not avoid delegation of its powers to captains with commissions, lords lieutenant, and sheriffs and justices of the peace acting (in counties where there was no lieutenant) as commissioners of musters with the same military functions as the lord lieutenant. Such delegation might seem unwise in a country where rebellion was not unknown; but the risk of abuse of authority was slight, for the Crown exercised a firm control over the men to whom its authority was delegated.

The captains were of course directly responsible to the council; the sheriffs and justices were bound to the Crown by their office: they might be inefficient servants, but they could not become active opponents of policy and still hold their jobs. A similar tie bound the lords lieutenant, with the additional safeguard that they were often members of the privy council. In 1587, for example, of the sixteen active and eligible members of the council eight were also lords lieutenant,⁴ and during the latter part of Elizabeth's reign the number of lords lieutenant who were also members of the council was seldom less than one-third of its total membership.⁵ Moreover, several members of the council held important offices connected in varying degree with the

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xii. 126.

² Sir Simonds D'Ewes, *Parliamentary Journals*, 661.

³ *Allarme to England*, 83.

⁴ *H.M.C. Foljambe*, 25-6.

⁵ *Dom. Cal.* and *A.P.C. passim*.

defence of the country. In 1587 Cobham was warden of the Cinque Ports, Howard was high admiral, Sir Amyas Paulet was governor of Jersey, and Warwick master of the ordnance.¹

The intimate relationship between the council and its agents in the shires was a safeguard against irresponsible use of delegated powers. Even so, the business of raising troops was not left entirely to the discretion of the lords lieutenant and the other local representatives. It is true that in the earlier part of the reign the council did little more than act as a court of appeal against military service. If a problem arose which could not be solved locally it was referred to London. Thus a captain appointed by the commissioners of musters for Suffolk submitted a petition setting forth reasons why he could not accept a commission, and the council instructed the local authority to appoint a substitute.² Again, the captain of a company levied in Chichester asked to be relieved of his duties because of ill health. The commissioners of musters were instructed to arrange for his discharge, if the facts warranted it.³ Sir Thomas Knyvett successfully pleaded that business considerations should free him from the captaincy of a company. The Duke of Norfolk was informed that as Knyvett was engaged in a lawsuit, he was not required to serve.⁴

The indulgence which the Crown showed prior to England's open intervention in the continental struggle in 1585 was no longer possible after that date. The demand for troops increased without any corresponding increase in the willingness of men to serve, and the council was forced to take a greater interest in recruiting in the provinces. It became more exacting in its demands, and less generous in its decisions when appeals were made against compulsory service. Moreover, it began to exercise a stricter control over the methods of levying men. An episode in Wiltshire illustrates the close attention with which the council now followed the course of a levy. It was suspected that there had been some abuse in gathering the men, and the justices of the peace were ordered to hold an inquiry into the facts.⁵

¹ *A.P.C.* xv. 482-4.

⁴ *Ibid.* 121.

² *Ibid.* vii. 120.

³ *Ibid.* xxvii. 112-13.

⁵ *Ibid.* 126.

Nor was it always the lower officials who had to be called to account, for on one occasion the deputy-lieutenants of Carmarthen were summoned to the court of star chamber on a charge of misappropriating a tax raised for the equipment of a hundred soldiers. Not only had they pocketed public money, but they had tried to collect the tax at the extortionate rate of fourteen pounds a soldier.¹ The deputy-lieutenants of Pembroke also appeared in the star chamber and were removed from office by the council.² These cases show that the Crown fully appreciated the importance of keeping a careful eye on the activities of the local authorities.

In the earlier part of the reign there was no machinery for raising troops in England to replace men who had died, deserted, or been invalided out of the army abroad. The result was that companies were perpetually below establishment, and could be brought up to their proper strength only when new levies came out from England. This meant of course that every force that left England was depleted as soon as it arrived, and also that the council tended to get a false idea of the strength of the troops abroad. It was unsatisfactory from the captains' point of view as well, for even if they were willing to keep their companies at established strength, they could not do so without returning to England to find replacements.

This important question had been raised even before Leicester reached the Netherlands. Sir John Norreys pointed out that the official expedition could be kept up to full strength by the inclusion of volunteers who had been in service with the Dutch.³ Walsingham agreed that it might be possible to find a thousand troops to fill gaps in the ranks without sending a new levy from England.⁴ The captains' views were expressed in a petition in 1588 which dwelt on the lack of machinery to fill up the companies from time to time and pointed out how harmful this was.⁵

The privy council ruled in 1594 that the captain should be responsible for the immediate replacement of all men who departed from the company, whatever the reason. For

¹ *A.P.C.* xxviii. 460.

² *Ibid.* xxx. 180-1.

³ *For. Cal.* xx. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.* 8.

⁵ *Ibid.* xxii. 163.

the expense of levying, transporting, and equipping a recruit he was allowed a man's pay for a month out of the fines for deficiency in equipment, provided that the recruit was taken on within two months of the departure of his predecessor, and that his arrival was duly certified by the mustermaster. Secondly, the captain was given the uniform allowance of the departed soldier from the beginning of the season¹ to the day of his departure, to provide the newcomer with arms and uniform. Every effort was made to ensure that the recruit was actually with the colours before these sums were paid.²

In Ireland the question of replacements was always troublesome, for there it was easy to keep the companies up to establishment—so far as the records went—by the simple device of inviting natives or resident English civilians to join the company for the muster day. This practice drew a remonstrance from the privy council, which pointed out that as there had been no reinforcements from England, either the muster-rolls (which showed that the bands were full) were false or large numbers of Irishmen had been enlisted. Henceforward only men who had been sent from England for the express purpose of serving in the army were to be admitted to the companies.³

Only a small proportion of the men levied returned to England from the foreign expeditions, but it was nevertheless necessary for the government to make provision for them, in self-defence rather than out of philanthropy. It was probably largely this motive that inspired the sick benefits for discharged soldiers described below,⁴ and the later decrees about the control and distribution of the returned forces seem to have been made in much the same spirit. The hostile attitude of the government towards the disbanded levies was forced upon it by the many deserters who found their way back to England by devious routes to swell the already great number of vagrants. Against these only the sternest measures were likely to have effect.

¹ The winter season ran from 11 October to 10 April, and the summer from 11 April to 10 October.

² Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, ff. 309b-310.

³ *A.P.C.* xxvi. 349-50.

⁴ Chapter X.

Thomas Digges held that as soon as a soldier was discharged he should return to his former occupation and not regard it as degrading to follow an honest trade again.¹ A royal proclamation of 1589, however, suggests that this was easier said than done. The queen had learned that many discharged soldiers had not been taken back into their former employment but were having to beg for their livelihood. All these were now to be re-engaged by their old employers: if the latter disobeyed this order, they were committed to prison or otherwise punished.²

The following year, immediately after Essex had left for France, plans were made to receive back those of the troops whose lives had not 'otherwise been disposed of by the Almighty'. The port authorities were instructed to list the names and equipment of the men as they landed, and provide them with enough money to take them home. The hope of the previous year's proclamation was again expressed; the men were to return to their place of levy, where they would live with their parents or masters as they had done before joining up. If a man had lost his job to another he was supported by the parish until work was found for him. In fact there seems to have been some justification for the privy council's claim that the queen gave as much attention to the welfare of discharged soldiers as to any other matter of state—whatever the motive.³

In addition to his journey money from the seaport to his home town the soldier was given a pass which gave him time to get home and no more. If he loitered, and therefore failed to get home before his pass expired, he was apprehended and dealt with as an ordinary vagrant. Lastly, all soldiers who landed in England without adequate discharge papers were committed to prison to await the sentence of the privy council.⁴

By 1591 the problem was becoming serious. A proclamation expressed concern at the multitude of soldiers and men passing themselves off as soldiers who were to be found in and around London. A commission was appointed to

¹ *An Arithmetical Military Treatise*, 83.

² Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 292.

³ *A.P.C.* xxi. 352.

⁴ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 132, 169.

call these men before it to separate the real soldiers from the impostors, and ensure that genuine cases were given the consideration they deserved.¹ Next year the privy council arranged for the examination of soldiers in London. They were assembled and asked where they had served, and who had been their captain; in which county they had been levied, and what their job had been; whether they had been wounded, and if they had, whether their wounds were curable or likely to spoil their chance of earning a living. Those who were still incapacitated were recommended to one of the hospitals in London, while able-bodied men with satisfactory discharge papers were given a pass to take them home, and all others committed to prison.²

Four years later matters were worse than ever. Now, only the constables and men of established position were allowed to walk in the streets or fields after nine o'clock at night, or sunset, whichever came earlier; and all public gatherings were declared illegal, with the exception of those held in church. A second commission was set up, this time including men who had experience of active service—Sir Roger Williams, Sir Thomas Sherley, Sir Thomas Morgan, and Captain Oliver St. John. They met twice a week at the Old Bailey and dealt with the men brought before them in much the same way as the previous commission had done.³

The council appointed provost marshals to arrest men wandering about the country with inadequate passes. Lords lieutenant were authorized to choose for their lieutenancy a sufficient number,⁴ who were to be assisted by the sheriffs and justices of the peace in keeping watch on the highways, and were empowered to punish by martial law the men they caught.⁵ In Hertfordshire, for example, there were appointed two provosts with a retinue of six men carrying staves and pistols. To make the arrest of vagrants more certain it was arranged that a periodical watch should be held throughout the county on the same day, and all those apprehended committed to the county jail. A respectable

¹ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 317.

³ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 349.

⁵ Ibid. 236-8.

² *A.P.C.* xxii. 295.

⁴ *A.P.C.* xviii. 221-2, 229.

householder in the county town was responsible for compiling a list of the names of those committed to prison, which was passed to the lord lieutenant so that he might ensure that justice was done on offenders.¹ The money to pay the provosts was supposed to be raised by the deputy-lieutenants and justices of the peace through a tax on all persons assessed at over eight pounds in goods or five pounds in land.²

The citizens concerned, however, were not prepared to pay the premium on what would probably have been for them a useful insurance policy, and no doubt the provost-marshal service and the citizens themselves suffered accordingly.

¹ S.P. Dom. 228, no. 23.

² *A.P.C.* xviii. 422.

II

THE JOURNEY OVERSEAS

IT was essential that the laborious march to the coast should start the moment the levy was complete. If it did not, the ill-assorted mass of recruits—unwilling conscripts dragged from honest employment or from a life of more or less profitable lawlessness, leavened with a few yemen volunteers thirsting for adventure and gentlemen volunteers with a stronger thirst for money—diminished like a snowball in reverse.

At the beginning of the reign there were virtually no ready-made arrangements for moving troops overseas. The only institution was the payment known as 'coat and conduct money', in which 'coat money' was the recruit's uniform allowance and 'conduct money' the sum provided for the expenses of the march from the assembly-point in the county to the port of embarkation. The latter sum was paid at the daily rate of eightpence a head,¹ and was supposed to be enough to feed the men on the day's march (which was usually expected to be from twelve to fifteen miles)² and provide them with a night's lodging at the end of it.

The time taken by the levies on their journey naturally varied with the remoteness of their county from the coast. Men levied in Montgomery were given three days' conduct money to get them to Chester, the main port of embarkation for Ireland, while Londoners were allowed a fortnight for their march to the same town. Other times authorized for the journey to Chester were: five days from Derby; seven from Warwick and Worcester; eleven from Buckingham; and eighteen from Norfolk.³ Levies going to Bristol were allowed nine days from Warwick, six from Oxford, and five from Wiltshire.⁴ Both the allowance of eightpence a day and the distance the levies were asked to cover were quite reasonable, and if men took longer than the authorized time to reach the seaport, and consequently

¹ Add. MSS. 37,999, f. 27.

² *A.P.C. passim.*

³ F. Grose, *Military Antiquities*, i. 342.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxix. 315.

had to go on short rations for the latter stages of the journey, they had only themselves to blame.

Conduct money was advanced by the authority in charge of the levy and in due course recovered from public funds. When, for example, the Earl of Pembroke had to raise 400 men in his lieutenancy for service in Ireland their conduct money was found locally and repaid to Pembroke's representatives as soon as the men had reached the coast.¹ In 1596 journey money for reinforcements going to Flushing was repaid out of the Customs funds. The outlay for men from Hertfordshire was defrayed by the Harwich Customs authority, while the Ipswich authority was responsible for those from Norfolk and Suffolk, and the London authority for the drafts from London and Middlesex.²

If the troops had been gathered by an officer holding a commission of array they usually marched to the coast in his charge. But most of the men levied after England's open intervention in the continental struggle were found by lords lieutenant or sheriffs and justices of the peace acting as commissioners of musters. It was hardly practicable for them to escort men to the coast, even if they were qualified for such an arduous task, and an individual was appointed for the purpose, either locally³ or by the privy council.⁴ His job was to lead the men, to see that they covered each day the dozen or so miles expected of them, and to ensure that none deserted on the way or sold their arms or equipment. It is probable that the journey money for the whole levy was handed over to the leader so that he could buy food and pay for lodgings, an arrangement which would encourage him to line his pockets at the expense of the comfort of the troops.

If a man claimed to have gone sick or fallen lame (no doubt a fairly frequent occurrence) he was committed to the charge of the mayor or a justice of the peace in the next town through which the levy passed. If his claim turned out to be genuine he was looked after until he was well enough to return home. He was then given a pass with full particulars of his affliction, which enabled him to

¹ *A.P.C.* xix. 29.

² *Ibid.* xxiv. 15.

³ *Ibid.* xxvi. 59.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxxi. 21.

reach without molestation the place where he had been levied.¹

The privy council fully appreciated the importance of getting the troops quickly to the seaboard, and contrived to minimize the distances to be covered by raising recruits in the counties nearest their destination abroad. If an unusually large force were required at short notice it might be necessary to levy part of it in a comparatively remote shire, but the surviving records show that as a general rule the regions nearest the theatre of war supplied the men. For example, the Welsh counties were usually called on to send men to Ireland. Of the troops raised there nearly 9,000 were sent to Ireland, while only 300 went to France and 200 to the Netherlands. On the other hand, 1,400 Hampshire men went to France, and only some 600 to Ireland and 500 to the Netherlands. Again, Hertfordshire was nearly equidistant from the three main theatres, and sent troops to them in almost equal numbers.²

But even when their journey had thus been shortened the levies seldom reached the coast intact. Leaders were usually anxious to supplement what they pocketed out of the conduct money by conniving at desertion in return for bribes. Once a levy had been broken up in this way it was a hopeless task to reassemble it. Sir John Norreys complained to the privy council on one occasion that more than a hundred men had escaped. Although he had written several times to the justices asking them to have the deserters arrested, so careless of their duty were the constables and other officials responsible for pursuing the runaways that not a single one had been recaptured. Villagers had given the escaped men sanctuary in their homes, and had helped to smuggle away both them and their equipment. Norreys blamed the Hampshire authorities for this sorry state of affairs, and suggested that as a punishment they should be compelled to levy a hundred recruits to take the place of those missing. He added that Hampshire was a well-populated county and could easily spare the men.³

In 1600 a leader chosen by the Earl of Shrewsbury to

¹ *A.P.C.* xxx. 794-8.

² See Appendix (nos. 2 and 3).

³ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 280.

take a levy from Derbyshire to Chester was accused of releasing seven of the men entrusted to him and replacing them with others, no doubt at a handsome profit,¹ and a captain reported from Barnstaple that of a hundred men levied in Hampshire the leader had allowed eleven to run away.² At Chester large numbers of soldiers escaped, and few were recaptured by the constables.³ In the following year the men responsible for getting the levies to the ports were still being blamed for their inefficiency and corruption. A force from Lancashire and Lincolnshire was twenty-two short when it reached Chester. The council sent the names of the escaped men to the commissioners of musters in these counties, and instructed them to have the offenders arrested and initiate proceedings against those who appeared to be the ringleaders. It was pointed out that the man in charge of the force had probably gained through the desertions. The commissioners were therefore instructed to question closely all who were apprehended to find out how much they had paid for their freedom.⁴

Clearly it was vital that the forces should not be thus depleted before they even reached the port of embarkation. The levies were, however, usually drawn in comparatively small numbers from several counties, which meant that many leaders were needed, at least before the confluence of the smaller levies on the highway to the seaport. It was probably before this confluence that most desertions took place, for it was more difficult for the privy council to police effectively the activities of the leaders on the earlier stages of the journey.

As soon as the number of troops required from each village or hundred was complete the whole body was transferred to the charge of the appointed leader. Two lists of the recruits' names were written on the same paper or parchment, and then separated by an irregular cut, from which the documents took their name of indenture. One list was signed by the individual receiving the men and sent to London so that the privy council would know that the desired number had been found and were actually on their

¹ *H.M.C. Rutland*, i. 358-9.

² *Ibid.* 473.

³ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xi. 431.

⁴ *A.P.C.* xxxii. 359-60.

way to the coast. The other was signed by the sheriff or justice of the peace and taken by the leader to the port. It is likely that even when the leader was comparatively honest a large proportion of the levy slipped away without his connivance while they were still in a friendly neighbourhood where they knew the lie of the land; and it is even more likely that when the leader was corrupt he would be willing to sell their release to men whom he had probably known since childhood.

Indentures at first recorded only the name of each recruit, his armour and weapons, and the parish in which he had been levied. Towards the end of the century, however, the privy council extended their scope in an attempt to achieve a better control over the levies on the earlier stages of the march.¹ They now contained in addition to the man's name and a note of his equipment details of his personal appearance which would make identification easier should the leader be accused of changing men.² Indentures recording cavalry levies showed the colour, height, age, markings, pace, and equipment of the horse, as well as particulars of the owner and rider.³

Widening the scope of indentures gave little better guarantee that the levies would be efficiently led to the coast. What was really wanted was an improvement in the type of men appointed as leaders, and this improvement the council strove to achieve. Instead of leaving the arrangements entirely to its regional representatives it took an increasing interest in the appointment of leaders in the hope that if honest men were appointed recruits would find it impossible to buy their way out of the army. It seems that the council's solution of the problem was to choose the leaders more from established captains than local men, no doubt on the ground that the former were less likely to be influenced by local ties. In 1601 a captain who was commissioned to find a hundred men in Gloucestershire was also made responsible for leading a hundred from Wiltshire

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xi. 5.

² Exchequer Accounts, Q.R., bundle 65, no. 5 (4) contains four indentures. See Appendix.

³ *Ibid.*, no. 5 (2).

and fifty from Pembrokeshire. Another who had raised a hundred in Monmouthshire for his own company was ordered by the council to lead twenty-five from each of Radnor and Cardigan to Bristol, where they were to embark for Ireland.¹

But despite the council's efforts the abuses in leading the recruits persisted throughout the reign. In 1600 a number of small levies were handed over at Chester to a single captain who was responsible for taking them on the second stage of their journey to Ireland. In its instructions for raising this force the privy council referred pointedly to the prevailing abuses, and said that as there had recently been a great deal of changing of recruits the captain was to be particularly careful to satisfy himself that he received the men actually specified in the indentures. If it turned out that any had in fact been changed the offenders were to suffer the exteme penalty of the law.²

The second stage of the troops' journey was usually done in privately owned vessels hired for the occasion by the Crown. The masters of these vessels were seldom eager to give their services, for government work of this sort seriously interfered with their private trading activities. Men were at best unprofitable cargo, and at the worst they left disease behind.

Even when the masters were graciously pleased to carry troops they might make some condition about their destination, to enable them to reach the most favourable port abroad from the point of view of subsequent trading. In 1592 a number of ships were detailed to go from Poole to Brittany, but on the pretext that the Brittany coast was too dangerous the masters proposed to land the men in Normandy, whither they would have been taking their ships in any event. The council tried to win them over by offering the services of pilots well acquainted with the coast of Brittany, but without much effect. Some masters persisted in their refusal to make ready for sea, and the council accordingly instructed the mayor of Poole to send the chief offenders to London to receive the punishment they deserved, and serve as an example to their fellows.³

¹ *A.P.C.* xxxii. 452.

² *Ibid.* xxxi. 21-2.

³ *Ibid.* xxiii. 252.

Perhaps there was some justification for the masters' reluctance in this case, for the council had forbidden Sir John Norreys, who was commanding the troops, to use the navy for their transport, because the dangers of the crossing were increasing with the approach of winter. But, as a general rule, it was necessary to use persuasion before the merchants would agree to substitute soldiers for more profitable merchandise.

Unwilling masters were not the only handicap to be overcome in the arrangements for carrying troops overseas. Though a fair wind might waft the levies well on their way almost as soon as they embarked, it more often happened that they were held up day after day by adverse weather, while their food bill mounted and the men themselves became more and more discontented.¹ Or it might be that after the force had embarked and left port the wind would change, and what should have been a short voyage would take many days.

Important enough in themselves, these delays were generally far-reaching in their consequences.² The longer the men remained inactive on English soil the lower fell their morale. There was opportunity for wholesale desertion, the unaccustomed demand for food tended to cause a serious rise in local prices,³ and the concentration of large numbers of men in a small area rendered them easy victims of disease. Moreover, if the troops were unable to leave within a reasonable time of their arrival at the seaport, money was liable to run short. On one occasion a force made three attempts to put out of harbour and each time was driven back. So long was its departure held up that the treasure chest was completely emptied, except for some French currency which was intended for use when the men reached France.

While weeks of waiting at the coast did much to dispirit and disorganize the forces, the hardships of the actual crossing could be no less serious in their effects. Edward Norreys had a gloomy tale to tell in 1585. He set out with five companies in good order, but a ten-day crossing in foul weather, scarcity of food, and eight days in a draughty

¹ *A.P.C.* xxx. 283.

² W. Monson, *Naval Tracts*, i. 146.

³ *c.s.* before Willoughby's expedition left in 1589. (*S.P. Dom.* 223, no. 100.)

church at Middelburg so undermined the health of his men that most of them went sick and many died.¹

Costs of transport overseas varied in proportion to the greed of the merchants in whose hands the work of transport lay. Moreover, there was no fixed time for the crossing; the normal costs might be doubled or trebled through increased expenditure on food and extra wages for the sailors on a protracted voyage. The outlay varied from about three shillings a head for the trip from England to the Netherlands² to eight shillings for the journey to Ireland.³ In 1590 the passage from England to Flushing cost 2*s.* 9½*d.* a man,⁴ and from the Netherlands to France 4*s.* 2½*d.*⁵ In the same year Portsmouth to Brittany cost three shillings and Sandwich to Flushing half a crown.⁶ These rates covered only the hire of vessels and the crews' wages, and did not include meals.

It was left to the queen's representative in the port of embarkation to make the best bargain with the masters for the hire of their vessels. His efforts did not always meet with the approval of the privy council. When the mayor of Bristol contracted with the shipowners to carry troops to Ireland for ten shillings a head, the council protested. Instead of agreeing to the high rate it instructed the mayor to reopen negotiations with the owners and get better terms.⁷ It was, however, quite prepared to be generous in its dealings with the shipowners. On one occasion the mayor of Chester was foolish enough to requisition some vessels without first making a bargain with the masters, who took advantage of the strong position in which his carelessness had placed them, and stuck out for an unusually high price. The council agreed that the mayor's proposed offer of six shillings was satisfactory, but authorized him to raise it to seven shillings, as the ship had been detained for some time in Chester waiting the arrival of the levies. If the masters were still dissatisfied the mayor was told to go as high as eight shillings as a last resort.⁸

¹ *For. Cal.* xx. 103.

² *A.P.C.* xxix. 736; xxx. 243-4.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *A.P.C.* xxvi. 339.

⁵ *Ibid.* xix. 647.

⁶ *S.P. Dom.* 239, no. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, nos. 6, 8.

⁸ *Ibid.* xxx. 243-4.

The council sought to control the shipowners and at the same time help the local authorities by appointing an official charged with the general supervision of the arrangements at the seaport. Nicholas Erington was appointed on the occasion of a levy of 1,500 men to replace veterans transferred from the Netherlands to France. He was required to arrange the embarkation of the men sailing from London, and also to see that contingents from Harwich and Sandwich were safely shipped. He was responsible under Sir John Norreys for the provision of vessels and food for the crossing. The ships from the three ports met at sea and proceeded in convoy to Flushing. On their arrival Erington had to distribute the force in such a way that the gaps left by the withdrawal of the troops for France were satisfactorily filled.¹

Five years later Maurice Kyffin, who had experience of other branches of organization,² was given a similar appointment with greater responsibilities. He had complete control of troops at Chester. He was their paymaster while they remained in England; if they were detained longer than four weeks for lack of a favourable wind he was authorized to start paying them as if they were on active service. He co-operated with the mayor and the Crown officers in the port in requisitioning sufficient shipping to carry the men to Dublin, and mustered the contingents from the various counties as they came in, recorded their strength, and made a detailed inventory of their equipment for comparison with the indentures brought by the leaders. All changes in personnel and shortage of weapons thus disclosed were submitted to the privy council. Kyffin was also expected to keep a benevolent eye on food supplies, which were often none too good.

The privy council was favourably impressed by the success of these experiments, and in 1599 appointed two officials for the sole purpose of finding and requisitioning transports. John Goite was given charge of Bristol, Milford, Padstow, and Barnstaple, and Robert Davies Chester and and Liverpool. They were instructed to visit the ports allocated to them and to hire ships as they were required. If the shipping available in the ports was insufficient for

¹ *A.P.C.* xxi. 23.

² See p. 88.

³ *A.P.C.* xxix. 474.

the needs of the moment the agents were empowered to requisition any vessel that came in, unless it was a foreigner with cargo or an English ship bound on an important voyage. At their first employment Goite and Davies spent thirty days finding ships for Ireland.

They were reappointed in the same year, Goite now having to control all the ports from Bristol to Land's end, and Davies Chester and Liverpool and the ports and creeks in their neighbourhood. If one of them found a surplus in his region he was to inform his colleague, so that if necessary a transfer could be made. Apparently there was a surplus in the south, for the council asked that seventeen vessels should be sent from Barnstaple to Chester, whence they were to proceed to Dublin.¹

These new appointments relieved the local authorities of some of their responsibilities, and at the same time materially improved the efficiency of transport. It was now possible for the central government to exercise greater control over the movement of troops by sea. Much of the work still fell on the shoulders of the authorities in the coast towns, however, especially in the west. The corporation accounts afford a glimpse of the work involved in shipping a levy. The men had to be fed and billeted during their stay in the town, which might be indefinitely prolonged through lack of a favourable wind. The town officers had to co-operate with the official transport supervisor in finding ships, and occasionally providing crews. Victuals had to be found for the voyage and packed in casks able to withstand the effects of salt water. Straw for bedding on board ship and rowing-boats to embark the soldiers and tow the vessels into the fairway had to be supplied. Pilots had to be engaged, and also a large staff of watchmen had to be found to prevent the men from deserting before they embarked.² The civic authorities were at all times expected to enlist the aid of the Crown officers in the port. In 1600 the mayor of Bristol was reprimanded by the privy council for ignoring these officials when embarking troops.³

¹ *A.P.C.* xxix. 511.

² Exchequer of Receipt, Army, Navy, and Ordnance Accounts, box 12, no. 2.

³ *A.P.C.* xxx. 166

It will be apparent from the foregoing pages that the efficient movement of troops to an overseas destination was virtually impossible. The privy council might improve its control over the levies while they remained in England by widening the scope of indentures, and by selecting competent leaders, but after the recruits were safely brought to the coast it was still necessary to contend with the ship-owners and the vagaries of wind and weather. The former could be disciplined, but against the elements the council was no more powerful than Philip of Spain when the Almighty blew to destruction the remnants of his armada.

THE FORCES IN THE FIELD

THE chief command was vested in an officer normally styled general, lieutenant, or lieutenant-general,¹ although there were other titles. In the first expedition to the Netherlands Leicester was called 'lieutenant and captain-general';² and Sir Francis Vere, who commanded the English forces there after August 1589, bore the titles of sergeant-major-general and colonel-general.³ It is doubtful if mortal were ever blessed with all the qualities which contemporary writers attached to the office of supreme commander. According to Thomas Digges, the holder had to be religious, temperate, sober, wise, valiant, liberal, courteous, eloquent, of good fame and reputation.⁴ Another writer adds to the catalogue of necessary virtues, saying that the general should be magnanimous, gracious, easy to be spoken with, constant in his counsel, quick to make decisions, and able to keep his plans secret.⁵ While Mountjoy claimed that in Ireland he had to be nurse to the forces as well as their leader.⁶

Not only had the general to be a military administrator, strategist, and tactician, he was occasionally required to exercise the functions of statesman and administrator in the wider sense of the term. In the Netherlands Leicester was ordered to try to modify the constitution. He was also expected to be something of an economist, and had to investigate the working of the exchange with a view to stabilizing the currency.⁷ He may have failed in most of his tasks, but it is unlikely that there was anyone available in England who would have succeeded. The council seems to have appreciated the danger of putting too much on the general's shoulders, for later commissions were narrower in scope and made the leader more and more responsible to the Crown.

¹ F. Markham, *Epistles of War*, 189.

² *Ordinances*, 1 (see Appendix, no. 13).

³ E. P. Cheyney, *History of England*, i. 235; Markham, 143.

⁴ T. Digges, *An Arithmetical Military Treatise*, 138.

⁵ B. Rich, *A Pathway to Military Practice*, 3.

⁶ *Irish. Cal.* 1600, 253.

⁷ J. Bruce, *Leicester Correspondence*, 12.

Willoughby's commission of November 1587 did not give him the political powers of Leicester, and even contained a proviso that he was to do nothing without the counsel and assent of the marshal, Sir William Pelham.¹ He was highly displeased at this curtailment of power. He complained, moreover, that he was not allowed to appoint his own second-in-command, which was contrary to all precedent, and that he had not the right to appoint captains. He suggested bitterly that he was hardly more important than a company clerk, and said he would rather serve as a private than bear a glorious but empty title.² When Sir Francis Vere succeeded him in August 1589 the power of the chief commander was still further limited. Vere was given command only of the troops in the field, while the governors of the garrison towns held individual commissions and had full control of their own forces.³

The limitation of the general's authority is well illustrated by the position of Essex in France. Sir Thomas Heigham was sent out to advise the commander, and more particularly to prevent him from taking risks which were not expected of one of his high rank. If he found any captain tempting Essex to do something rash, Heigham was to reprimand the offender in the queen's name.⁴ In this case the control was personal rather than a limitation of power on principle. But the commission to Essex in 1597 for the amphibious expedition to Spain and the Azores shows that a conscious effort was being made to make the commander more directly responsible to the Crown. The commission was accompanied by lengthy instructions about the movements of the fleet and the control of the forces on shore. Especially significant is the appointment by the privy council of a council of war, consisting of the vice-admiral, lieutenant of the infantry, marshal, master of the ordnance, and sergeant-major, to guide the general. If the members of the council of war could not agree on any point, Essex was allowed to use his own judgement, but he had to be supported by at least three members. So that the privy council might satisfy itself in due course

¹ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. 3, 414.

² F. Markham, *Epistles of War*, 144.

³ *Ibid.* xxi, pt. iv, §24.

⁴ *S.P. France*, xxvi, f. 290.

that the council of war's advice had been properly taken, minutes were to be made of all discussions.¹

The institution of a formal council of war shows that the Crown was trying to spread the control of the foreign expeditions over as large a number of individuals as possible. It is interesting to note that the importance of the council of war was recognized by contemporary writers, one of whom attributed the failure of the Portugal expedition to the lack of such a body.²

The Crown also curtailed the leader's powers by taking some of them into its own hands. The history of the general's right to award knighthoods for valour on foreign service is a striking illustration. This was a privilege which had its origin in the times when the English king was his own commander-in-chief. Leicester was warned to make sparing use of the privilege, but he paid scant attention to the warning.³ Willoughby also was exhorted to use the greatest discretion in awarding knighthoods.⁴ The queen had been annoyed by the recent knighting of men who did not qualify for the honour either by reason of their birth or their services in the field, and she reminded the general that the two most important qualifications for knighthood were wealth enough to keep up the position and outstanding bravery in action. She again emphasized this in instructions to Burgh, who was told to knight only men whose social position and income were satisfactory, unless they had given some really extraordinary proof of their valour.⁵ In 1599 Essex was authorized to confer the title on the same conditions,⁶ but by the end of the reign the general had virtually lost the privilege. Mountjoy was instructed to refer all his proposed awards to the privy council in England for their approval.⁷

The senior offices varied slightly from one expedition to another. The high-marshal was usually second-in-command. His functions were twofold. He was responsible for the administration of justice, and had to ensure that

¹ *Dom. Cal.* 1595-7, 434, 439-41.

² *S.P. Dom.* 238, no. 45.

³ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 214.

⁴ *H.M.C. Ancaster*, 288.

⁵ R. Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, iii. 281.

⁶ *Carew Cal.* 1589-1600, 295.

⁷ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 446.

the troops obeyed the laws set up by the general. More serious breaches of discipline or disputes between individuals he investigated himself, but he had under him a provost-marshal who took charge of lesser cases and was responsible for the executive side of disciplinary control, having to imprison the convicted and hang those condemned to death. The second function of the high-marshal was to supervise the internal construction and organization of the camp and to devise the order of marching.

The other chief officers were: the generals of infantry and cavalry; the master of the ordnance, who looked after everything connected with munitions; the treasurer-at-war; and the sergeant-major, to whom was entrusted the task of drawing up the men for battle. There were a number of less important offices, including that of quartermaster, master-gunner, forage-master, and carriage-master, whose titles speak for themselves. The forage-master and the carriage-master were allowed to call upon the cavalry to help them in the execution of their duties in camp, although in action the sole command of cavalry was naturally vested in the general of the horse. Again, in the routine of camp life the trench-master took his orders from the high-marshal, who was responsible for the construction of the camp, while in action he was under the direct orders of the master of the ordnance.

The main unit was the company, which varied in establishment from 100 to 200 men, but was generally fixed at 150. In 1585 it was reported that, although the Netherlands companies were nominally 150 strong, each captain had on the average only 80 men.¹ It was, of course, in the captain's interest to keep the numbers of his company as small as possible, for he could pocket the pay of the missing ranks, but as has been pointed out above,² it was at first difficult for him to keep his company at establishment even if he wanted to.

At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign companies were not grouped into regiments. A treatise written by Captain Alfonso Adriano in 1566,³ and quoted by Sir Julian Corbett

¹ *For. Cal.* 1595-6, 246.

² Above, p. 18.

³ *De la Disciplina Militare* (1566).

in his essay on 'The Colonel and His Command',¹ suggests that the idea of the regiment was already current in Italy by 1519, although the unit had then still much in common with the unwieldy medieval 'battaglione'. Another Italian, Count Savorgnano, also quoted by Corbett, throws further light on the point. Writing about 1569, he says: 'Those are called colonels who command large bands (grosse Bande) of infantry.' These bands, he continues, 'today amongst the Germans are called *Reggimenti*, and so also say the Swiss, amounting to four or five thousand men: but with the Spaniards and Italians the Bands are usually four thousand and I approve this number. . . . Over each of them is placed in command one whom we call colonel with his lieutenant and his captains of four and five hundred.'² It seems that the first Elizabethan force to approximate to this organization was that under the command of Sir Humphrey Gilbert in the Netherlands in 1572. According to Sir Roger Williams this was the first 'regiment' of Englishmen to serve in the Netherlands against the king of Spain; it consisted of a group of ten companies, and its commander bore the title of colonel. After Gilbert left the Netherlands Thomas Morgan succeeded to the command and to the title.³

From this time onwards it was customary to group the companies in regiments, although this was not done in the case of the 1585 expedition to the Netherlands, perhaps because of its hasty organization. But for Willoughby's expedition to France four years later the 3,600 men were divided into regiments of 900, each under the command of a colonel.⁴ Again, in the expedition to Portugal in the same year there were fourteen regiments, whose colonels acted as a council of war on at least one occasion.⁵ Apparently by this time the regiment had become an accepted formation, for on the march it was usual to draw the men up according to their regiments and not merely as a collection of companies.⁶ By the end of the century the regiment

¹ *American Hist. Review*, ii. 1.

² *Arte Militare* (1599).

³ Sir R. Williams, *The Actions of the Low Countries*, 69.

⁴ *Dom. Cal.* 1581-90, 620.

⁵ A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 502-3.

⁶ *Ibid.* 492.

was established as a tactical unit. Robert Barret said in 1598 that in battle it should be drawn up with the colonel on foot at the right of the front rank. If it were assigned an individual task, the colonel was empowered to lead it with the authority of the general.¹ The force carried to Cadiz in 1596 consisted of eight regiments of 750 men, with six or seven companies in each.² Essex drew up a code of instructions for his colonels on this expedition. Their duty was to be in the vanguard in attack and the rearguard in retreat; in camp to have their head-quarters in the midst of the regiment; and weekly to make an investigation of the affairs of the troops, and preside at the marshal's court for their own regiment. Each had under him a lieutenant-colonel to take over the command if necessary.³

The captain was the link between the higher command and the company. In the words of Professor J. E. Neale:

He stood between the queen's officials and his men, in some respects the exploiter of their labour, in others their representative and defender. He was to a certain extent responsible for arming, clothing and feeding them, all of which were expenses covered by their pay; and if provision was made by royal officials—which was not necessarily the case—the sums expended were charged against the company and settled between the treasurer-at-war and the captain when payment was made. He was also responsible, so far as the supply of men allowed, for maintaining his company at full strength: his clerk kept muster rolls to record changes in numbers, and accounts to show how the company stood with the treasurer.⁴

The captain was thus in an extremely powerful position and could swindle with comparative ease and impunity both the government and his men. For example, the Flushing captains were accused, doubtless with good reason, of dismissing their men so that they could pocket their pay; of taking the arms of the men thus discharged and selling them to new recruits; and of enrolling in their companies Dutch freebooters whose activities further enriched them.⁵

¹ R. Barret, *The Theory and Practice of Modern Wars*, 86-7.

² *Dom. Cal.* 1595-7, 222.

³ Harl. MSS. 703, f. 25.

⁴ *E.H.R.* xlv. 381.

⁵ S.P. Holl. xxx, f. 189.

In great measure the efficiency of the forces in the reign of Elizabeth depended on the extent to which the power and lawlessness of the captains could be controlled. In 1592 the privy council made a determined effort to stop fraudulent practices in the Netherlands. Allegations that the captains there had been selling or pawning uniform were investigated by the governors of the garrison towns, and as a result regulations for the distribution of uniform were tightened up.

At the same time an attack was made on the practice of keeping hands under establishment and drawing pay for a full company. It was laid down that if the strength of a company containing 150 infantry fell below 110, or a company of cavalry 100 strong below 60, the governor was to dismiss the offending captain and ask the privy council to find a successor. Until the latter was appointed, and had had the opportunity of bringing the company up to establishment, it was to be paid at a special rate in proportion to its actual strength. If the captain was not to blame for the gaps in the company's ranks—if they had been brought about by losses in battle or by the ravages of disease—he was not to be dismissed, but the facts of the case were to be reported to the privy council for further consideration.¹

The captains' misdeeds in Ireland, which included enticing men from other companies to fill up the gaps in their own on muster-days, hiring 'churls' for the same purpose, and being frequently absent from their duties,² made Buckhurst suggest that each should be compelled to keep a full record of the activities of his company. This record was to be sent each month to the chief of the province, who was in turn to send copies to the lord deputy and the privy council: by this means the queen would have had a monthly statement of how every captain had been employed, and of what service he and his men had done.³ If these proposals had been accepted they might have prevented absenteeism, but they would hardly have ended the other frauds. In any case, it seems that they were not acted upon.

¹ Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, ff. 294b-295.

² *Irish Cal. 1599-1600, passim.*

³ *Ibid.* 277-8.

Captains were usually appointed by the privy council. In the earlier days of the revolt in the Netherlands, however, private individuals had raised companies of volunteers in England for service with the Dutch, and there are a few instances of this in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign. The voluntary levy of cavalry and infantry companies, and the private appointment of their officers by the bishop of Winchester, has already been mentioned.¹ There was another example in 1592, when Sir Roger Williams recommended that a certain lieutenant should have a captaincy which his superior officer had given up. Partly on the strength of this recommendation, and partly because the lieutenant had promised to raise transport and equip the company at his own expense, the council agreed to the appointment, provided the man carried out his part of the bargain.² It seems, however, that the council retained the right to appoint officers even when companies were levied by private individuals.

To begin with, this right was not always exercised. In the first Netherlands expedition the pioneers had no captains when they arrived, and Sir John Norreys was forced to choose some on his own authority. He remonstrated with the privy council for this oversight and pointed out that the officers should have been appointed before the men left England. In 1588 there was a move to promote men locally in the Netherlands without first obtaining the sanction of the council in England (for example, the governor of Flushing claimed that six of the companies in the town were at his gift); but Willoughby said that neither the general nor any of the commanders of the garrisons should have the right to make captains, which shows that his views on this subject had radically changed. The proper procedure, he said, was for the general and his advisers to send recommendations to the council, the final choice being left to the queen. This, he added, was the method used in Spain.³

In 1590 Sir John Conway was given specific instructions about promotion. In future when a captaincy fell vacant he was to inform the council at once, sending in the name

¹ p. 17.

² *A.P.C.* xxiii. 209.

³ *For. Cal.* xxii. 9, 30.

of the lieutenant, and was not to choose a successor until he had been authorized by the council.¹ Presumably this meant that in general the council would promote the lieutenant unless there was a good reason to the contrary. In Ireland, however, the appointment of captains was left to the commander-in-chief. Sir William Russell asked that he might be allowed to choose captains there, as had been the custom,² while Mountjoy was accused of appointing captains for his own gain rather than for the good of the service. In his defence he said that he had promoted only men of known worth, some of whom actually had the approval of the privy council.³

Although it had the advantage that it made irregular promotion more difficult, the appointment of captains from England had the disadvantage that not always the best men were selected. Sir John Norreys complained that inexperienced officers were often appointed when better men were passed over.⁴ The same complaint was made by the Earl of Ormonde, who asked that he should be allowed to appoint captains to be certain that the best men were chosen.⁵

The subordinate company officers were selected by the captain. In a company of 150 infantry there were a lieutenant, an ensign-bearer, two sergeants, two drummers, and a surgeon.⁶ There were also six corporals, who had to exercise their section of the company in the use of their weapons, see that they were adequately equipped with powder, match, and bullets, and that their equipment was in good order.⁷ When alone with their sections (which were further divided into smaller groups known as 'camaradas') the corporals commanded with the authority of the captain.⁸

The lieutenant was the captain's understudy in most spheres of activity. The ensign-bearer was in battle the inspiration of his comrades, and in camp was stationed at company head-quarters. If both the captain and lieutenant

¹ S.P. Holl. xxxii, f. 260.

² *Irish Cal.* 1596-7, 165.

³ *Ibid.* 1600, 503.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1596-7, 59.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1598-9, 293, 335.

⁶ S.P. France, xxvi, f. 292b; *A.P.C.* xvii, 440.

⁷ B. Rich, *A Pathway to Military Practice*, 23.

⁸ R. Barret, *The Theory and Practice of Modern Wars*, 19-20.

fell in action the command of the company devolved upon the ensign-bearer, who was usually armed with a sword and dagger, while the ensign pole had a metal point and could be used for thrusting.¹ The sergeants were responsible for drilling the troops and for supervising the issue of rations and equipment. The two drummers were employed to beat time on the march, make inquiries about prisoners, and sound commands on the field of battle. The drummers were supposed to be privileged in dealing with the enemy. One sent to ask for a parley before the battering of a town on the Portugal expedition was shot at from the ramparts: immediately afterwards the man who fired the shot was hanged from the wall. When the parley was eventually held, the commander of the town apologized for the incident and said that he was anxious to adhere to the rules of war.²

Next to the captain the most important individual in the company administration was the clerk, a non-combatant, who had great influence, which was seldom used in the interest of the Crown.³ His functions included keeping a list of the men in the company, on which was recorded the armour each had received from the county store at the time of his levy and the equipment provided by the captain from time to time. Powder, match, and bullets were issued through him so that he would know exactly how much was to be deducted from each man's wages for these supplies. He visited all sick men weekly, and compiled a list of their names and where they were billeted, for the use of the muster-master; if he were found guilty of including fictitious names in this list he forfeited a week's pay.⁴ When the half-yearly issue of uniform was made he presented each member of the company to the official in charge of the distribution, and recorded what was supplied to find out how much of his wages remained due to him in cash. If he presented any men who did not qualify for uniform, or connived at the presentation of the same man twice, he went to prison for a month.⁵

¹ Ibid.

² S.P. Dom. 234, no. 76.

³ Ibid. f. 105b.

⁴ A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 488.

⁵ Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, f. 300b.

It is obvious that his position in the administrative system gave the clerk great power. He ought of course to have been the chief means of controlling the captain's wiles, but in practice he worked hand in glove with his superior, and between them they defrauded both soldier and government practically at will. There was a general complaint against the corruption of clerks in the Netherlands under Willoughby, who was urged to see that their books were better kept in the future,¹ but it was not until 1600 that Buckhurst went to the root of the trouble. He suggested that clerks should become the sworn agents of the Crown. They were no longer to depend on the captains for their living but were to have two shillings a day out of the checks. If this rule had been made at the outset, a great deal of corruption would have been rendered impossible.

Two important members of the company were the preacher and the cannoneer, who for some reason are always grouped together. For example, in Ireland a special deduction was made from the company's pay for a preacher and cannoneer. The latter duly received his share, but according to the commissary for musters in Munster, there was not a single preacher in the forces in the province.² In the same year it was ruled that preachers and cannoneers were not to be included in the pay sheet, but were to depend on 'dead-pays' for their living.³

In 1600 fourteen preachers were supposed to be attached to the troops in Ireland—considerably less than one a company. Of these, three were absent in England and the rest were said to be useless. One was drawing a salary as dean of Cork, and it was reported that he was never with the forces. Another offender was the dean of Christ Church in Dublin, who never stirred from the city.⁴ The lord deputy was instructed to stop the pay of those preachers who had livings and to reduce the pay of full-time chaplains. At the same time it was laid down that the cannoneers should be dispensed with, as there was little need for their services in Ireland.⁵ While the normal practice was for preachers

¹ Cott. MSS., Galba D I, f. 24.

² *Irish Cal. 1599-1600*, 383.

³ *Ibid.* 397.

⁴ S.P. Ireland, 207, pt. 1, f. 459.

⁵ *Irish Cal. 1600*, 275.

to look after the spiritual needs of a single company, occasionally they held a more important appointment. For example, in the 1589 expedition to France each regiment had a preacher drawn from the same district as the troops. The archbishop of Canterbury was asked to find some learned and discreet person for the London regiment, who was to be paid a pound a day by the clergy of the diocese.¹

Leave from active service abroad was generally granted only to officers, yet regulations in 1589 seem to have applied to captain and private alike. Six men could be absent from a company of 150 infantry, or 100 cavalry, if they held a pass from the town governor and reported their departure to the muster-master. No one was to have more than six weeks' leave in a year, unless he was prevented by illness, or failure to get a ship, from getting back to his unit within the limit of his pass. Those who got back in time were paid on their return, but men who overstayed their leave had their pay stopped for the whole time of absence.² In 1594 the council received a petition from the captains in the Netherlands and France asking that the latter practice should be stopped, and suggesting that pay should be withheld only for the unauthorized period of absence. The council did not agree to make the change, which would probably have given the captains too much freedom, but agreed to a compromise. It gave orders that a fortnight should be added to the customary period of annual leave, which by this time had grown to eight weeks, so that an officer was now allowed leave of absence with pay up to seventy-four days in the year. It does not appear, however, that this privilege, or indeed anything like it, was extended to the private soldier.³

It remains to consider an institution which seems to have been peculiar to the forces in Ireland—a permanent reserve of officers and men, known as the pensioners. In 1578 Sir Henry Sidney, the lord deputy, referred to the pensioners in a letter to the privy council,⁴ and five years

¹ S.P. Dom. 226, no. 60; Add. MSS. 32092, f. 104.

² S.P. Holl. 33, f. 214.

³ Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, f. 301.

⁴ *Carew Cal.* 1575-88, 151.

later the council instructed Sir John Perrot to reduce their number. Experienced officers and men were retained on the reserve, but those of lesser experience were dismissed, and given as compensation holdings from attainted lands in Munster.¹ The precise nature of these pensions is not revealed, but it appears that they were neither political, nor for disablement, nor for distinguished service.

A similar type of pension is mentioned in instructions to Sir William Fitzwilliam, Perrot's successor as lord deputy, and in a letter from the queen to Lord Burgh on the occasion of his appointment to the same office. Fitzwilliam was informed that of recent years the cost of pensioners in Ireland had reached unduly large proportions, and was instructed to consult the council there as to the steps to be taken to reduce this charge. Pensioners who were absent from Ireland without permission, or who had been in England for over six months, were to be dismissed.²

Burgh's orders are more illuminating. It was stated that in the past it had been customary for a number of officers and private soldiers to have pensions, so that when their service was needed again they could be recalled to the colours and their pensions replaced by military pay. Burgh was told to get the treasurer-at-war and the muster-master to compile a list of these men, and restore them immediately to the positions they had formerly held in the forces. As recent levies from England had had captains appointed before sailing, there were at this time no vacancies for those holding the rank of captain, but as vacancies occurred through death or other cause, pensioners were to be appointed. If any left Ireland, his pension was to be stopped. Burgh was further instructed to exercise caution in appointing new reservists, as the council suspected that in the past unwise appointments had been made.³

Lastly, in 1594 Sir William Russell was ordered to appoint captains to command the new companies from England from the ranks of the pensioners: on appointment, their pensions were to lapse and be replaced by ordinary military pay.⁴

¹ *Carew Cal.* 1575-88, 371.

² *Irish Cal.* 1586-8, 491.

³ *Carew Cal.* 1589-1600, 214.

⁴ *Ibid.* 91.

From these scanty allusions it is possible to build up a fairly complete outline of the institution. It seems to have been a permanent reserve of officers and men, who in return for their pensions were obliged to reside in Ireland in case of emergency. There was no fixed establishment, although the strength was usually in the region of fifty men. In 1585 the number is given as 45;¹ in 1588 it has risen to 51;² in March 1590 it has fallen to 47,³ and in 1599 to 44.⁴ Most of these were almost certainly reserve pensioners, but the inclusion of a certain number of Irishmen (seldom more than ten) suggests that at least some of them may have been political. On the other hand, men like Barnaby Rich were certainly not political pensioners, and the lists usually contain about forty names of a similar character.

The value of the pensions drawn varied from eightpence a day (the full wages of a private soldier) to as much as 13s. 4d. a day, and in 1599 the forty-four reservists were costing over £1,700 a year. These payments were subject to stoppages according to the rules which applied to the pay of the ordinary soldier.⁵

It cannot be suggested that this body of reservists constituted anything approaching a standing army, but its existence does prove that Elizabeth's government made some effort to introduce an element of permanency into its forces, and meets to some extent Sir J. W. Fortescue's accusation that in military affairs the queen 'was incapable of living otherwise than from hand to mouth'.⁶

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1586-8, 41.

² *Carew Cal.* 1575-88, 464.

³ *Irish Cal.* 1588-92, 390.

⁴ *Carew Cal.* 1589-1600, 290.

⁵ *A.P.C.* xxi. 351.

⁶ *History of the British Army*, i. 130.

IV

RATIONS

ONE of the hardest tasks facing the privy council was that of feeding the expeditionary forces, particularly in Ireland. The provision of an adequate food-supply was easier in the Netherlands, where the fertility of the soil impressed Sir John Norreys,¹ and in France, where at least on one occasion the English soldiers found bread, milk, and cider set out for them in almost every house on their route.² But in Ireland, the third main theatre of war, the barren soil could scarcely satisfy the simple demands of the native population.

Sir John Perrot, when lord deputy, frequently expressed alarm at the difficulty in keeping the garrison fed. He confessed that it was beyond his power to better the lot of the soldiers: either they had to suffer the pangs of hunger, or the queen had to take the expensive course of sending supplementary supplies from England.³ As the garrison increased, so the problem of victualling in Ireland became more serious, and towards the end of the century Sir William Russell warned the privy council that food shortage might compel him to withdraw his troops from the field.⁴

It did not follow, however, that the provisioning of the troops could be accomplished with complete ease even out of the comparative plenty of France and the Netherlands. It was, for example, inevitable that an invading army's demand for produce should tend to force up prices. Soon after Leicester arrived in the Netherlands he took the precaution of arranging for the shipment of food from England, partly to provide a reserve stock in case the enemy interfered seriously with local sources of supply, and partly to keep prices (which were admitted at the time to be reasonable enough) from getting out of hand.⁵ In Dieppe a few years later Sir Roger Williams found food so expensive

¹ *For. Cal.* xx. 244.

² T. Coningsby, *Journal of the Siege of Rouen*, 14.

³ Perrot MSS. i, ff. 98, 241b.

⁴ *Irish Cal.* 1596-7, 165-6.

⁵ *For. Cal.* xx. 158.

that his men (who had of course to pay for their rations out of their wages¹) were hardly able to get enough to support life.² Nor was Williams's experience unique. Periodic complaints about the poor quality of food and the extreme difficulty of buying it at reasonable prices suggest that the French and Dutch authorities' moral responsibility for helping to keep their allies well fed sat lightly upon their shoulders.

In the earlier part of the reign the supply of food was principally in the hands of merchants working on their own account. It is not clear how these were selected. The appointments may have been at the gift of the higher-ranking officers or they may have been made by the privy council. The victuallers followed the army as civilians, bought provisions locally, or carried supplies from England and retailed them to the troops. It was customary for the Crown to advance a small sum to enable these private merchants to lay in their first supplies.³ It also helped them by relaxing the restrictions placed from time to time on the export of foodstuffs. For example, on one occasion when there was a general revocation of licences to export beer, because of the scarcity of corn, an exception was made in favour of men supplying the forces in the Netherlands.⁴

As the troops had to pay for their rations out of their wages, which were constantly in arrear, it is hardly surprising that the existence of the private victualler was precarious. The loan he received from the Crown was soon spent, and as often as not never recovered. When the army was fortunate enough to have arrears of pay made up, the merchant naturally tried to make good his losses by charging high prices; and the troops either had to pay up or go hungry. When the army was not paid, the victualler had to live on credit or go out of business.

There were frequent complaints about the activities of private merchants. The captains in the Netherlands said on one occasion that they were charging 30 per cent. more to the army than prices in the open market, although the food was so bad that the health of the men was being

¹ See below, p. 69.

² *For. Cal.* xx. 198.

³ S.P. France, xxiv, f. 55.

⁴ *A.P.C.* xiv. 384-5.

undermined.¹ Leicester was fully aware of the disadvantages of the rather haphazard system of free-lance victualling: he urged that the number of operators should be kept to a minimum, pointing out that if there were too many, all would go bankrupt.²

Competition between the private merchants seems to have led to a considerable amount of trouble, and various devices were employed to regulate it. For example, in the expedition to Normandy in 1589, private victuallers were ordered to supply only the troops drawn from their own county, to prevent competition among themselves for the custom of the entire force. This was at least a step in the right direction, but it did not completely eliminate the competitive element, and still left it open to suppliers in the invaded country to play off the private merchants against each other.

Poor victuals at the high prices often charged by private merchants were responsible for much discontent, and partly caused the serious mutiny at Ostend in 1588.³ Yet in this case there is something to be said on behalf of the victualler, whom the soldiers threw into the harbour, in the hope that he would give better value in the future. A man who was dissatisfied with his rations could have them replaced: furthermore, it was pointed out that the prices charged were not unreasonable when the original cost of the food and the cost of transport, storage, and customs dues were taken into account.⁴ One of the victualler's accusers made a list of the goods he supplied, with their price to the troops in Ostend and their estimated price in England. The discrepancy between the two sets of prices is considerable, but there may be some doubt about the accuracy of the estimated English prices. For example, butter was supplied in Ostend at just over fourpence a pound, whereas it was alleged that in England it had cost only threepence. But butter was in fact costing a fraction over fourpence a pound in England at this time, and instead of a profit of five shillings a firkin (or something over 30 per cent.) the victualler was probably making less than a shilling, or about 6 per cent., which was hardly excessive.

¹ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. 2, 180-1.

³ *Ibid.* xxii. 166, 202, 341.

² *Ibid.* xx. 205.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxii. 168-9.

Profiteering was not the only crime of the private merchants. It was not unusual for them to dispose of their cargoes to the enemy if the price were sufficiently attractive. The illicit dealings of 'lorendrivers'—smugglers who took goods to the enemy from the garrison towns in the Netherlands—were serious enough,¹ but far worse were the activities of merchants who shipped to the enemy whole cargoes from England. Merchants found guilty of this crime were executed from time to time, but this failed to stop the traffic.² Leicester reported that a large quantity of food was being carried to Calais, whence it found its way into enemy storehouses,³ while Sir John Conway also complained that the Spaniards were being supplied from England.⁴

In an attempt to stop the practice royal proclamations were issued in 1588,⁵ 1591,⁶ and 1597.⁷ These required merchants exporting foodstuffs to give bonds for double the value of the goods to be exported, which were redeemable only when it was established that the supplies had been safely received by the proper authority abroad. The privy council also attempted to curtail the unlicensed export of food, partly to conserve supplies at home and partly to reduce the quantities smuggled to the enemy. Any shipment not covered by licence was liable to confiscation. If the goods reached their destination abroad, half went to the Crown, and the other half was shared between the governor of the town where the food was found and the official army victuallers.⁸

There is nothing to be said in favour of private victualling: the system was clearly intolerable. The burden of financing the purchase of food was, largely because of the irregularity with which the army was paid, too great to be borne by private individuals. Even if the army had been paid regularly, and the financial problem had consequently not existed, there would have remained the dangers of competition between private merchants for the available supplies, and of smuggling food to the enemy. The privy council went a

¹ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. 2, 148.

² *Ibid.* xx, 321.

³ *Ibid.* 358.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxi, pt. 3, 76.

⁵ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 282.

⁶ *Ibid.* f. 308; S.P. France, xxv, f. 72.

⁷ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 373; *A.P.C.* xxxi. 123, 359.

⁸ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 4.

long way towards solving the problem of victualling by entering into contracts with a small number of established merchants. These contracts were the basis of a new method of victualling which replaced the unregulated activity of private individuals. They made the merchants more directly responsible to the Crown, they enabled the council to keep track of the movement of supplies abroad, and they at least partially transferred the financial burdens to the broader shoulders of the government.

The transfer of responsibility for feeding the troops from private hands was beginning round about 1580. In that year the privy council accepted an offer from a Liverpool merchant to carry food to the forces in Ireland.¹ The arrangement in this case differed from the ordinary free-lance victualling in that the council did not merely advance money to the merchant, leaving him to make a success of the venture if he were lucky, and to fail if he were unlucky. It entered into a definite contract with him, under which the value of half the supplies was paid when the contract was signed and the balance when the food reached Ireland. Full responsibility did not pass to the Crown, however, for it was stipulated that the goods were to be carried at the merchant's risk. That is to say, if they were lost by shipwreck, captured by the enemy, or if they went bad in transit, the merchant was out of pocket to the extent of the difference between the sum advanced by the council and the amount paid by him for the food thus lost. A weakness in a contract on these lines was that the merchant may have had some incentive to ship short weight, or poor quality food, trusting in the inefficiency, or more likely the corruptibility, of the official inspectors in Ireland to let him get away with a handsome profit.

A somewhat similar development was seen in the Netherlands three years after the first official expedition had landed, when George Leicester was appointed 'victualling commissary' for the garrison towns. He was much more than a free lance, for he was given specific authority to buy food at reasonable prices, and to requisition wagons and ships to carry it abroad.² The privy council laid down precisely

¹ *A.P.C.* xii. 228-9.

² *Ibid.* xvi. 398.

what quantities he was to buy in England. He was, for example, given a licence to export 4,000 quarters of wheat in specified amounts from the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Kent, and Sussex. The commissioners for the export of grain took from him a bond which was redeemable when it had been established that the wheat had safely reached its destination.¹ Thus some slight progress was made towards making the Crown directly responsible for feeding the troops. A further step was taken in this direction in the following year when, at George Leicester's request, the queen undertook to make good losses sustained through capture by the enemy up to the value of 2,000 pounds.²

The first comprehensive Netherlands contract was signed in 1588, when some London merchants, including George Leicester, the victualling commissary, undertook to supply annually 4,000 tuns³ of beer. This arrangement was modified in 1591 so that if these commodities were scarce their export was restricted. The contractors were authorized now to export the full quantities only so long as the prices of wheat and malt did not exceed 23s. 4d. and 13s. 4d. a quarter respectively. If prices rose above these limits the same quantity of wheat was to be exported, but not more than 2,000 tuns of beer.

These merchants established on the island of Walcheren a permanent storehouse for victuals holding 1,000 quarters of wheat, 100 tuns of beer, 50 weys of cheese, and 40 barrels of butter; and another in Ostend with half these quantities. Soldiers had first claim on the stores, but it was laid down that they were to be changed every four months, and if the army was unable to consume them all, the surplus was to be disposed of to private citizens.⁴ This arrangement was maintained in the Netherlands until the end of the reign, and was also used in France.⁵

The contracting system was further developed in Ireland at the end of the reign. Between 1598 and 1601 there were at least fifteen contracts involving well over 100,000 pounds.⁶

¹ *A.P.C.* xvi. 411-12.

³ A tun contained 252 wine gallons.

⁵ *Ibid.* 574-5.

⁶ *A.P.C.* xxix. 271, 383, &c.; xxx. 187, 189, &c.; xxxii. 196, 253, &c.

² *Ibid.* xvii. 171-2.

⁴ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 4.

They were held by John Wood, a gentleman, and John Jolles and William Cockain, two London merchants who usually worked in partnership. In two cases Jolles was in partnership with Marmaduke Darell, the official navy victualler.¹

The contracts were on the following lines: the privy council struck a bargain with the merchants, who agreed to provide a definite quantity of food (usually enough for one or three months of twenty-eight days) within a certain time. The Crown paid for this service in two instalments: one when the bargain was struck, so that the merchant would have something in hand to buy supplies, and the other when it was proved that the goods had been shipped or had safely reached their destination abroad. Thus in the first of these later Irish contracts Jolles was paid 1,000 pounds down to help him to make his purchases. These he undertook to ship to Cork and Youghal within eleven days of the signing of the contract, all risks, with the exception of shipwreck, being borne by him. The merchant was paid the balance of the sum due to him under the contract not more than six days after he had produced to the privy council certificates from the mayors of Bristol and Chester that the goods had been shipped.²

At first the merchants were required to give bonds (ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 pounds) for the due performance of their part of the bargain, but this condition was dropped from the later contracts. Apart from modifications of this sort, however, there was little change in the contracting system. The terms of a contract to supply 10,000 men in 1599, when the merchants agreed to provide half the food at Dublin, and a quarter at each of Cork and Newry, were almost identical with those described above. There were, however, one or two interesting developments. As before, the whole shipment had to leave England within eleven days of the signing of the contract, but now the risks both of capture by the enemy and loss by shipwreck were borne by the Crown.³ Also, in this and subsequent contracts the merchants were given more latitude: for example, if it was found impossible to obtain the specified quantities of a

¹ *A.P.C.* xxix. 457, 621.

² *Ibid.* xxix. 271.

³ *Ibid.* 458-60.

certain type of food, the deficit could be made good with a suitable substitute.¹ Finally, the Crown undertook that the authorities in Ireland would be prepared to unload the food ships as soon as they arrived, to avoid extra expense through delay in discharging: if such delay were inevitable, the expense was to be borne by the government.²

The transport of food supplies was organized in much the same way as the transport of the levies. Ships were requisitioned and sailors pressed into service as occasion demanded, the greater part of the work falling on the shoulders of the civic authorities of the ports from which the food transports sailed.³ The privy council did what it could to facilitate the purchase of provisions and their carriage to the coast. Instructions were issued to all public officers to help the contractors to buy bread, butter, cheese, oatmeal, and beer, and to see that they or their representatives were enabled to ship these supplies without hindrance.⁴ When the mayor of Bristol refused to find a ship to take a cargo of food to Cork (pleading that all the available ships had been used to transport a recent levy of a thousand men) he was severely reprimanded by the council and ordered to provide a vessel at once.⁵

Towards the end of the reign the transport of provisions was more closely supervised by the council,⁶ and made easier by the abolition of customs charges on food leaving the country for the use of the troops abroad. At first the ordinary duties were charged,⁷ and even as late as 1598 the victuallers complained that the customs officers were molesting them unduly. To remove this difficulty instructions were issued to all customs officials that food for the army was to leave the country duty free.⁸

The rations supplied to the forces consisted of biscuit or wheat to be baked with biscuit locally; oatmeal and hulled oats; peas, beans, rice, butter, and cheese; pork, bacon, and fresh and salt beef: fresh Dutch ling, dried Newfoundland cod ('stockfish'), and herring; and, of course, beer.

¹ *A.P.C.* xxix. 623.

² *Ibid.* 624-5.

³ *Ibid.* xv. 151; xxix. 31.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxix. 258.

⁵ *Ibid.* 353.

⁶ *Ibid.* 439.

⁷ *S.P. France*, xxv, f. 72; *A.P.C.* xvi. 411-12.

⁸ *A.P.C.* xxix. 233, 259; xxvi. 116.

The latter was an essential item in the soldier's diet: if he drank water he quickly fell a victim to disease.¹ In Flushing the beer allowance was half a gallon a day—a generous ration.² In Ireland it was supplied by the victualling contractors, although not under the main contracts. The ration in 1598 was a quart a day, supplemented by half a pint of sack, and every second day half a pint of whisky. A drink known simply as 'beverage', made from liquorice and aniseed, was also provided for the troops.³ In the victualling contracts rations were specified in detail. In one, for example, the daily allowance was one pound of bread or biscuit (costing 1½*d.*), three ounces of butter (¾*d.*), six ounces of cheese (1*d.*), and three-quarters of a pint of oatmeal (¾*d.*). Transport and other expenses were reckoned at ¾*d.* per man daily, raising the cost of a man's ration to 4½*d.*⁴

Rations were usually on these lines, but they did vary slightly from time to time. In 1598 each man was allowed a pound of biscuit or a pound and a half of bread. For six days of the week half a pound of butter and a pound of cheese were served with the bread on alternate days, while on the seventh day the bread ration was accompanied by two pounds of salt beef or two and a half pounds of fresh beef.⁵ On this occasion the contractors were authorized to provide fish if they were unable to buy enough beef. The suggested equivalents of the beef ration were: a quarter of a Dutch ling; eight herrings; one large Newfoundland cod, or one and a half smaller cod.⁶

Salt fish was an unpopular substitute for meat. It did not keep well, and, as Essex and the council in Ireland complained, aroused a thirst which was not easily quenched.⁷ This objection did not apply in the same degree to fresh fish, although in Mountjoy's view any fish was less nourishing than bread, butter, and cheese, and compared with these there was the disadvantage that pans and fuel were needed to cook it.⁸

Buckhurst proposed to stimulate the Irish fishing industry by giving it a subsidy. It was suggested that the

¹ Treaty Papers, xxiv, f. 103.

² A.P.C. xxix, 70.

⁶ Ibid. 385.

⁴ Ibid. xxix, 272.

⁷ Irish Cal. 1590-1600, 21.

³ S.P. Holl. 51, no. 5.

⁵ Ibid. 384.

⁸ Ibid. 1600, 491.

river Bann, Lough Foyle, and Lough Swilly, where there was said to be an abundance of salmon, herring, eels, and cod, should be intensively fished. If they could give satisfactory guarantees fishermen were to have their tackle provided by the government, and repay their debt in fish.¹ In the Netherlands fish was at least on one occasion more popular than bread and cheese; for in 1586 the soldiers were selling their bread and cheese ration for half its value and buying fish or meat instead.²

The storage of food abroad presented considerable difficulties. The method used in Ostend and on Walcheren, which has already been described,³ was extended to Flushing in 1596, at the request of the governor, Sir Robert Sidney.⁴ The problem was partly solved in the Netherlands by an order that householders in the garrison towns should keep enough food in stock to last them a year, which provided a safety cushion and relieved the victuallers of much anxiety in time of scarcity.⁵ In Ireland food was stored in buildings hired for the purpose: the victuallers affirmed that without these it was impossible to keep provisions from going bad.⁶ The wooden storehouses which were at first used at Lough Foyle were later replaced by a 350-ton ship moored in the lough,⁷ but even this did not entirely remove the difficulties.

The council in Ireland told the privy council that while it was true that the climate had affected the health of many men, more had been the victims of bad food which had got damp on the voyage, and had further deteriorated through being kept too long in store. It therefore suggested that instead of keeping reserve stocks, which as often as not went bad, provisions should be bought in Ireland as they were required.⁸ This plan was supported by one of the muster officials, who pointed out that if the English forces were supplied in Ireland there would be less food available for the rebels, and that the inconvenience of carriage from England would be avoided. Moreover, the mobility of the troops would increase, as they would no longer have to keep in touch with the storehouses.⁹

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 382.

² *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. 2, 182-1.

³ p. 53.

⁴ S.P. Holl. 53, no. 17.

⁵ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 379.

⁶ *Ibid.* 380-1.

⁷ *A.P.C.* xxx. 576.

⁸ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 289.

⁹ *Ibid.* 484.

One captain urged that as discontent and disease were the inevitable consequences of the practice of victualling from government stores,¹ men should have their ration money in cash so that they could buy the sort of food they liked best. At the end of the century the plan adopted earlier in the Netherlands was introduced into Ireland. Householders in fortified towns were required to lay in a year's stock of corn, and, if they could afford it, of butter, cheese, and salt beef.²

The issue of rations was usually supervised by the victualler's agent, but there was a tendency for the Crown to assume a greater control of this branch of organization. It began to appoint its own agents, and to give its own instructions to the agents already appointed by the contractors. For example, at the close of the century one John Baxter was made official victualling commissary for Ballyshannon. His duties began in England, where he superintended the lading of food transports at Chester. He then accompanied the ships to Ireland, where the cargoes were on arrival examined for damage by sea-water. He was responsible for keeping records of the amounts of food issued to the troops, and made up a monthly statement on which were based deductions from pay. He also kept a record of supplies going bad in store, which as a precaution against fraud had to be signed by two witnesses of good character.³

This method of supervision was developed in 1600 when Allen Apsley was made commissary for Munster. He also checked supplies as they left England, giving the contractors a receipt showing the amount and condition of the goods taken over. In this he was assisted by commissioners appointed by the Crown, who had to pass the victuals as fit for human consumption, and likely to remain so for five months. If they did not come up to this standard the merchant was responsible for replacing them with a satisfactory quality. If goods passed by the commissioners were subsequently found to be unsatisfactory the Crown bore the full responsibility.⁴

The issue of rations was regulated by the council in

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 289.

² *Ibid.* 379.

³ *A.P.C.* xxx. 13-16.

⁴ *Carew Cal.* 1589-1600, 495.

Munster, without whose authority Apsley could take no action. He had to let the treasurer-at-war know how much food had been distributed at least once in every two months, and also to see that stocks of food were salted and turned to keep them as long as possible, and to keep the council informed as to which rations were most popular with the men, so that arrangements might be made to supply these, provided no extra expense were incurred.¹

In most respects the victualling of the troops was as satisfactory as circumstances permitted. It was one of the newer branches of organization, but it seems that the privy council attacked the problems involved with some intelligence. At the beginning of the reign the army had to depend on free-lance victuallers, who were only indirectly responsible to the Crown, and who supplied food with a view to filling their own pockets rather than the stomachs of the men. Yet by the end the contracting system had been firmly established, to the greater benefit of the service. It was impossible, however, to reach a very high standard of efficiency with the primitive methods of preserving food then available. Fish could be dried and beef could be salted, but apart from this the sixteenth-century victualler had no satisfactory means of food preservation, which meant that he was all the time up against difficulties undreamed of in a later age.

¹ *A.P.C.* xxx. 623-9.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT

PROBABLY the most important military development in Elizabeth's reign was the victory of fire-arms over the older weapons. It was by no means an easy victory; the substitution was made slowly, in the face of considerable difficulty, and even opposition from professional soldiers. In 1585 the bow was not antiquated enough to prevent Leicester from taking a company of bowmen with him to the Netherlands.¹ A decade later it was still in use in the militia, although by now bowmen were described in the records as untrained men. About the same time, however, the commissioners of musters for Buckinghamshire were congratulated by the privy council on their decision to equip county forces with muskets and calivers.² By the end of the century the bow, which had been for so long the national weapon, had almost completely disappeared, and the new 'weapons of fire' were firmly established in its place.

The renewed threat of a Spanish invasion was probably responsible for the issue of the new weapons to the domestic forces, but the equipment of those serving abroad had already been modernized to give them a chance of holding their own with continental armies. In every hundred men sent to Normandy in 1589 sixty had pikes and the rest (except one or two swordsmen responsible for guarding the company colours) carried either a musket (a heavy weapon which had to be fired from a rest) or a caliver (a lighter weapon fired from the shoulder).³ When Essex went to France two years later companies of 100 had about 40 pikemen, 20 musketeers, and 30 calivermen.⁴ The number of pikemen had thus considerably decreased. Levies for Ireland in 1596 were armed equally with fire-arms and other weapons. Half the force consisted of halberdiers and pikemen; the other half carried fire-arms in the proportion of three calivers to one musket.⁵

¹ Add. MSS. 5753, f. 333.

² *A.P.C.* xxx. 27.

³ *Ibid.* xviii. 88.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxi. 222.

⁵ *Ibid.* xxv. 267.

This equality still existed in 1598,¹ but by 1601 the balance had swung definitely in favour of fire-arms. Companies of 100 men now contained 24 pikemen and 12 billmen, who also carried basket-hilted Turkish swords, as against 24 musketeers (half with ordinary muskets and half with the so-called 'bastard musket' which was probably something between a caliver and a musket, and did not need a rest) and 40 calivermen.² Later in the same year the proportion was still 64 fire-arms to 36 pikes and bills.³

For once practice did not lag behind theory. In Essex's force in France in 1591 a company 135 strong should have contained according to the regulations 75 men armed with fire-arms as against 60 with other weapons. A muster taken in France shows that on the average the companies actually had 47 pikemen, 15 halberdiers, 30 musketeers, and 43 calivermen—73 fire-arms and 62 other weapons, or almost exactly the proportion laid down by the regulations.⁴

The acceptance of fire-arms as the army's principal weapons greatly raised the cost of equipping the forces. The long-bow had been an economical as well as an effective weapon. In 1566 bows of first-quality imported yew were sold at the controlled price of 6s. 8d., and of second quality at 3s. 4d. Bows of English yew cost as little as two shillings.⁵ On the other hand, during the latter part of Elizabeth's reign the price of calivers ranged from twelve to thirty shillings; of muskets from eighteen shillings to two pounds; and of pikes and bills from two to three shillings. If we take thirty shillings as the average cost of fire-arms, and three shillings for the other weapons, and apply these to the early and late companies described above, it appears that in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign the cost of a company's equipment went up by about 50 per cent.

The arms and equipment used on the foreign expeditions were supplied from four main sources: the armoury and the ordnance offices, private contractors, and the county arsenals.

The armoury and ordnance offices were responsible for the provision of light and heavy munitions respectively.

¹ *A.P.C.* xxviii. 527.

² *Ibid.* xxxii. 223.

³ *Ibid.* 473.

⁴ *S.P. France*, xxvi, f. 174.

⁵ *8 Eliz.*, c. 10.

The former was more concerned with the supply of fine armour for the nobility than the provision of equipment for the rank and file, but it did provide swords to troops going overseas. In the last twenty years of the century it sent more than 11,000 swords for the forces in Ireland.¹ But apart from supplying these, and more rarely corselets,² morions, and targets,³ the armoury office played a comparatively small part in equipping the army.

More important was the ordnance office. This was 'a much larger establishment than the armoury, having in Elizabeth's time, as its principal officers beneath the master, a lieutenant, a surveyor, Keepers and Clerks of the great and small store-houses, clerks of deliveries, and a master gunner'.⁴ In addition to these officers there was a large staff, which in 1588 consisted of nine craftsmen—a carpenter, joiner, cooper, smith, bowyer, fletcher, grinder, and two furbishers. Two men were engaged to test the quality of gunpowder and saltpetre, and there were also twenty labourers, a carter, a messenger, and six clerks to keep the books.⁵

The office was responsible for the provision of heavy guns, small arms, match, shot, and a whole host of kindred supplies, including bandoliers, moulds for making bullets, melting-ladles, musket rests, powder flasks, touchboxes, shovels, spades, crowbars, pickaxes, felling-axes, hedging-bills, scythes, reaping-hooks, rope, canvas for binding halberds, chests for muskets and calivers, nails, tallow, and wood in all forms.

Most of the heavy guns provided were intended for the use of the navy, but many were supplied to the army for battering fortifications. In 1601 a cannon, a demi-cannon, and two culverins were sent to the siege of Kinsale.⁶ The office did not engage in the manufacture of heavy artillery, but made purchases from private makers. Another of its responsibilities was the maintenance of small arms. The muskets and calivers held in the office were examined

¹ Exchequer Accounts, Army, Navy, and Ordnance, bundle 64, no. 11.

² *A.P.C.* xxx. 375.

³ *Ibid.* xxxii. 298; *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iii. 409.

⁴ Sir E. K. Chambers, *Sir Henry Lee*, 119.

⁵ Exchequer of Receipt, Miscellaneous Books and Papers, no. 13.

⁶ *A.P.C.* xxxii. 218-9.

periodically, and any defective weapons were sent out to gunsmiths for repairs.¹

Regulations for the administration of the ordnance office were drawn up by the master (the Earl of Warwick) in 1584. Two sets of records were kept, one for the information of the Crown and the other for the use of the office itself. All contracts for the purchase of munitions had to be signed by the master and two other officers before they were valid. Records of the receipt and issue of stores were preserved in the 'greate standred cheast', to which the master, lieutenant, and surveyor held keys, and were examined once a year. Private purchases of munitions were strictly forbidden, and a warrant from the queen or the privy council had to be produced before any issue was made.² Five years later Warwick extended the regulations. It was now laid down that all the chief officers should meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays; four journals of proceedings were to be kept—by the surveyor, the clerk of deliveries, the keeper, and the master's clerk; books were to be made up every two months, and no application for the supply of powder was to be considered unless it was addressed to the master.³

It was revealed when Warwick died that he had been misappropriating official funds. He was entitled by the terms of his appointment to claim certain fees, but a commission set up to investigate his accounts reported that he had been pocketing sums considerably in excess of his allowance. The new master, Essex, was exhorted by the privy council not to follow in his predecessor's misguided footsteps. At the same time the council revised the regulations, in the hope that Essex would be unable to follow Warwick even if he wanted to. Munitions were now to be issued only when the master or lieutenant had received orders direct from the council, although in exceptional cases the instructions of the lord treasurer or admiral were deemed to be sufficient. Another change was that craftsmen were now to be taken on only for specific jobs and after they had

¹ Exchequer of Receipt, Miscellaneous Books and Papers, no. 13.

² S.P. Dom. 175, no. 97.

³ Ibid. 228, no. 20; Harl. MSS. 309, f. 72.

given an undertaking that they would lay no claim to employment when the work in hand was completed, which suggests that under Warwick's mastership the craftsmen's posts had become sinecures.

A more elaborate system of accounting and book-keeping was introduced. The council stressed the importance of keeping exact records of receipts and deliveries of munitions and instructed the clerks of receipt and delivery to compare their books on the first Monday of every month to reveal discrepancies. If one of the clerks was found to be at fault, he was fined a month's pay. If he continued in error for four months, he was dismissed. Each quarter a review was made of all transactions, and if the records were in order they were put away in a chest for future reference. The master was made responsible for getting quarterly returns from the royal arsenals at Woolwich, Rochester, and Chatham so that an up-to-date record of the country's stock of munitions would be readily available.¹

Normally the ordnance office was able to meet the army's requirements, but occasionally emergency measures had to be taken to find an adequate supply of munitions. At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign Sir Thomas Gresham was sent to buy arms in the Netherlands,² and Sir John Norreys had a similar commission before the Portugal expedition left.³ Once or twice private individuals offered to supply arms by contract, but at first offers of this sort do not seem to have been accepted. In 1588 the master smith of the ordnance in Ireland offered to provide there all kinds of munitions at the price at which they were issued from the ordnance office in London, so that the Crown would be saved the cost of transport and losses at sea. The council was tempted by the offer, and instructed the lord deputy to accept it if he could be certain that the arms thus manufactured in Ireland could not possibly find their way into the hands of the rebels, and that the merchants who were accustomed to carry munitions to Ireland at their own risk would not be discouraged from doing so in future.⁴ Apparently there was no assurance that these conditions

¹ *Dom. Cal.* 1595-7, 381-3.

² *S.P. Dom.* 219, no. 56.

³ *Ibid.* 1547-80, 121, 128.

⁴ *A.P.C.* xvi. 186.

would be fulfilled, for nothing more was heard of the proposal.

A few years later a manufacturer asked for a ten-years' contract to supply annually a thousand muskets and a thousand calivers. He said that if this offer were accepted he would be able to keep in employment craftsmen whom he had assembled from all over the country, and suggested that in time of national emergency his establishment would greatly benefit the state. He proposed to deliver the arms free on board at Chester for shipment to Ireland, but again nothing further is heard of the proposal.¹

The growing needs of the army at the end of the reign compelled the council to enlist the aid of private suppliers. In 1601 Edmond Nicholson offered to supply both cavalry and infantry weapons at prices lower than those current, and a commission was set up to consider the offer and examine samples.² The project was opposed by some of the armourers in London, who maintained that if the council did business with Nicholson, their workpeople would be thrown idle. On the other hand, a number of armourers, cutlers, and gunmakers—no doubt those likely to be employed by the contractor—were strongly in favour of the scheme. Eventually the offer was accepted after the commission had heard evidence from the two sets of armourers, and Nicholson provided corslets, pikes, poldrons (shoulder-protecting armour), calivers, morions, bandoliers, muskets, bastard muskets, and basket-hilted Turkey swords for a levy of 2,000. His agents delivered the supplies to the companies at Southampton, Bristol, and Chester, in the presence of the officials supervising embarkation, and received from the captains receipts which were used by him in due course as warrants for payment.³

The county stores were the fourth source of the arms of Elizabeth's forces. They were intended primarily for the equipment of the trained bands, but in practice were used to equip men levied within the county for service abroad. The arms were bought out of the county funds; and, as usual, the citizens were reluctant to meet their obligations.

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1588-92, 377.

² *A.P.C.* xxxi. 112.

³ *Ibid.* xlx. 381; xxviii. 472-3.

The council pointed out to Buckhurst that his lieutenant's commission gave him sufficient authority to compel those from whom contributions were required for the replenishment of the store to pay up.¹ Again, Cobham, when faced with the task of finding equipment for a body going to France, said that his lieutenantcy was unwilling to bear the cost of equipment, and asked how in these circumstances he was expected to replenish the store.² Towards the end of the reign the need for arms became so urgent that it was impossible to get all the equipment needed from the stores, and they had instead to be taken direct from individual citizens. In Oxford men levied for service in Ireland were equipped with weapons commandeered from citizens selected by the corporation. Before they were issued to the recruits the weapons were valued so that in the event of their being lost or damaged the owner would receive compensation from a fund raised from all the townspeople.³

It was intended that arms should be returned to the county store when the men came home, but the safe return of weapons was exceptional. After the expedition to France in 1589 Willoughby remarked on the fact that the troops had restored the bulk of the equipment to the proper authorities—the like of which had never happened before in his experience.⁴

It is a moot point whether the dishonesty of the recruits or the stress of battle was responsible for the greater loss of arms. A royal proclamation was issued in 1590 in an attempt to stop the illegal disposal of equipment. Soldiers selling or pawning their arms were liable to the death penalty, while the buyer had to hand over the arms and suffer imprisonment. So that arms which had been sold might be traced all weapons were to be marked with a sign which was recorded in the muster rolls.⁵ But the evil persisted. In 1591 eleven men were found guilty of buying their discharge from their captains partly by a cash payment, and partly by handing over their equipment, which

¹ *A.P.C.* xvi. 218.

² *Dom. Cal.* 1581-90, 647.

³ H. F. Salter, *Oxford Council Acts 1583-1626*, 127.

⁴ *H.M.C. Lancaster*, 312.

⁵ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 285.

the captain sold to a London merchant.¹ A few years later it was said that captains in France were selling their men's arms, and even the clothing off their backs.²

The replacement of lost equipment issued to the levies was a heavy charge on the county funds, and in 1596 the council tried to ease the burden by decreeing that the captain or lieutenant receiving the troops should give the county authorities a bond for double the value of the equipment supplied. This bond was redeemable when the arms were returned to store, or, if they had been lost in battle, when the captain or lieutenant produced a statement signed by one of the principal officers describing exactly how the weapons had been lost.³ It is not clear if this decree was taken seriously by the captains, but in any case it can have had little effect on the private soldier.

In 1598 the council in Ireland appealed for fresh supplies of arms from England. It reported that not only were weapons broken and lost in the ordinary course of service, but that they usually disappeared when a man died or deserted. It was also common for men to sell their arms to the Irish, even the rebels.⁴ About the same time some of the captains in Ireland admitted that their men were selling their arms, but excused them on the ground that this was the only way they could get money for food.⁵ Buckhurst tried to solve the problem by proposing that an indenture should be made between the captain and the treasurer-at-war in which was recorded the weapons carried by each man. The captain was to be bound to give a monthly statement of lost equipment, and if any had been sold by his men, to replace it out of his own pocket.⁶ Like most of Buckhurst's suggestions this was too drastic to be acceptable to the captains.

It was the Crown's intention that the replenishment of the county stores should be the responsibility of the local authority. In 1590 levies from Derbyshire and Staffordshire were so badly supplied that the central government was

¹ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 89.

² *Ibid.* 1595-7, 495.

³ *A.P.C.* xxvi. 163; J. Wake, *Northampton Musterr* (Northants Rec. Soc. iii, 1926), 31.

⁴ *Irish Cal.* 1598-9, 138.

⁵ *Ibid.* 148.

⁶ *Dom. Cal.* 1592-4, 200.

compelled to supplement their equipment before they sailed. The council attributed the shortages to the negligence of the deputy lieutenants and justices of the peace who had made the levy, and instructed the lord lieutenant to raise enough money in the offending counties to recompense the Crown for its outlay.¹

Before 1588 the country had been largely dependent on imported gunpowder, despite the fact that in 1561 the government bought from a German inventor a method of making the principal ingredient, potassium nitrate, or saltpetre. The dangers of having to depend on foreign supplies of such a vital munition were emphasized by the heavy expenditure of powder in the sea-fight with the armada, and induced the council to encourage home production. Chemistry was not yet sufficiently advanced to enable powder manufacturers to dispense with imported sulphur, but charcoal was readily available from domestic sources, and saltpetre (of which there were no natural deposits in England) could be made artificially from lime, ashes, and earth treated with animal excrement.

The council entered into a contract with certain manufacturers and authorized them to acquire earth for saltpetre anywhere in the country, except London and two miles around, and the five northernmost counties. They were licensed to dig in dove-cotes, barns, stables, stalls, and outhouses, provided that they re-erected any buildings which collapsed as a result of their activities, and replaced with fresh supplies the earth which they removed. The local authorities were instructed to give them every assistance and were probably frequently called upon, for the removal of earth was naturally unpopular with property owners.

In 1599 the northern counties, which had hitherto been exempt, were required to supply earth like the rest of the country. It was recorded at this time that the requisitioning of wagons to carry earth to the factories had been an unwelcome burden on the people, who had also suffered through the great destruction of forests for charcoal manufacture. The manufacturers now agreed to supply the council with

¹ *A.P.C.* vii 161

a hundred lasts of gunpowder a year (nearly 110 tons) at sevenpence the pound. If they were able to make more than this quota they were authorized to sell it to merchants at the controlled price of tenpence a pound. As it turned out there was a considerable surplus, and in 1601 over 30 tons were exported to the Netherlands, which had been England's chief source of supply in the earlier part of the reign. But despite the great increase in domestic production, powder was still imported from time to time.¹

The main powder store was in the ordnance office, but considerable stocks were held by private merchants. In 1586 the lieutenant of the Tower complained that one was keeping a stock of over 40 tons in a storehouse on Tower hill, and pointed out that it was in great danger, as vagrants were accustomed to light straw fires near it at night.² But even in the ordnance office no great precautions were taken with powder. It was reported that large quantities were lying about in the open, whereas they should have been carefully stored in the vaults.³ Throughout the country there were smaller stores, which the lieutenant was expected to keep stocked with purchases from the ordnance office. In practice many counties made no attempt to keep their stores full, and when an investigation was made in 1592 they were reprimanded and ordered to make immediate purchases from London.⁴

It was at first usual to deduct from the soldier's wages the value of the powder he expended in practice and in battle. The captain applied to the master of the ordnance for the company's requirements, and gave for the powder a receipt which was passed to the treasurer-at-war, so that he could stop the appropriate amount from the company's next pay.⁵ That deductions were still being made for powder in 1589 is shown by a recommendation that the private should be given a special allowance for fire, light, and laundry, as if he were not it was likely that these expenses, added to the levy for keeping the surgeon, clerk, mustermaster, priest, and for gunpowder would leave him

¹ S.P. Dom. 195, nos. 112 and 71; and 224, no. 28.

² Dom. Cul. 1581 90, 311.

³ Ibid. 1595-7, 81.

⁴ A.P.C. xviii. 273.

⁵ T. Digges, *An arithmetical Military Treatise*, 114.

with nothing at all.¹ It seems likely that in practice the naturally slow rate of fire of the new weapons was further decelerated by the private's knowledge that every time he fired he was knocking something off his next week's pay. Although Essex urged that the private should have a free issue of powder, Buckhurst objected strongly, and said that such an issue was against all reason, equity, good order, and justice — on what grounds it is not quite clear.²

The captains in Ireland objected to the soldiers' having to supply their own powder. They pointed out that this was a constant source of worry to the men, who knew that the more powder they used the less would they have in food and clothing. It made the men unwilling to fire their weapons, and turned brave men into cowards.³ In 1598 it was alleged that this method of issuing powder was the only reason an English force was defeated by the rebels.⁴ Frequent engagements towards the end of the reign imposed a much greater strain on the already taxed resources of the private, and Buckhurst conceded that the men should have free powder for use in action.⁵ The logical step was taken shortly afterwards when Mountjoy was authorized by the privy council to issue powder from time to time for training purposes as well as for use in battle.⁶ This decision was confirmed in 1601 by the council when it ruled that neither the cost of powder nor the loss of arms on the battlefield were to be borne by the private soldier.⁷

¹ *Treaty Papers*, xxiv, f. 103.

² *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 380.

³ *Ibid.* 1598-9, 148.

⁴ *Ibid.* 252-3.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1597-1600, 320.

⁶ *Ibid.* 448.

⁷ *A.P.C.* xxii. 337.

UNIFORMS

BEFORE they left the place where they were levied the troops were provided with coats, generally without specific instructions from the central government.¹ The Crown bore only a part of the cost of this provision, the bulk (eleven or twelve shillings out of fifteen or sixteen) being borne by the local authority out of 'coat and conduct funds'.² It was clearly the Crown's intention that its own liability for coat money should be limited. When Lord Chandos suggested that, as the central government was giving only four shillings towards the cost of coats in his lieutenancy of Gloucestershire, it was hardly fair to expect the county to pay more than an equal sum, his reasoning drew forth a sharp rebuke from the privy council, which ordered him to see that 10s. 10d. was paid towards coats costing 14s. 10d.³

The coats conformed to no standard, although it was usual to clothe the levies from the same county in one colour. By the time of Elizabeth the white coats which had been common under the earlier Tudors seem to have disappeared.⁴ Archers levied for service in Ireland in 1566 were dressed in blue cassocks with white borders,⁵ and in 1574 infantry coats were 'color bleu, Gasconie fashion'.⁶ The clothing of the levies probably depended largely on the discretion of the lord lieutenant. The Earl of Rutland laid down that men levied in his lieutenancy for Leicester's expedition to the Netherlands were to have a cassock and red cloth hose.⁷ At the same time cavalry were fitted out with doublet, hose, boots, and sleeveless knee-length red cloaks.⁸ Men for Ireland were clothed in motley, or russet, which it has been suggested was for the purpose of camouflage.⁹ Another levy for Ireland was equipped with heavy-lined coats because of the approach of winter.¹⁰

¹ S.P. Dom. 226, no. 53. ² A.P.C. xxvii. 337. ³ Ibid. xxi. 306-7.

⁴ Sir J. W. Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, i. 135.

⁵ Harl. MSS. 1926, f. 28b. ⁶ Ibid. f. 29. ⁷ Dom. Cal. 1581-90, 285.

⁸ J. Luard, *The Dress of the British Soldier*, 70.

⁹ C. W. C. Oman, *The Art of War in the Sixteenth Century*, 385.

¹⁰ J. Wake, *Northampton Musters*, 33.

As a rule infantrymen were given only a coat when they were levied, but the council tried to encourage the local authorities to fit them out more generously. It admitted that the counties had been willing enough to supply coats in the past, but pointed out that many recruits had perished because they were so badly provided with other garments.¹ Perhaps as a result, the accoutrement of men from Anglesey in 1601 showed a great improvement. They had caps, cassocks, doublets, breeches, netherstocks, shoes, and shirts, and their clothing aroused considerable jealousy among the men from other counties.² The general intention, however, seems to have been to issue at the time of levy the minimum needed to last the troops until the first deliveries of uniform were made overseas.

Clothing for the army abroad was supplied twice a year, as in the Spanish forces. In 1590 the regulation winter outfit for a private was a cassock, a doublet, a pair of venetians (breeches of cloth first made in Venice and imitated in England), a hat, two shirts and bands, three pairs of stockings, and three pairs of shoes. When it was suggested that this outfit should be varied by the issue of extra shoes, stockings, and shirts instead of the doublet, the privy council said that it hardly thought a change necessary. It promised, however, to discuss the matter with the suppliers and to make any modification which seemed desirable.³

In 1597 the private's summer clothing in the Netherlands consisted of a canvas doublet lined with white linen; a pair of venetians of Kentish broadcloth, also linen-lined; two shirts and bands of Holland cloth; two pairs of leather shoes; two pairs of kersey stockings; and a hat. The same outfit was provided for the winter season, with an extra pair of shoes and stockings and a cotton-lined broadcloth cassock.

Officers were more elaborately fitted out. In summer they had a doublet of Milan fustian, faced with taffeta; a pair of broadcloth venetians trimmed with silk and lined with cotton and linen; and a pair of worsted stockings.

¹ *A.P.C.* *xxix.* 238.

² *H.M.C. Salisbury*, *xi.* 474.

³ *A.P.C.* *xx.* 137.

In winter they had in addition a broadcloth cassock lined with baize and faced with taffeta.¹ In Buckhurst's opinion officers' clothing was too elaborate. He proposed that only colonels and upwards should be allowed to wear silk and lace. Captains were to be content with fustian, cloth, and canvas, and were to spend on arms the money saved on clothing.²

There was a controversy about the clothing most suitable for the troops in Ireland. Sir Henry Wallop, the treasurer-at-war, suggested that it should be provided locally, for not only would the men be better equipped, but their outfits would cost thirty shillings a head less. He advocated the provision of Irish linen shirts and frieze cassocks, and in particular of a mantle or plaid which would keep the soldier dry by day and give him good shelter at night in a country where normal billets were few and far between.³ Wallop's proposals were unsympathetically received by the privy council, whose spokesman (probably Sir Robert Cecil) said that there was no doubt that English clothing was best for Englishmen, although he admitted he had never been to Ireland and therefore had no first-hand knowledge of conditions there. He found it difficult to believe that a soldier could carry an unwieldy plaid and still be able to fight effectively. It was his opinion that only long practice had made the Irish expert in manipulating it, and that Englishmen would abandon the garment in the heat of battle.⁴

At first sight this seems to be a straightforward controversy between a civilian and a man with practical experience of military affairs, but as usual there was more in the argument than meets the eye. Wallop's proposal was sound enough, but it was inspired by an ulterior motive. If the privy council substituted Irish clothing for English—frieze for cloth, calfskin or sheepskin brogues for shoes, and plaids for cassocks—it would mean that considerable sums would have to be sent to Ireland to make purchases there. Wallop, who was allowed a percentage of the money carried by him to Ireland, would

¹ Add. MSS. 5753, ff. 229b-230.

² *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 379

³ *Ibid.* 359.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1596-7, 381.

benefit accordingly, although it was said that he was already making more than he should.¹

One objection to the purchase of clothing in Ireland was that, although directly supplied by men loyal to the government, it would in the first place have come from rebels, who would use the English currency received in payment to buy munitions in Scotland and Denmark. Burgh warned the privy council to weigh very carefully any scheme for the provision of uniform in Ireland, and suggested that on the whole it was probably desirable that enough money should be set aside in England to clothe the troops from there.²

The question came up again in 1599, when it was proposed to substitute for part of the outfit then issued two pairs of Irish frieze stockings and three pairs of brogues, which were in the opinion of men who knew the country much more suitable than the English equivalent. It was said that if this change were made the money saved could be used to provide a plaid, and it was urged that the proposal should be considered before winter set in, as it was in that season that the plaid was most needed. It was of the greatest use both in sickness and in health, for however wet it got a little shaking and wringing made it perfectly dry. At night it was the soldier's bed, and without it men fell easy victims to dysentery, especially when they had to sleep in the open or do night guard duty.³

Essex favoured the adoption of Irish-made clothing. He maintained that English uniforms shrank when they got wet, which often happened when the troops had to wade across rivers. In winter the short English cassocks gave little protection against the cold. He fully believed that if they were replaced by plaids, and that if brogues were substituted for English shoes, the troops would keep their health much longer. Essex, however, had to be tactful. He was well aware that the privy council had given the whole question careful thought, and therefore said he would not presume to thrust forward his own views.⁴ In reply the council informed Essex that the order had already been

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1596-7, 413.

² *Ibid.* 383.

³ *Essex Cal.* 1599-1600, 334.

⁴ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 93.

given to issue the types asked for,¹ and in 1600 it seems that men were issued with either a plaid or a specially long broadcloth cassock.² In the same year the use of brogues was recommended by the council.³

The supply of clothing to the troops abroad was mainly in the hands of merchants working under contract. In 1588, however, the treasurer-at-war was still sharing in the business of supply. It had been proposed to buy clothing abroad for issue to the garrison of Ostend, but it was subsequently decided that it would be more satisfactory if the goods were procured in England. If this were done a better quality would be obtained while the transaction would be in keeping with the best mercantilist principles of the age. Sherley was accordingly instructed to buy clothing in England and have it dispatched immediately.⁴

It was natural that the cloth merchants, whose activities bulked so largely in the commerce of the country, should be deeply interested in the supply of uniform. In 1588 some merchants offered to make themselves responsible for the provision of clothing for the troops in the Netherlands, and stressed the benefits which would accrue from this step. Not only would English workmen turn out better goods, but the cost would be reduced by about one-tenth. Moreover, it was the Spanish practice to send uniform from home to the forces abroad, and it was suggested that what was good enough for the Spanish army should certainly be good enough for Englishmen.⁵ Soon afterwards the privy council announced that certain merchants had been commissioned to provide doublets, hose, stockings, and hats at reasonable rates, and that deductions to pay for them were to be made from the soldiers' wages. Willoughby was ordered to see that the captains made no profit when distributing supplies to their companies.⁶

Apparently this scheme was a success, for in the same year an agreement on similar lines was drawn up between the government and four merchants. Clothing was to be supplied to the value of 12,000 pounds for the winter season

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 112.

² *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 310.

³ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. iv, 34.

⁴ *H.M.C. Rutland*, i. 357.

⁵ *A.P.C.* xv. 352.

⁶ *A.P.C.* xv. 412.

and to the value of 8,000 pounds for the summer season. The whole winter issue had to be delivered by 1 November, and the summer issue by 1 June.¹ A year later Uriah Babington and Robert Bromley (who continued their operations into the next reign) were supplying at least part of the clothing for the Netherlands. They complained that the customs authorities there were charging the usual import duties on ready-made outfits intended for the use only of the English troops. The privy council sent a strong note of protest to the burgomaster of Flushing, and apparently succeeded in redressing the merchants' grievances, for the matter was not raised again.²

Several captains in the Netherlands alleged that the arrangements were far from satisfactory. They said that the clothing actually supplied was not as good as the standard outfits kept in the wardrobe office, that it was made of inferior material which wore quickly and shrank into the bargain, that the stockings were too short, and the shoes badly made. To remedy this the captains suggested that cloth should be sent from England and made to the soldier's measure on the spot.³ Sherley, however, asserted that the merchants were operating quite satisfactorily, and added that the captains had no right to meddle in the supply of clothing, and in fact merely wanted to get their hands on the troops' uniform allowance.⁴

The method of contracting is illustrated by negotiations with the merchants in 1595, when the privy council had arrived at the conclusion that existing arrangements were inadequate. It announced that the contractors were not doing their job honestly, and asked other merchants to submit tenders. John Jolles, a London merchant, offered to 'arm, apparel, victual, and pay the forces in the Low Countries and Brittany'; to employ the agents of the previous contractors, provided an assurance was given that no attempt would be made to entice them away; and to give a bond for the due performance of his part of the bargain. This offer was deemed too ambitious and was not accepted.⁵ Nor was an offer by George Leicester and

¹ *For Cal.* xxi 127.

² *J.P.C.* xviii. 351.

³ *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 331.

⁴ *Ibid.* 332

⁵ *Ibid.* 1595-7, 22-3.

William Beecher, two merchants whose activities had been singled out for criticism by the privy council, but who claimed that the allegations against them were quite without foundation.¹

The successful merchants were John and Thomas Bolton and Richard Catcher, drapers and merchant tailors of London, who agreed to supply clothing for officers and privates at a fixed rate per head. They undertook to manufacture up to 1,000 pounds worth every fifteen days, until the whole amount was provided, it being a condition that the goods should be paid for by the Crown at the time of delivery. They did not undertake to carry the uniforms abroad, but a separate agreement was entered into with Thomas Catcher, Richard's brother, who was paid 1,000 pounds a year to see the goods safely to their destination overseas, deliveries having to be completed by the end of May for the summer period and by the middle of October for the winter. When it was suggested by the council that the contractors should put down 10,000 pounds as evidence of their good faith, they objected and said it would be more reasonable for the Crown to give them some security for the due payment for supplies delivered. Later they agreed to put up a bond for 1,000 pounds, and brought forward three reputable citizens to vouch for them.²

The Boltons' offer was gladly accepted by the privy council, for it represented a substantial saving on the rates charged by the previous merchants.³ Indeed, when the new suppliers learned just how much the Crown was saving they regretfully informed the council that they had not realized how low their offer was compared with earlier prices, but that they were nevertheless prepared to abide by it.⁴

Some idea of the incompetence of the government officials of the time may be gathered from the contractors' dealings with the wardrobe office, which was responsible

¹ *Dom. Cal.* 1595-7, 25.

² *Ibid.* 22.

³ *Ibid.* 27. The actual prices were: private's outfit: Boltons and Catcher, £3. 5s. 3d., Beecher and Leicester, £4. 2s. 6d.; officer's outfit: Boltons and Catcher, £4. 0s. 10d., Beecher and Leicester, £5. 1s. 6d.

⁴ *Ibid.* 29.

for keeping the standard outfits and displaying them to would-be suppliers. The overseer of the office was unable to tell the difference between the officer's and private's suits, and passed off as a private's cassock one made of very good cloth, lined with baize and faced with taffeta, which was infinitely more costly than the standard garment. He also showed samples of Devonshire kersey stockings, which were worth half a crown a pair, although the official allowance for stockings at this time was about half that amount.¹

In practice delays in payment by the Crown handicapped the merchants. At first no payment was made until it had been established that the goods had safely reached their destination abroad, which meant that the suppliers might have to stand out of their money for many months. It was eventually arranged, however, that instead of having to wait until the goods had arrived overseas the contractors could be paid after supplies had passed inspection by the officers of the wardrobe office. The clothing was then packed, sealed, and dispatched. This procedure not only relieved the merchants of a considerable financial burden, but also ensured that only satisfactory uniforms were sent abroad.²

The actual distribution of uniforms to the troops was far from efficient, and as usual the captains were largely to blame. Private soldiers in the Netherlands sent the privy council many complaints that the captains were retaining uniforms which they ought to have handed out, and thus were lining their own pockets at the expense of the soldiers' comfort. It was therefore decreed that the captains should cease to take part in distribution. Instead, clothing was to be issued jointly by an official chosen by the Crown and the agents of the merchants.

At the same time other changes were made in the arrangements for distribution. As it was difficult for men to carry their spare clothing about with them, and as experience had shown that privates generally sold everything not immediately needed by them, it was laid down that shoes and stockings were to be doled out at intervals instead of

¹ *Dom. Cal.* 1595-7, 22.

² *Ibid.* 29.

all at the beginning of the season. No soldier who was not a full member of a company—who did not keep watch and ward—was eligible for an outfit, which meant that enlisted men who were doing part-time civil jobs in the garrison towns did not qualify. Men disposing of their uniforms were to be severely dealt with and have their pay stopped until the value of the clothing sold had been recovered. The official in charge of deliveries was instructed to keep a separate register for each company, which was to be submitted for the privy council's inspection every six months, and to make it more difficult for captains to introduce outsiders into the company for the express purpose of collecting a uniform he was expected to familiarize himself with the mustermaster's records.¹

These precautions suggest that there must have been a good deal of fraud in this branch of organization in the Netherlands. In Ireland, however, matters were much worse. The principal merchants, Babington and Bromley, and their accomplices pocketed vast sums of public money. The frauds were not brought to light until 1616, when the Crown sued the merchants' executors for the recovery of money which it was alleged they had misappropriated, and although the case against them was eventually dismissed in 1630, there is no doubt that the contractors, Sir George Carew, the treasurer-at-war, and most of the captains were guilty of large-scale fraud.²

Even if the Crown's case against the merchants was not strong enough to convince the court (and it may well be that the lack of conviction was to be attributed to external causes),³ it seems clear that their activities were far from straightforward. Another merchant complained that although he had devised the method of supplying the troops in Ireland, and had sold it to Babington and Bromley for a third of their profits, he had never had a penny from them. He took proceedings against them in 1599, but six years later when he had found his way into the Fleet prison he had got no satisfaction.⁴ James Quarles also

¹ Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, ff. 303b-306.

² H. Hall, *Society in the Elizabethan Age*, 125 ff.

⁴ H.M.C. Salisbury, xvii. 241.

³ See p. 96.

accused Babington and Bromley of underhand dealing. They had asked him to engineer a break between himself and the privy council (he had himself been supplying clothing) but he had refused, despite their warnings about his fate if he persisted in working on his own. Instead he told Babington and Bromley that if they continued in their disorderly course he would lay the facts before the queen and council.¹

William Holliday was a third merchant who accused Babington and Bromley. He alleged that they had defrauded the Crown of 27,000 pounds between 1597 and 1600. They had supplied only two-thirds of the uniforms contracted for, and had also given captains money in lieu of clothing at the rate of twenty-four shillings for the winter outfit, for which the Crown was paying the merchants forty-nine shillings, and proportionately for the cheaper summer outfit.

Holliday quoted figures to prove that out of about 1,000 men only some 600 received a uniform, and that the money which should have clothed the other 400 had been shared between the merchants and the captains. He suggested that there should be an official inquiry, but none was held, and a year later he raised the question again. He said that as the treasurer and the lord chief justice had decided against an inquiry, despite the fact that the merchants had broken the terms of their agreement by supplying money instead of uniform, he perhaps should not take the matter any further.² He had, however, taken counsel's opinion and had been advised that the contractors' action was quite inexcusable.³

These accusations were made by rival merchants and should therefore perhaps not be taken at their face value. They are, however, strongly supported from independent sources. There were innumerable complaints from Ireland about short deliveries of clothing. For example, in the winter of 1598-9 the merchants reported that they had supplied enough for all the forces, although in fact they had delivered only 2,500 suits. The council in Ireland

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, vii. 202-3.

² *Ibid.* xi. 535-6.

³ *Ibid.* xii. 774-6.

made the best of matters by sharing out the available supplies so that every man would get something, but the companies resented this and were reluctant to accept anything less than complete outfits.¹ The privy council said it was very ready to believe that the contractors were profiteering, and suspected that as the captains and muster-master made no complaint their mouths must have been stopped by bribes. Mountjoy was therefore ordered to investigate the whole position.²

Finally, one John Byrde submitted that the council had been hoodwinked by the contractors in various ways. He said they had supplied uniforms which were so rotten that the men had been eager enough to sell them back for seventeen or eighteen shillings a suit; and by disposing of the same suit over and over again the merchants had made as much as twenty pounds on a single outfit. Byrde also hinted at the implication of higher officials whose names he dared not commit to paper (probably Sir George Carew was among them) and said that Babington and Bromley had sent him to Bristol to persuade the mayor and Crown officers to certify the shipment of a much larger number of uniforms than had actually left the port. He offered to justify his accusations by an investigation of the merchants' accounts, and of the books of the port officers of London, Bristol, and Chester.³

In fact, even after a considerable allowance has been made for the ulterior motives of their accusers, it is clear that the merchants who supplied the forces in Ireland were guilty of frauds which cost the Crown great sums of money. These frauds were successful only because of the universal corruption of the age, and it is difficult to see how they could have been controlled by the Crown with the officials at its disposal.

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1598-9, 464.

² *Ibid.* 1599-1600, 442.

³ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xvi. 75-7.

VII

MUSTERS

THE effectiveness of Elizabethan military organization as a whole depended above all on the honesty and efficiency with which those charged with the duty of counting the troops carried out their task. The muster office was primarily responsible for recording the numbers of men in service and their absences on leave and sick leave. It thus provided the treasurer-at-war with the information on which he calculated the total amounts which captains were entitled to draw for distribution to their companies, after the appropriate stoppages had been taken into account. It was also responsible for reporting on the condition of arms and other equipment, so that ideally it should have been a mirror through which the commander-in-chief and the privy council could accurately assess the fighting state of the men. The importance of the office was further enhanced by the fact that its records were used as the basis for distributing rations and clothing.

It is probably true, however, that in practice the muster officials were seldom honest and never fully efficient. The price which captains could afford to pay for false certificates, which would enable them to claim more pay, more clothing, and more food than was justified by the number of men actually with the colours, was too tempting to be refused. So that the muster returns hardly ever gave an accurate reflection of the strength and equipment of the forces; instead they showed a picture which was distorted and dangerously misleading.

According to the regulations, in the Netherlands and France the troops were inspected at least once a month. The inspections were made at irregular intervals and at very short notice. The purpose of this was, of course, to make it more difficult for captains to anticipate the muster, and fill up their depleted companies specially for the occasion by hiring anyone willing to masquerade as a soldier for a day. It was usual to give only two hours' notice of the muster, which took place in the early morning, as it was less

likely that masqueraders could be successfully smuggled into the ranks before the bustle of the day's routine had begun.

Even the commanding officer was informed that a muster was to be taken only on the eve of the event. He was required to set a special watch at dawn if the troops were in camp, and to post extra sentries if they were in garrison. This done, he ordered the captains to lead their companies to the scene of the muster, which was normally near a church or some other building large enough to hold the men. They were marched into the church, and the captains handed the muster-master lists of those absent because of sickness or wounds, who were thereupon inspected in their billets. These absentees were identified with particular care, for it was presumed to be easier to deceive the muster-master from an alleged sick bed than on the parade ground. The other members of the force who could not pass muster with the main body of the troops—those on guard and engaged on special duties—were also inspected at this stage, although they were occasionally mustered before they went to their posts.

In the meantime the rest of the force had been waiting patiently behind locked doors, which were now thrown open. The men came out one by one, as their names were called from an earlier company list. These lists, or rolls, varied in the amount of detail they contained. Some recorded only the man's name, station in life, and his arms and equipment. The more elaborate specified in addition his age, height, complexion, colour of hair and beard, and any distinctive marks on face or body. Names were called at random in an attempt to make it more difficult for a man to answer successfully any name but his own.

The test of a man's right to pass muster was his regular presence at watch and ward: that is to say, he had to be taking full part in all the activities of the company. All others who were brought before the muster-master—labourers, victuallers, pedlars, vagrants, and the like—ran the risk of being hanged; and the officers responsible for their presentation were liable to be cashiered. It was laid down in the regulations that the corporals must stand beside the

table where the muster-master officiated to identify any such interlopers; but it must have been just as easy for the captain to buy the corporals as it was for him to buy the muster-master, and this provision cannot have been much of a safeguard.

The muster-master kept a record of all men who died, deserted, were discharged, went on leave, or were absent without leave. Every six months he made up his accounts on the basis of this record, making allowance for those considerations which called for stoppages from pay. This six-monthly reckoning was then passed to the treasurer-at-war, who used it in making a full pay—that is, the payment of wages due for the whole of the six-monthly period, after the weekly instalments which had already been paid were deducted.

If a private claimed that he had not received as much as he should have done from the captain (who was, of course, responsible for doling out pay) it was the duty of the muster-master to inform the soldier of the amount to which his service entitled him, and which was still owing over and above the weekly imprests. If he were still satisfied that he had not received his due, the matter was referred to a superior officer for further investigation. If a man complained with justification that his captain was trying to get round the regulations, the muster-master was entitled to ask that the soldier should be transferred to another company, while the captain was liable to forfeit his pay and be dismissed the service. If the muster-master himself was convicted of accepting bribes, the penalty was hanging.¹

In theory, at least, the regulations governing the muster office were eminently sound, and if they could have been enforced the organization of the army would have felt considerable benefit; but, as usual, there was a wide gap between theory and practice. The main obstacle in the path of the muster-master was the uncompromising attitude of the captains, most of whom were in the army first and foremost to make a handsome profit, and who well knew

¹ This description of muster regulations is based on S.P. Holl. xiv. ff. 245 et seq.; *ibid.* xviii. ff. 1446 et seq.; S.P. Dom. 234, no. 36; Cott. MSS., Galba D. LX, ff. 298b 301b; and A.P.C. xvii. 438-46.

that if the muster-master were given his head they would inevitably be denied their main objective. Their attitude is clearly illustrated in the period of office of Thomas Digges, the first muster-master in the Netherlands. Digges appears to have made an honest attempt to curb the greed of the captains, although he was at least once accused of working hand in glove with them. It was said that he was conniving at defects in equipment, so that while on paper infantry seemed to be adequately equipped, they were in fact so badly off that they hardly deserved the name of pioneers. The equipment of cavalry had been allowed to deteriorate in the same way. Weapons and mounts of men on leave, or incapacitated through sickness or wounds, should have been examined by the muster-master even in the absence of the rider, but this was not being done.¹

If criticism of Digges's administration of the muster office was justified, his shortcomings were probably to be attributed to incompetence rather than wilful misconduct. That he was honest, and therefore an exception to the usual run of muster-masters, seems to be established by the constancy with which the captains opposed his attempts to enforce the regulations. He reported that by insisting on stoppages and deductions from pay he had contrived to save the Crown more than had ever been done in the past, but that the principal reward for this service had been the cordial hatred of the captains.² He even went so far as to invite soldiers with grievances to come forward and lay information against their leaders. Many joyfully accepted the invitation, some not unnaturally regarding it as an excuse for flouting the authority of their superior officers, and a serious mutiny was only narrowly averted.³

This sort of thing did not make the muster-master's position any stronger. The redoubtable Thomas Morgan took up the cudgels on behalf of his fellow captains in Bergen-op-Zoom, and demanded that Digges's activities should be controlled. The captains, he said, resented so much interference on the part of a civilian: they were soldiers, who would give their last penny to keep their

¹ S.P. Holl. xv, f. 153.

² *For. Cal.* xv. 438-9.

³ *Ibid.* xxi, pt. ii, 431-2.

companies fully efficient—a statement which the facts do not support with any great strength.¹

As time went on, dissension grew. Digges's activities were the subject of a report to the secretary of state, which, while it admitted that the muster-master was doing no more than carry out his instructions, suggested that it would probably be better for everybody concerned if he were to modify his enthusiasm for saving public funds.² A later report said that the captains were bitterly complaining that the muster-master was forcing them into bankruptcy, although the writer gave it as his private opinion that the soldier alone was suffering.³ Digges himself claimed to the lord treasurer that even if he had earned the enmity of the captains he had at least compelled them to keep their companies up to establishment.⁴

Digges's experience would probably have been paralleled by that of any muster-master who tried to do his job properly. The efficient man had plenty of kicks from the captains, whose profit margin he was seriously curtailing, and not many halfpence, or indeed even much gratitude, were forthcoming from the Crown in compensation. It is therefore hardly surprising that muster-masters should have preferred in their dealings with captains to follow the highly profitable line of least resistance.

In the Netherlands, however, they were up against difficulties quite apart from the opposition of the captains. Not only had the muster-master to look after widely scattered garrisons, which meant constant travelling about the country, but he had also to struggle against the obstructive attitude of the Dutch muster officials, who were in fact supposed to co-operate with him.⁵ Of these difficulties, perhaps the scattered nature of the garrisons was the lesser, for it was possible to overcome it by appointing resident muster officials in the various garrison towns.

This was suggested by Digges, who claimed that it was the only way to control the troops in the towns. His proposal was that there should be available for every important garrison a local official to record the death, discharge, or

¹ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. II, 432-3.

² *Ibid.* 3.

³ *Ibid.* 390.

⁴ *Ibid.* 440-1.

⁵ J. E. Neale, *E.H.R.* xlv, 383.

other departure of soldiers, to stop the loss of public funds in paying wages to men who for one reason or another did not exist. Two or three garrisons could be looked after by the same official if they were near enough together, but where the town was remote and isolated—Bergen-op-Zoom, for example, where there was a garrison of ten or twelve companies—Digges asked that there should be a permanent muster clerk. He maintained that if half a dozen new appointments were made, either the Crown would save vast sums or companies would be kept up to the establishment, with consequent benefit to the service.¹

This plan was adopted by the government. Elizabeth agreed that the task of mustering the troops in the Netherlands was too much for one man, and authorized Digges to appoint in every province deputies, who were to have as their wages 2 or 3 per cent. of the stoppages they effected.² Even with the new establishment, however, difficulties seem to have persisted. Digges told Burghley that the dispersal of the troops still made it impossible for the muster office to function effectively.³ The fault may have lain with the deputies chosen, for they were accused of inefficiency. It was said that they made little or no effort to ensure the accuracy of their returns, although their close association with the troops should have made their task comparatively simple.⁴

Lastly there was the attitude of the Dutch. It had originally been agreed that the troops should be mustered by the English and Dutch muster officials working in conjunction, but in the summer of 1586 the Dutch authorities protested to Leicester that this had not been done since the first general muster had been taken immediately after the English force had arrived in the Low Countries.⁵ Yet when only three months later Digges asked for a joint muster the Dutch objected, putting forward as their reason that to muster without being able to pay the men would inevitably lead to mutiny. They consequently refused to allow their

¹ *For. Cal.* xx. 285.

² *Ibid.* xxi, pt. ii, 41; Stowe MSS. 163, ff. 21, 25; *H.M.C. Salisbury*, v. 240.

³ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 114-15.

⁴ S.P. Holl. xxv, f. 151.

⁵ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 90-1.

own muster-master to take part, although Digges made no secret of his suspicion that the real motive was to allow the accounts to fall into confusion. It seems, in fact, that the proposal to have joint musters, instead of making for greater efficiency, had made inefficiency just as desirable for the Dutch as it was for the captains: if no reliable muster records were available, they might contrive to escape some part of their financial obligation to the English government.¹

If in the Netherlands circumstances made the task of the muster-master wellnigh impossible, in Ireland the main responsibility for the inefficiency of the muster office lay with the government. At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign recording the numbers of the troops there was part of the duty of an official known as the clerk of the check who kept tally of the 'checks' or stoppages from pay. In 1592 Sir Ralph Lane succeeded Sir Thomas Williams as clerk of the check and muster-master of the army in Ireland.² Lane, who had been muster-master with the Portugal expedition of 1589, seems to have proved quite unequal to his job, although he was constantly putting up to the government sensible proposals for improving the organization of the office. Despite these schemes, however, it was suggested that Lane was weak in the head, and unfit to hold office.³

Instead of following the obvious course and relieving Lane of his duties the privy council begged the question of his suitability by appointing a second officer, Maurice Kyffin, who was instructed to inspect the troops both within and beyond the Pale—this despite the fact that Lane was still nominally muster-master.⁴ A conflict naturally developed between the two officials, and the situation quickly became intolerable. As Lane held office by letters patent, he could not be dismissed by the lord deputy, although the latter regarded his dismissal as long overdue because of his failing mental powers. On the other hand, Burgh said that

¹ *For. Cal.* xvi, pt ii, 198.

² J. Merrin, *Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland*, 230; *Irish Cal.* 1592 6, 41.

³ *Irish Cal.* 1592-6, 527, 522; *Curwen Cal.* 1589 1600, 268.

⁴ *J.P.C.* xvi 176 7; *Irish Cal.* 1596 7, 187.

Kyffin was very competent.¹ It seemed that a solution had been found when Lane was tempted into voluntary retirement by the promise of a pension equal to his salary as muster-master, but unhappily Kyffin died before Lane could be got out of the country, and the latter found himself once more in sole possession of the post.¹

As the garrison in Ireland increased, so it was necessary to increase the establishment of the muster office there. The first expansion came in 1590, when the muster-master was instructed by the privy council to appoint two deputies to inspect the troops once a fortnight.² In 1596 Lane told Burghley that it was impossible to keep accurate records without a larger staff,³ and the treasurer-at-war, Sir Henry Wallop, added that neither Lane nor Kyffin could be expected to work without assistance.⁴ Deputies were appointed for Connaught, for Knockfergus, and the forts in the neighbourhood, and for Newry, Dundalk, Carlingford, and Blackwater.⁵ There was no special official for the Leinster district, which the muster-master was expected to cover himself. In 1600 it was suggested that these posts should be abolished, and that the functions of the deputy muster-masters should be taken over by the company clerks, but it appears that this step, which would probably have proved disastrous, was never taken, and, in fact, soon after the number of deputies was increased to twenty, at which level it appears to have remained.⁶

The method of inspecting the troops in Ireland was much the same as in France and the Netherlands, except perhaps that the captain and the company clerk were allowed to take a greater part in the compilation of the returns. This exception was the subject of one of Lane's projected reforms. Instead of leaving the clerks a free hand in certifying the returns, as had been customary, large committees (consisting of nineteen members in a cavalry company and twenty-three in the larger company of infantry) were to be set up, with authority to examine the muster books. Thus, before there could be fraud, many members of the company had to lay

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1596-7, 309.

² *Ibid.* 1596-7, 113.

³ *Ibid.* 391.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1598-92, 312.

⁵ *Ibid.* 213.

⁶ *A.P.C.* xxv. 85-6.

their heads together, which was unlikely, for, although the pecuniary reward of successful fraud was large enough when only one or two were involved, it would hardly be worth the risk when about twenty people were concerned.¹ But nothing seems to have come of this project, and Kyffin reported to Burghley that he was encountering strong opposition from the captains and subordinate officers, who found that his strictness reduced their profits. He said that corruption in the muster office had done infinite harm. Large numbers of men were hired by the captains just to pass muster, being assured that they would come to no harm; and honest soldiers were afraid to reveal the true state of affairs, having been threatened with death as mutineers if they did.² Even after the extra muster officials were appointed matters were little better. Sir George Carew, the treasurer-at-war, told the privy council that he suspected that every one of them was guilty of carelessness or corruption. And while Carew can hardly in general be regarded as a reliable witness, there was probably an element of truth in his words in this case.

The importance of the muster office as the key to the efficient handling of the army as a whole can hardly be exaggerated. If it had been allowed to function properly it would have provided for the government at home a true picture of the state of the forces. This might well have had considerable bearing on the conduct of military operations: in theory, at least, the true strength or weakness of the weapon which the government was wielding through the commander-in-chief would have been more readily ascertainable if the muster returns had been reliable. Moreover, accurate returns would have paved the way for immense savings through stoppages on the pay of absentees and for corresponding savings in the supply of food and clothing; they would have compelled men to keep their equipment in a satisfactory condition; above all, they would have revealed the stratagems of the captains, and controlled their all-consuming greed. But unhappily the captains were too deeply versed in the arts of corruption, and succeeded either in buying the muster-master when he was corruptible or in

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1592-6, 187.

² *Ibid.* 1586-7, 190.

out-manœuvring him when he was not. In these circumstances the muster office was more of a hindrance than a help: the foundation upon which the privy council had to struggle to build an efficient military organization was in fact but shifting sand.

VIII

PAY

IT was mentioned in the previous chapter that the troops received only a proportion of their pay week by week, the balance due to them being made up at intervals usually of six months. Each week the treasurer-at-war issued to the captains the amount of advance pay to which their companies were entitled by the latest muster returns, and every six months, on the basis of the muster-master's half-yearly records, a sum which would enable them to bring each man's reckoning up to date. The weekly payments were known as 'imprests', while the six-monthly payment was usually described as a 'full pay'.

Before payment was actually made an official known as the 'clerk of the check' had to satisfy himself that the appropriate deductions had been made for absences with or without leave, for defects in equipment, and for any offences against the regulations for which the penalty was loss of pay—swearing or failure to attend divine service, for example. The clerk of the check had, of course, to co-operate closely with the muster-master and the treasurer-at-war. Like these two officials he was required to make up his books twice a year, and had to provide one copy for the treasurer-at-war and one for the privy council. In the Netherlands a third copy was required for the Dutch authorities, who were responsible for contributing towards the cost of the English forces.

The importance of efficient 'checking' will be readily appreciated. For example, in the half-year ended April 1596 £419 was saved through checks on the pay of the garrison of Flushing, and £65, £62, and £244, respectively, on the garrisons of Ostend and Brill and on the army in the field. Again, in the year ended October 1588 the stoppages in the Netherlands totalled over £9,000.¹ In Ireland, however, it seems that the amounts stopped from pay were often insignificant. The checks on many com-

¹ S.P. Holl, xxvii, f. 130.

panies there in 1600 were no more than a shilling or two for a period of six months.¹

The activities of the muster-master, treasurer-at-war, and clerk of the check were reported on by an independent auditor. There is not a great deal of evidence about the functions of this official, but a fairly clear picture may be gathered from a list of qualifications for the post compiled by the indefatigable Thomas Digges. 'The auditor had to maintain a diligent watch on the treasurer-at-war and his assistants: to keep an accurate record of the army's outstanding debts and encourage the treasurer to pay off the oldest first; to ensure that the stoppages ordered by the clerk of the check were just and that they were regularly paid over to the Crown; and to see that the treasurer and captains kept proper accounts, and periodically to examine those accounts. Digges pointed out that it was important that the auditor should have an adequate salary to minimize the temptation to accept bribes, and that he must be scrupulously careful not to appear to be on intimate terms with the treasurer-at-war or the captains.'²

At first sight the arrangements for paying the troops appear to have one great advantage for the Crown. There was no machinery whereby widows or dependants could claim that part of his wages which a soldier would have collected at a full pay had he lived.³ This meant, of course, that when a man died the government saved the difference between the sums advanced to him week by week and the total sum due to him since his last full pay. If a man whose full pay was 4*s.* 8*d.* a week had been receiving an average of 2*s.* in weekly lendings and had the misfortune to be killed just before a full pay was due, the Crown would save £2. 10*s.* The saving would as a general rule be much greater, for few men were lucky enough to have as much as 2*s.* a week in lendings, and the intervals between full pays were in practice much longer than the theoretical six months. But any economies of this sort (on which the government could hardly expect to be congratulated) were more than offset by losses made possible by irregularities

¹ *A.P.C.* xxxi. 130.

² Cott. MSS., Galba C VIII, ff. 238b-239b.

³ The widow's pension mentioned on p. 128 was probably unique.

in the muster office. Indeed, it seems probable that for every penny saved on the wages of dead men the Crown paid out pounds for men who existed only on the pages of the muster records.

The chief official in the financial administration was the treasurer-at-war. Altogether there were six treasurers between 1585 and the end of the reign. Sir Henry Wallop, who acted in Ireland for twenty years until his retirement in 1599; Sir George Carew, who succeeded Wallop and held office until 1606; Richard Huddilston, the first treasurer-at-war in the Netherlands; Sir Thomas Sherley, who replaced him in 1585, and was a dominating figure in military finance for the next ten years, in Brittany, Normandy, and Picardy as well as the Netherlands; Sir Thomas Fludde, who followed Sherley and was himself succeeded by William Meredith.

The treasurer-at-war's was certainly the most lucrative administrative post in the army organization, thanks to his perquisites. It was said, for example, that he earned 3,000 marks a year, which was more than either the lord treasurer or the lord chancellor had.¹ Sherley was reputed to draw 4,000 pounds a year from legitimate sources, his income from other sources being left to the imagination.² Huddilston was paid 26s. 8d. a day and 1 per cent. of the money passing through his hands, the latter payment being for the trouble and expense of transporting money for the troops' wages.³ There was, however, a tendency to reduce the treasurer-at-war's remuneration. In 1594 the daily wage came down to one pound,⁴ and in 1597, when Meredith was appointed, there was a further reduction to ten shillings.⁵ Moreover, after arrangements had been made to pay the army through the merchant adventurers the percentage allowance on the sums passing through the treasurer-at-

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, 76-7. The following were the average amounts received by various ranks in Elizabeth's reign: general, £3. 6s. 8d.-£5; general of infantry, £2-£2. 10s.; marshal, £1-£2; sergeant major, 13s. 4d.-£1; master of the ordnance, 26s. 8d.; camp-master, £1; muster-master, 6s. 8d.; treasurer-at-war, 10s.-26s. 8d.; auditor, 13s. 4d.; quarter-master, 10s.; colonel, 6s. 8d.-13s. 4d.; judge marshal, 13s. 4d.; provost marshal, 4s.-13s. 4d.; clerk of munition, 2s.-2s. 6d.; master gunner, 2s.

² *S.P. Holl.* xxxii, f. 80.

³ *Ibid.* xxxiii, f. 106.

⁴ *Dom. Acc.* 1595-7, 415.

⁵ *Ibid.*

war's hands was stopped, as he was no longer responsible for getting money to the Netherlands.¹

Under both Huddilston and Sherley the recognized establishment of the treasurer-at-war's office in the Netherlands was an under-treasurer and three paymasters. In addition, thirty men were employed to guard bullion as it was moved about the country.² Sherley, however, complained that he could not supervise payments at the scattered garrisons without more assistance.³ Fludde had a bigger staff: two deputy paymasters, two clerks in England, and four in the Netherlands.⁴

Of these six officials at least three served the Crown badly. The evidence against them is not all reliable: much was invented by associates who hoped to gain through their downfall. Huddilston may have been a victim of unscrupulous rivals when the queen got to hear reports that he was pocketing the soldiers' wages. She said that if the allegations turned out to be justified, the men were to be told of it openly. It troubled her not a little that poor deserving soldiers who hourly ventured their lives in her service should want their due: if the treasurer had been corrupt or negligent he would get what he deserved—but she added that it was well known that she disliked discharging a man whose guilt had not been proved beyond all doubt.

Apparently the verdict was 'not proven'. Wilkes told the queen that Huddilston had tried hard to save her money and hoped he would not be condemned without a fair hearing.⁵ The treasurer was not dismissed, but the privy council recorded a vote of no confidence in him by appointing Sir Thomas Sherley to act as joint treasurer. Huddilston was forbidden to receive or pay any money without Sherley's knowledge, while the treasure chest was given a double lock to which Sherley and Huddilston both held keys, and which could be opened only when both were present.⁶

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iv. 579.

² Cott. MSS., Galba D IX, f. 327; *H.M.C. Salisbury*, iv. 579.

³ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 142.

⁴ Declared Accounts, Pipe Office, Roll 248; *H.M.C. Salisbury*, vii. 92.

⁵ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 345.

⁶ *Ibid.* 82.

Inefficiency was probably Huddilston's only crime, but of his successor's guilt there can be little doubt. Indeed, in promoting Sherley to be sole treasurer the privy council could hardly have jumped more resolutely into the fire. During his first four years in office his books were thrice subject to a special examination. The third investigation was made at his own request, which suggests that he was complete master of the situation. He complained that the queen was listening to tales carried by men whose only grievance was that his handling of public funds was leaving them no richer than they were entitled to be. A commission duly examined the accounts, but as before nothing untoward was revealed, and Sherley continued in office.

It seems fairly clear that he had pulled the wool over the examiners' eyes on this occasion, but in 1596 the crash came and he was dismissed. During his term of office he must have squandered immense sums, for he was deeply in debt when he lost his job.¹ In 1589 he was reported to be making 16,000 pounds a year on top of his salary, by advancing money to officers before a full pay was due, selling concessions to victuallers, taking over soldiers' debts when it was believed that there was no prospect of a full pay, and using the queen's money to carry on the business of general money-lender.²

The evidence against Sir George Carew came to light only several years after his death. He was credited in an Exchequer Court case against his executors with extensive fraud in Ireland. It was said that he had paid Irish troops nothing, and the English troops much less than their due; that he had retained the debased coinage after it had been recalled, used it to make official purchases, and repaid himself in the new currency; that he had offered debased currency as new in paying the forces; and that he had connived at the frauds of the clothing suppliers in Ireland. It was estimated that over 150,000 pounds had found its way irregularly into his pocket. A decision was not given until 1630, when the case was dismissed, probably because the Carew family now had great influence with the Crown and because

¹ *F.r. Cal.* xvii. 357. *Dom. Cal.* 1591-4, 54, 77, 373, 536; 1595-7, 44.

² *S.P. Holl.* xxxii, f. 80.

a conviction would have implicated many who had used Carew's ill-gotten gains to rise to high positions. But whatever the reasons for the acquittal, there can be little doubt of Carew's guilt.¹

At first the treasurer-at-war was personally responsible for carrying the army's pay overseas. Huddilston was instructed to carry money to Middelburg, or any other town selected by the general, there to be issued as occasion demanded. He was to pay the troops in local currency at the best rate of exchange available.² It was hardly surprising, however, that the council should abandon this somewhat primitive arrangement and enlist the services of the merchants, who had long experience of the machinery of exchange. In 1585 Davison, the English agent in the Netherlands, was informed that arrangements were being made with the merchant adventurers to supply money to the garrisons of Flushing and Brill.³

This scheme seems to have met with success, for in the following year it was suggested that all money for the troops' wages should be paid to the merchants in London and repaid by them at Middelburg. It was said that if this were done the only loser would be the treasurer-at-war, who would no longer require an allowance for carrying money overseas. This advantage was, of course, offset by the fact that the merchants had to be paid for their services, but there is no doubt that the change was justified, and the merchants were called upon by the council to help. The irregular arrival of money in the Netherlands had made it impossible for even the weekly imprests to be paid, and the merchants were ordered to negotiate with Huddilston so that the deficiency might be made good. To encourage the merchants, who did not whole-heartedly approve of the arrangements, the council pointed out that their co-operation would greatly benefit the service and help to save the life of many a poor soldier.⁴ At the end of 1587 it was announced that because of the inconvenience

¹ H. Hall, *Society in the Elizabethan Age*, 128-32.

² *For. Cul.* xv. 163; xvi, pt. ii, 83-4.

³ *Ibid.* xv. 114.

⁴ *Ibid.* xvi, pt. ii, 316.

of sending bullion abroad the queen had contracted with certain merchants to pay the forces by exchange.¹

Payment through the agency of the merchants became the regular procedure, although it did not prove entirely satisfactory. There were occasional complaints that units were not being properly paid, but despite these shortcomings it was recommended that the assistance of the merchants should be enlisted for paying the army in France in 1592. This was done, and the merchants, whose head-quarters were at Caen, asked that a definite limit should be placed on the sums they might be required to find, and that they should receive payment in England six weeks in advance.²

There were three special institutions in the system of payment: payment by concordatum, payment by poll, and dead-pays. The first existed only in Ireland. The concordatum fund was intended to cover expenses which it was difficult to provide for in advance, including the payment of messengers and spies, hiring of packet-boats, rewarding men for services rendered, and the keeping of prisoners.³ There was every opportunity for abuse, for the treasurer-at-war was not required to render detailed accounts of sums expended by concordatum. As early as 1578 Sir Henry Sidney was reprimanded for gathering unnecessary servants around him, and having them paid from the concordatum fund.⁴ Again, in 1600 Sir George Carew was accused of paying by concordatum sums which should properly have been detailed in the ordinary accounts.⁵

Payment by poll was a device intended to cut down wastage of public money, and at the same time improve the lot of the private soldier. The treasurer was no longer to pay the captain a lump sum according to the muster returns, which were not regarded as satisfactory evidence of the numbers present in the company, but only to issue enough money to pay the men he had himself counted by the 'poll' or head. Moreover, it seems that their wages were to be handed direct to the men, without first passing

¹ *For Cal.* xxi, pt. ii, 471; *A.P.C.* xvi, 376.

² *Dorn. Cal.* 1592, f. 215.

³ Exchequer of Receipt, Q.R., box 3, roll 1.

⁴ *Carew Cal.* 1575-89, 150.

⁵ *A.P.C.* xxx, 585.

through the captain's hands. The system was first introduced in 1563, during the siege of Le Havre, although it was at this time regarded as suitable only for the lower ranks. Sir Maurice Denys, the treasurer-at-war, informed Cecil that a captain had refused to have his pioneers paid by poll but demanded that they should be paid through him in the ordinary way.¹

The decision that men were to be paid direct and strictly according to their numbers was not enforced at Le Havre, but instructions issued to Leicester again made provision for this method of payment. He was to have the troops carefully mustered on his arrival in the Netherlands, and see that they were paid by the head.² Apparently this order had little effect beyond upsetting the captains. Thomas Digges, the muster-master, complained to Walsingham that they had been enraged by the new method of payment, which made it impossible for them to gain through the death or absence of men under their command. They held Digges responsible for it, though he claimed that he had never interfered with their interests except when the queen's interest came first.³ His complaint bore fruit in instructions from the privy council to Buckhurst, who was told to punish captains who suggested that Digges was responsible for orders about payment, and who disobeyed them for that or any other reason. The council said that only their strict enforcement would keep the companies up to full strength.

The captains claimed that if payment by poll were insisted on, they would become bankrupt, as they had given extensive credit for their men, many of whom had died or deserted. The council, however, maintained that there would be no difficulty if the clerks listed the men who had departed, and produced receipts from those merchants and victuallers to whom they had advanced money to buy provisions for their company. Buckhurst was told to call together the senior captains and inform them of the queen's desire that henceforth payment should be made

¹ *For. Cal.* vi. 303.

² J. Bruce, *Leicester Correspondence*, 13.

³ *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. iii, 21.

in accordance with the numbers actually in service.¹ The constant opposition to this method of payment suggests that if it could have been enforced the service would have greatly benefited. But, as usual, the captains were too powerful and by various means prevented the system from becoming effective.

Thirdly, there was the institution known as 'dead-pays'. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the expression 'dead-pays' had two meanings in the sixteenth century. It meant 'Pay continued to a soldier no longer in active service', in other words a pension for old or disabled soldiers; and it meant 'Pay continued in the name of a soldier or sailor actually dead or discharged, and appropriated by the officer'.

This second meaning indicates an abuse which flourished in the Elizabethan forces. Sir J. W. Fortescue comments on this abuse in the financing of the English troops at the siege of Leith in 1560 in these words: 'Thus, though the muster-rolls of the army in Scotland showed eight thousand men for whom the queen paid wages, only five thousand were actually with the colours, and the pay of the remaining three thousand went of course into the captains' pockets.'² And again, speaking of the forces in the Netherlands in 1585-7: 'The companies fell into the hands of unscrupulous swindlers, who sent their men out to plunder and did not omit to take their own share, rejoicing over every soldier who died or deserted for the money that would pass into their pockets when the long-deferred pay-day should come.'³ Fortescue concludes that the prevalence of this dead-pay abuse proves the Elizabethan government guilty of neglecting the interests of the rank and file, thus: 'There have been many sovereigns and many ministers in England who have neglected and betrayed their soldiers, but none more wantonly, wilfully and scandalously than Elizabeth.'⁴

The expression 'dead-pay', however, seems to have had a third meaning, neither mentioned by the *Oxford English*

¹ Cott. MSS., Galba D I, f. 24; *For. Cal.* xxi, pt. iii, 56.

² Sir J. W. Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, i. 128.

³ *Ibid.* i. 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Dictionary nor touched upon by Fortescue, which throws a different light on Elizabethan military finance. The earliest reference to this type of dead-pay is in 1560,¹ when the Duke of Norfolk complained to Cecil about the mercenary nature of the captains in Berwick, most of whom put personal gain before service. He suggested that the queen would be better served if she were to allow the captains twenty or more dead-pays in a hundred.² In 1562 the same thing is mentioned by the Earl of Warwick, who was in command of the English garrison at I.e Havre, and asked the privy council's permission to modify the pay sheet in favour of certain deserving captains 'as well for their encouragement and relief as for the help of such gentlemen and expert soldiers as they are forced to consider above the queen's allowance'.³

The plan outlined was that the captains in question should be sent a hundred men's pay for every ninety-five men under their command. Part of this extra sum, which was called dead-pays, was to go to increase the captain's own pay, and the rest was to be disbursed by him to the gentlemen volunteers attached to his company. The privy council eventually sanctioned the scheme, but stipulated that the number of dead-pays awarded should never exceed 8 per cent. of the pay roll, that no part of the fund should be disbursed except in cases of obvious need, and that a full account of disbursements should be given monthly.⁴

After England's open intervention in the continental struggle in 1585 this dead-pay system became properly established. In the interval it had been used in the payment of the English volunteers in the service of the Dutch; but in 1585 it was definitely included in the arrangements for the troops in the Netherlands, when the treasurer-at-war was instructed to award as many dead-pays as had been allowed in the volunteer companies.⁵ This was ten in every hundred pays issued to the captains (which meant that, when the muster rolls showed a hundred men, the

¹ The earliest reference to the other types in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is in 1565.

² S. Haynes, *State Papers*, 239.

⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 933.

³ S.P. For. 46, no. 918.

⁵ S.P. Holl. iv, no. 11.

actual strength of the company was only ninety), and until the close of the century this rate was maintained for the forces on foreign service.

This extra fund, however, proved insufficient to satisfy the greed of the captains, who continued to appropriate illegal dead-pays. So flagrant was the abuse that the Earl of Leicester devised a new scheme (probably early in 1586),¹ which transferred the dead-pay fund from the captain to other members of the company. The customary ten dead-pays in the hundred were to be allocated as follows: one was to be divided between two corporals to increase their pay to a shilling a day; two between four gentlemen volunteers, making their pay likewise a shilling; three between twelve of the musketeers, increasing their wage to tenpence a day; three were to be bestowed on the officers at the captain's discretion; and the tenth was to be given to the captain's servant. It is clear, however, that this plan was not adopted. In 1589 the privy council when reviewing the whole question of pay and musters ordered that Leicester's method of distributing the dead-pay fund should be adhered to in the future.²

In 1591, in answer to proposals from the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom, the council said that while dead-pays were officially allowed to the captains it was hoped that some of them would be given to deserving soldiers, showing that even then Leicester's scheme had not yet been accepted to any great extent.³ In 1593 the captains in the Netherlands asked that full control of the dead-pay fund should be restored to them, on the pretext that the recipients named by Leicester were often unworthy of extra pay.⁴ On this occasion Sir Thomas Sherley advised the privy council to ignore their request, pointing out that in practice they were pocketing half the dead-pay fund, in defiance of all orders to the contrary.⁵

Such was the system in the Netherlands. It was never applied to the forces serving in England, as is shown by

¹ There appears to be no record of the date of the order authorizing this scheme.

² SP. Ho. vii. f. 165; A.P.C. vii. 442.

³ A.P.C. xx. 343.

⁴ *D. m. Cal.* 1592-3, 331.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1591, 332.

a ruling given in 1596 in answer to a request by Lord Hunsdon for a dead-pay fund in the garrison of the Isle of Wight. In their refusal the privy council stated: 'We have not heard of any such allowance to be made to those forces that are to be employed within the land.'¹ Presumably this was because the captain's expenses at home were much less than on active service abroad, and because the close proximity of the privy council and the star chamber inspired honesty in them without the use of bribes.

In Ireland, however, the situation was more akin to that in the Netherlands, especially after the outbreak of Tyrone's rebellion, and in 1596 the English captains were allowed dead-pays in Ireland at the special rate of six in a hundred.² This did not satisfy them, and in May 1598 they petitioned that the same percentage of dead-pays should be allowed them as was usual in the Netherlands. They backed up their claim by pointing out that the Irish wars were the hardest on the soldier, and brought forward the regular excuse that the dead-pay fund was essential if the gentlemen volunteers, who were 'a great aid and assistance upon any occasion of service', were to be kept in the forces.³ But no action was taken by the council, and the Irish rate remained unchanged until 1600, when the matter came up again for investigation. Buckhurst, the lord treasurer, voiced the opinion of the privy council when he advocated that the dead-pay system as it existed should be abolished. He suggested instead that a shilling a day should be paid to five gentlemen volunteers per company, the captain having no extra benefit. He also emphasized the gravity of the offence when captains pocketed illegal dead-pays, and urged that the death penalty should be inflicted on any captain so doing, and on those who aided and abetted him.⁴

On the other hand, Mountjoy took the side of the captains and recommended that the customary six dead-pays should be increased to ten, the increase being justified on the grounds that, as the musters were to be tightened up, fraud on the part of the captains would become practically impossible, and if any such fraud did take place severe

¹ *A.P.C.* xxvi. 337.

² *S.P. Ireland*, 202, pt. ii, no. 38.

³ *Ibid.* 277.

⁴ *Ibid.* 207, pt. i, no. 7.

punishment was to be meted out to the offender. But Mountjoy as spokesman of the captains was not content with urging an increase in the number of dead-pays awarded, for he wanted their value increased as well. In the past they had been reckoned at 3*s.* 4*d.* each per week, the proportion of the private soldier's full pay which he was technically entitled to draw every week. Mountjoy now suggested that they should be paid at the full pay-rate of 4*s.* 8*d.* per week.¹ Buckhurst's plan won the day, and by the middle of 1600 the financial arrangements for the troops in Ireland made no allowance for dead-pays.² But the system was not forgotten by the captains, for a memorandum of the following year suggests dead-pays at the full pay-rate of eightpence a day, the rate which Mountjoy had tried to establish.³

The institution ended when the forces in the Netherlands were transferred to the pay of the Dutch, but the abandonment of the scheme in Ireland shows that the privy council realized the futility of trying to control the captains in this way.

It had hoped that the greater amount of money available for distribution to the troops would increase the honesty of the captains' dealings and make possible the more adequate payment of the gentlemen volunteers, who, although not officially recognized, played an important part in the company. But the system depended for its success on sating the captains' greed, which proved to be impossible, and they continued to appropriate illegal dead-pays. Thus an experiment to promote the efficiency of the forces and the welfare of the company had little other result than the magnification of the evil it was intended to diminish.

¹ S.P. Ireland, 207, pt. i, no. 76.

² A.P.C. xxx. 415.

³ S.P. Ireland, 208, pt. ii, no. 84.

IX

DISCIPLINE

THE military forces of the sixteenth century were not remarkable for the excellence of their discipline. Even in the Spanish army, which was in many respects the best in Europe, the troops occasionally went on strike. When they were dissatisfied with something they refused to march, or do anything more than the minimum required to give them protection against a sudden attack from the enemy, while their spokesman negotiated with the commander-in-chief. When their grievances had been redressed the spokesman was given money and an escort to take him safely beyond the reach of the law.¹ This sort of indiscipline was not found among Elizabeth's troops, however. They preferred to show their opposition to authority in a less orderly fashion.

By far the commonest offence was desertion. It has been pointed out above that as soon as a levy was complete men began to disappear, and they continued to do so after the force reached its destination abroad. The offence had reduced the Earl of Warwick to despair when he was besieged in Le Havre, for despite elaborate precautions his troops kept melting away.² Nor had the private soldier's enthusiasm for service increased by 1585. Sir John Norreys complained bitterly about the prevalence of desertion. Many men had vanished, although he believed that few had perished at the hands of the enemy or from want of food: desertion and sickness rather were to be blamed for the gaps in the ranks. Next year Leicester had much the same tale to tell. Of 1,100 recruits 300 ran away, although most of them were recaptured.³ Several were executed as a warning to the others, and Leicester begged the privy council to deal severely with any who returned to England with unsatisfactory passes. The only signatures to be accepted on passes were his own and those of the governors of the garrison towns.

¹ Sir R. Williams, *The Actions of the Low Countries*, 101.

² *For. Cal.* xx. 219.

³ *Ibid.* xxi, pt. 2, 25.

Apparently this failed to check the offence, for soon afterwards Leicester reported that men were deserting in large numbers to the enemy, who gave them safe-conducts to ports from which they could find their way back to England. He asked the privy council to see that these men were arrested, to have a few of them executed, and to send the rest back to their units.¹ Willoughby, who succeeded Leicester as commander-in-chief in the Netherlands, attempted to stem the tide of desertion by forbidding captains to issue leave passes without first getting the authority of the commander of the garrison. In addition to the signature of the commander and the captain, that of the muster-master was now necessary before a pass became valid, unless the holder was engaged on secret service work, when the signature of the garrison commander was sufficient.²

Desertion was, of course, often encouraged by the officials escorting the troops overseas. Of a levy of 200 for Ostend in 1590 less than half reached their destination. The council investigated the disappearance of the others, and concluded that the leaders had allowed them to escape, either through sheer carelessness or more likely in return for a bribe. This sort of transaction could be most profitable. In 1588 one official (assisted by his wife) was getting about two pounds a head for the men he released.³

The captain and the company clerk indulged in the same practice. In 1591 there were arrested at Cambridge a number of deserters carrying passes issued by a clerk. They had been bought for sums ranging from a few shillings to as much as four pounds, the proceeds being shared by the clerk and captain.⁴ In the following year it was reported

¹ *H.M.C. Lancaster*, 187.

² *A.P.C.* xiv. 189.

³ *Ibid.* xvii. 387. The following were some of the transactions carried through by this enterprising family: 'Money received by Mr. Gabriel Hanley and his vervauntes at Saram the last sommer: Melvish, servaunt to Mr. Hanley, received of James Marshfield 42s.; William Ley payd Melvish for his sonnes discharge xls.; Thomas Saunders paid to Bartholomew Drey, his servant, for his discharge xls.; But receaved back again of the same xs.; Mistress Hanley receaved for the discharge of Robert Bulpen viiil¹; She had alsoe of — Galhampton of West Newton viiid.; Nicholas Dybell paid to staie at home xls.; John Paine of Taunton, taylor, paid viiil¹.'

⁴ *S.P. Dum.* 239, no. 141.

that captains of companies levied for service in France were making large sums by giving men permission to leave the service. The council ordered an inquiry, and asked that severe punishment should be meted out to any found guilty.¹

The expedition to Portugal fared no better than those to the Netherlands and France. According to one estimate nearly 3,000 deserted from it.² The privy council was fully alive to the importance of stamping out desertion, and instructed the Crown officers and civic authorities in the ports to have the credentials of everybody who entered the port most carefully scrutinized. Anyone suspected of being a deserter was to be put in prison to await further examination.³

In Ireland, where conditions of service were more rigorous than elsewhere, desertion was particularly rife. Often whole companies melted away as soon as they reached the country.⁴ Many troops escaped to the Pale, where they hoped to find ships to take them back to England. Lord Burgh asked the council that an example should be made of the ringleaders and the rest sent back to Ireland.⁵ Men were often tempted to desert by offers of higher pay and better food from the rebels. Whenever there was a shortage of rations, or wages were not paid, there was wholesale movement into the rebel forces, which inevitably had serious consequences.⁶ Towards the close of the century the council in Ireland said that desertion was still far too common. It confessed its inability to deal satisfactorily with the problem and blamed the corruption of the captains for its failure.⁷

Absence without leave on the part of officers was just as troublesome as desertion among the privates. If a captain wanted to return to England to attend to his affairs he had to have a pass signed by the general or the commander of his garrison. In normal circumstances he could get this easily enough, but if he wanted to get back to England without reasonable excuse it was not unusual for him to take the law into his own hands and make the trip without

¹ *A.P.C.* xxiii. 309.

² *A.P.C.* xxiv. 73.

³ *Ibid.* 358.

⁴ A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 479.

⁵ *Irish Cal.* 1596-7, 179.

⁶ *Ibid.* 1598-9, 31.

⁷ *Ibid.* 274.

official sanction. In 1592 the queen was forced to order all officers absent from their companies in Ireland to return immediately, as their absence was proving a great hindrance to the service.¹

Some years later the treasurer-at-war bemoaned the fact that most of the captains were still in England.² When some of them were brought before the privy council they swore they had no company in Ireland, but all who admitted that they had ever served there were ordered back.³ Few obeyed the order, however, and sterner measures were proposed.⁴ The queen had learned that the absence of the captains was encouraging soldiers to plunder the country and lower the English forces in the eyes of the native population. It was also encouraging them to leave the colours, and return to England, or follow some trade locally. It was laid down that henceforth any captain who left his company without proper authority was to be discharged, unless it could be proved he was in ill health. But this had little effect, and captains continued to behave more or less as they pleased.⁵

The second major offence was mutiny, and was usually caused by lack of pay. Sometimes, however, the troops would mutiny even before their unpaid wages had had a chance of accumulating. In 1587 a company levied for service in the Netherlands mutinied in London. The lord mayor was instructed to see that the offenders were punished 'with some severe and extraordinary correction', which included flogging through Cheapside to Tower Hill, the pillory, and the loss of an ear.⁶ In 1602 a company from Gloucestershire mutinied at Bristol. The commissioners of musters ordered the ringleader to be seized, whereupon the whole company swore they would set him free, even if it cost their lives. They made a show of returning to their quarters, but instead suddenly fell upon the officers guarding the prisoner. The rescue attempt failed and another of the leading spirits was arrested. As martial law was not operative until after the force had left the country, the

¹ *J.P.C.* xvi, 180.

² *Ibid.* 155.

³ *Ibid.* 1600, 272, 322, 442, 505.

² *Irish Cal.* 1599-1600, 192-3.

⁴ *Ibid.* 424.

⁵ *S.P. Dom.* 202, no. 8.

commissioners resorted to deception. Pretending they had the right to execute offenders they set up a gibbet and sent a preacher to the prisoners to prepare them for death in the morning. At dawn they were brought to the place of execution with ropes round their necks, and sent up the ladders to the gibbet in the presence of all the troops. It was not until after they had said their prayers and were duly resigned to their fate that they were set free. The commissioners believed that this display of mercy had a quietening effect on the unrest, although it seems extremely unlikely.¹

From the outset of the campaign in the Netherlands lack of pay disturbed the troops. A private accosted Leicester one evening as the general was on his way to dinner, and on behalf of his company demanded that they should have arrears of pay. Leicester discussed the request with Sir John Norreys, who ordered the provost-marshal to arrest the fellow and have him hanged. This aroused the rest of the soldiers, who rescued the prisoner and threatened to shoot the provost and his men if they interfered. Fortunately two companies came in from another garrison at this juncture, and with their assistance the offender was recaptured and thrown into prison along with nine others.²

More serious was the mutiny in Ostend in 1588. This was caused by lack of pay, unsatisfactory victualling, and the natural discomforts of the town. The disturbance became general when some idle soldiers pitched the victualler's assistant into the harbour and pelted him with stones. Sir John Conway, the governor, tried in vain to pacify the men, who demanded their back pay and imprisoned him and the loyal officers for two nights and a day. Order was eventually restored, but a month later the garrison was still in a troubled state. When the treasurer's assistant arrived with a supply of weekly lendings there was a dispute as to which companies should be paid first.³ It was only by playing for time until new companies could be drafted into the town that Conway was able to save the situation. When the new-comers arrived Conway held a meeting of the loyal officers and decided to arrest the ring-leaders of each company in their billets and commit them

¹ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xii. 170.

² *For. Cal.* xx. 495.

³ *Ibid.* xxii. 279.

to prison. This was done, and on the following day the troops were drawn up in a square at the place of execution and one man from each of the nine mutinous companies was put to death. Later another four were executed, and the other chief offenders were banished from the town.¹

According to Conway this mutiny was not caused by private soldiers but by some discontented officers in need of money, who tried to use the men to attain their own ends.² Despite its seriousness the privy council took a lenient view and ordered the governor to deal lightly with the offenders. It fully admitted that the disobedience of the garrison was reprehensible, but pointed out that there had been no attempt to shirk sentry duties nor any suggestion of handing the town over to the enemy or treating with them in any way. As the offenders were now anxious to be forgiven the queen was graciously pleased that this should be done. Conway was authorized to give a free pardon to all who acknowledged their offence, unless he had reason to believe that an individual did not deserve a pardon.³

In Ireland the troops were almost always on the verge of mutiny. In 1590 Sir George Carew reported that the more seasoned troops were giving trouble. They were normally prepared to put up with the privations of the service, but the arrival of new companies who were paid more regularly stirred up bad feeling. Sir Thomas Norreys's company was the first to mutiny. Unknown to their captain they marched to the lord deputy headed by a drummer and a fifer and demanded a full pay. The lord deputy offered an imprest as a compromise, but this was not enough for the men, who asked either to be fully paid or discharged. It seems that they had some grounds for complaint, for they had had no ration money for months, and their credit was exhausted. Above all, their irritation at the preferential treatment given to new recruits was not unreasonable.⁴ Shortage of pay was probably the most common complaint in Ireland. The council in Ireland, in a report to the privy council, summed up the position in a single pregnant sentence:

¹ *For. Cal.* xvii. 322.

² *Ibid.* 202-3.

³ *Ibid.* 219.

⁴ *Carew Cal. 1589-1600*, 31-3, 36-7.

The want of money so long time is the cause of many disorders in the service, for the army being behind of their lendings more than five months it breedeth such discontentment in the soldiers that we have much to do to contain them, and yet we cannot hold some of them from running to the rebels, seeking there to better their condition.¹

Only the major offences came before the notice of the privy council, and therefore information about other offences is scanty. In 1585 Sir Roger Williams complained that the troops were so scattered that it was impossible for himself and Sir John Norreys to detect all disorders, although so far as he was aware there had been very little trouble. A sergeant had got drunk and been well beaten and cashiered. Williams also reported that he had 'trussed up' three freebooters, and had two soldiers strangled in their billets for causing a disturbance.² In some cases good service was allowed to count in favour of an offending soldier.

It was reported from Ostend in 1586 that there had been much trouble with the cannoneers, who disliked the hard life of the garrison there. Only the fact that they were very efficient had saved them from drastic action.³ About the same time three soldiers were executed in Utrecht for trying to rescue a prisoner from the custody of the provost-marshal.⁴ On the march across the peninsula during the expedition to Portugal a man was hanged for disobeying the order that there was to be no violation of private property.⁵ The culprit, who had broken into a house, was hanged at the scene of his crime with a card round his neck explaining the circumstances of his death. At the siege of Rouen Essex sentenced a member of his company of cavalry to be disarmed for striking a woman, and also presided over a court martial at which some men were condemned to death for attempting to return to England without passes, and some for other offences.⁶

It is possible to learn something more of the minor offences through the medium of the disciplinary codes normally devised by the general before one of the larger expeditions

¹ *Catw Cal.* 1589-1600, 307.

² *For. Cal.* xx. 105.

³ *Ibid.* 324.

⁴ *Ibid.* 557.

⁵ *Ibid.*; A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 497.

⁶ T. Coningsby, *Journal of the Siege of Rouen*, 29.

left England, or immediately after it had reached its destination abroad. According to one authority the earliest complete code of this sort is the 'Statutes, Ordinances, and Customs' issued by Richard II in 1385 on the occasion of the war with France. Subsequent codes seem to have been modelled on this—for example, the statutes of Henry V for his troops during the invasion of France, and the orders devised for the domestic forces by Henry VII before the battle of Stoke.¹ The Elizabethan codes were all developments of these earlier regulations.

In 1585 Leicester devised a series of 'Laws and Ordinances' for the use of the English troops serving under him in the Netherlands, which contains fifty-five articles dealing with discipline in camp and garrison. As in most of the codes the spiritual welfare of the soldier is provided for first. Blasphemy heads the list of offences, thus:

Forsomuch as the holy name of our most mighty and invincible God with all reverence ought to be regarded, and that destruction is pronounced to such as blaspheme or abuse the same: it is therefore ordained and commanded that no person whatsoever, either in common conference or communication or for any cause whatsoever shall blaspheme, being thus admonished, or take his name in vain.²

The next article commands that all soldiers shall as soon as general warning has been given by trumpet or drum repair to the place appointed for divine service, unless they are prevented through sickness or special service.

The code then proceeds to enumerate the offences which were likely to disturb the peace of the camp. The soldier was not to waste his time in gambling at dice or at cards; nor to introduce any woman into the forces other than his lawful wedded wife or launderers or nurses approved by the marshal. Other offences were: drunkenness, threatening a superior officer, quarrelling, maltreatment of foreigners, raising false alarms, and resisting the provost-marshal in the execution of his duty.

¹ Lord Firling, *Manual of Military Law*, 6. Early codes are to be found in Harl. MSS. 1379, ff. 74-8 (Richard II); Stowe MSS. 531, f. 100 (Henry V); R.M. Add. MSS. 33191 (15th cent.); Stowe MSS. 1047, f. 217b (Edward IV?); Harl. MSS. 309 (Henry VIII); and Cott. MSS. Caligula E V, f. 148 (Earl of Warwick, 1562).

² *Laws and Ordinances*, 2 (Leicester's code is printed in full in Appendix 13).

Provision was also made for the care of arms and equipment. Men were not to sell their arms and equipment, which had always to be kept clean and serviceable.¹ If a man could not produce his weapons he had to prove that they had been lost in battle, or take the consequences. Equally strict regulations were laid down to safeguard food supplies. Soldiers were forbidden to collect each other's rations, seize victuals being carried to the market-place, or rob the victuallers' stalls: nor were they to purchase food for a longer period than that authorized by the superior officer.

Communication with the enemy was strictly forbidden. No one was to receive into his lodging any outsider without immediately informing the general or the marshal of the stranger's arrival. Nor was anyone permitted to converse with the enemy's drummer or trumpeter.

On the march soldiers were not to linger with the wagons unless they had been detailed to accompany them or were sick or wounded. They were to remain with the main body of the troops and could go foraging only after getting the permission of the forage-master. If a hare were put up on the march there was to be no outcry, lest a general disturbance should follow. Lastly, men were to learn and obey the sounds of drums, trumpets, and fifes.

The final article in Leicester's code gave the general the right to punish at discretion any offence which was not covered by the fifty-four clauses, thus: 'All other offences and acts that may tend to disorder, not comprised within these articles, shall be subject to such manner of punishment, as the lieutenant general shall inflict upon them, as if it had been specially expressed and set down.'²

In addition to enumerating offences Leicester's code sets forth punishments graded according to the offence, and whether or not it was a first offence. Swearing and blasphemy were punishable on a first conviction by a fine of five shillings, on a second by five days' imprisonment, and on a third by loss of rank. Other offences punishable by fines were the illegal disposal of armour, and absence from divine service without reasonable excuse. Imprisonment

¹ *Laws and Ordinances*, 3.

² *Ibid.* 10.

was the punishment for killing cattle in the camp or garrison anywhere other than the place appointed for that purpose, for stealing provisions, or for causing a disturbance in billets, and imprisonment with loss of pay awaited anyone found guilty of loitering with the wagons or refusing to obey orders. Discharge was the reward of soldiers caught gambling away their equipment; and the same fate and a whipping awaited those who introduced women other than those permitted by the regulations. The death penalty was imposed for many offences, including the molestation of women, striking a superior officer, and foraging without permission, while the most serious offence of all, betrayal of the watchword, was punished with death by torture.

The twenty-nine articles issued by Willoughby before his force left for France in 1589 are little more than a condensation of Leicester's code.¹ Fines were inflicted for failure to appear at divine service or abusing the chaplain. Marching with the baggage, straggling, and pilfering on the march were punished with imprisonment and the bastinado. Willoughby did, however, increase the number of offences punishable by death with torture. The relevant passage in his articles runs thus:

Whosoever shall conspire against his majesty whom we serve, or his Lordship, colonel general, against the army, troops, or any part of them, or conceal any such conspiracy, or shall betray any town, fort, or ground in the possession of the state, army, or troops, or be guilty of the knowledge of any such treachery, and shall not with all possible diligence reveal the same, either to his lordship or to some officer of special trust, being lawfully convicted of such offence, shall suffer death by torment.

Strangely enough, the only offence punishable by death with torture in Leicester's code is punishable only by death in Willoughby's laws, although on the whole the latter are much stricter. Essex did not publish a code of his own on the occasion of the expedition to France in 1591: he was content, as he informed Burghley, to use Leicester's, with such additions as his advisers deemed necessary.²

A special code for the use of the garrison in Ireland is

¹ *H.M.C. Answer*, 289.

² *S.P. France*, xxv, f. 103.

interesting because of the part played by the clerk of the check in enforcing it. It is particularly significant that it is devised to control the captains rather than the private soldiers, showing that an attempt was being made to get at the root of the inefficiency in the army. The first clause, as usual, dealt with the soldier's religious life. Captains were instructed to see that someone from the company read divine service at least thrice a week. If any member of the company absented himself he was to be fined his day's wages for the first offence, and thereafter punished as the captain thought fit.¹

More important are the laws promulgated by Mountjoy in 1600. These begin with the usual clauses about blasphemy and religious services, and proceed to enumerate the offences punishable by death. They make a formidable list—harbouring rebels, molesting women, stealing treasure, victuals, or munitions worth more than a shilling, making an ignominious composition with the rebels, abandoning the ensign, sleeping on sentry duty or leaving a post, threatening a superior officer, burning any house, corn, ship, or wagon intended for military use, departing more than a mile from the forces, breaking rank, exceeding the time limit in a pass, unless it could be proved that the 'hand of God' was responsible for the delay, taking two pays, departing from one captain to serve with another, and selling equipment.

It was also laid down that the troops were to cover ten miles a day when on the march and be content with supper and breakfast in the place where they spent the night; horsemen who lost their mounts were to be degraded to the pioneer corps; prisoners were to be delivered to the provost-marshal within twenty-four hours of their capture; no soldier was to be admitted to a company if he could not produce satisfactory discharge papers; magistrates and town officers were forbidden to detain soldiers more than twenty-four hours, but were to hand them over to the provost-marshal for trial 'by the speedy course of martial law'. Wills made by men who died on the battlefield were deemed to be valid, while the goods of men who died intestate were

¹ *Carew Cal.* 1589-1600, 72.

to be distributed among the hurt or poor of the troops or given to the hospitals. Drunkenness was punishable on the first offence by imprisonment, and on a second by dismissal from the forces. Lastly, it was decreed that no woman was to follow the troops.¹

The code was read by the general to the captains, and by them in turn to the members of their companies as soon as the expedition had landed on foreign soil. Thereafter an oath was administered, the men raising the right hand and repeating after the captain: 'All these articles which have been openly read unto us we hold and allow as sacred and good, and those will we truly and stoutly confirm, fulfill, maintain and keep, so help us God and His divine word, amen.'²

The officers primarily responsible for the maintenance of discipline were the marshal, the judge marshal, and the provost-marshal. When an offender was tried the marshal held a court at which the man's captain and such members of the company as were deemed necessary were present. At one court martial in Brill, when four men were tried for inciting the troops to mutiny, all the principal officers in the garrison were present, as well as certain other experienced officers who happened to be in the town at the time. Each of the accused was heard separately, a unanimous verdict was given against all four, and sentence of death pronounced.³

Martial law normally operated in the forces only after they had left England. This was a great weakness in the opinion of the commissioners of musters of Bristol, who pointed out to the privy council that, as the city was a rendezvous for large numbers of troops on their way to Ireland, if only the mayor were empowered to deal with offences like desertion and mutiny by martial law, it would be a great help.⁴ In Ireland the troops were occasionally

¹ *Carew Cal.* 1549-1600, 522-5. Other Elizabethan codes are to be found in Cont. MSS., Galba D VIII, ff. 218b-284 (Brill); *ibid.* D IX, f. 269 (Brittany, 1491); Harl. MSS. 7218, f. 77; *ibid.* 4762, f. 64; Lansdowne MSS. 73, f. 168 (Frazer, 1491).

² T. Steward, *The Pathway to Martial Discipline*, 64. Another form of oath will be found in the Appendix (no. 7).

³ *A.P.C.* xxviii. 262

⁴ *H.M.C. Salisbury*, xii. 170.

subjected to the law of the land, despite the provisions of Mountjoy's code. Not only were English soldiers repeatedly attacked by the citizens of Limerick, they were even committed to the town jail by the mayor, who refused to hand the alleged offenders to the military authorities. This, it was said, was most irregular, as only the court martial was supposed to try soldiers on active service.¹

It will appear from this account that the machinery for the administration of justice differed little from that of a much later period. The undeniably weak discipline of the Elizabethan forces is not to be attributed to defective machinery for controlling them, but rather to the change in the nature of the service which men were asked to give the state. In earlier times Englishmen had found in their allegiance to an overlord a strong motive for loyal service. The ties binding them to their superiors were sufficient to make them good soldiers, and they had an added incentive in the knowledge that if their service were unsatisfactory they would probably regret it on their return to civil life, when their lord's displeasure might make itself felt. Some of the feudal ties still existed at the end of the sixteenth century, but they were beginning to be replaced by allegiance to the state, although the idea of the state was as yet too abstract for the average soldier to fight for it with much enthusiasm. The professional soldier might speak bravely enough about shedding his blood for his sacred sovereign and dear country (as did Sir Roger Williams) but not the ordinary recruit, to whom the attractions of the fireside far outweighed those of the firing-line.

¹ *Irish Cal. 1599-1600*, 402.

X

THE MEDICAL SERVICE

IT seems that before the fifteenth century the slender army medical service was reserved for the principal officers. Edward III's troops at the siege of Calais in 1346 had only one surgeon, who was in the retinue of the Prince of Wales.¹ More adequate provision was made by Henry V. In France in 1415 he had a physician and surgeon, who were required to engage twelve assistants between them, while in the following year he authorized the recruitment of an unspecified number of surgeons and makers of surgical instruments.² In 1474 Edward IV took to France twelve surgeons as well as two senior officers with the titles 'king's physician' and 'physician and surgeon of the king's body'.³ At St. Quentin in 1557 there were 57 surgeons in a force of between 5,000 and 6,000 men. Two were for the general, and one each for the lieutenant-general, the marshal, the generals of cavalry and infantry, and the master of the ordnance. The rest were deputed to look after the rank and file, except the pioneer corps, for which there appears to have been no special provision. Each had to look after about a hundred men, which remained the normal quota until 1594.⁴ Thus in the two centuries before Elizabeth the medical service had grown from practically nothing into a recognized branch of organization.

Most Elizabethan army surgeons came from the company of barber-surgeons of London, which in return for the privileges of its charter was required to keep the forces supplied with a medical officer and an assistant for every band. The members of the company were occasionally required to serve as ordinary soldiers, and in 1556 the master had to ask the corporation of London that so long as the company provided qualified surgeons members should not be conscripted as privates. The lord mayor agreed

¹ F. Grose, *Military Antiquities*, i. 274.

² T. Rymer, *Fœd. ii.*, n. 363.

⁴ Harl. MSS 6844.

³ Grose, *op. cit.* i. 276.

that this was reasonable, and authorized the barber-surgeons to record his decision in their minutes.¹ Six years later the privy council confirmed that qualified surgeons should not have to serve as privates. In instructing the corporation of London to raise troops for Warwick's expedition to Le Havre it said that in view of the obligation to act as surgeons in the army and navy members of the company were to be passed by, unless they were to be used in their professional capacity.² It was suggested in 1581 that the barber-surgeons should be given statutory exemption from ordinary service in the army, but it seems that the proposed bill did not reach the House of Commons.³

Although surgeons thus became exempt from conscription to serve as privates, they were as liable to conscription as anyone else, provided they were required in their professional capacity. The lord mayor was constantly being instructed to 'take up and imprest' surgeons for service overseas, which shows that they had to accept the queen's shilling like any other men. Recruiting warrants almost invariably coupled them with drummers, possibly because the duties of both required some degree of professional skill, or because in both cases London was the main source of supply.

It seems likely that surgeons had better treatment than their fellow officers; it was obviously in the interest of the company as a whole to see that they were well looked after. Even so, they had no greater love of military service than had the ordinary recruit. In 1598 when half a dozen were conscripted for service in Ireland at least one did not remain long with the forces. He appeared before the master of the company soon after he had been levied and confessed that he had bought his discharge for six pounds, half of which had found its way into the captain's pocket.⁴ Occasionally an unwilling surgeon would escape military service by providing a substitute. For example, in 1599 a sailor complained that because of such a substitution he had had an arm so unskilfully amputated that he had almost lost his life.⁵

¹ S. Young, *Annals of the Barber-Surgeon of London*, 99-100.

² *A.P.C.* vii. 119.

⁴ *Ibid.* 121.

³ Young, *op. cit.* 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*

In the earlier part of the reign warrants for levying surgeons were in the first place sent by the privy council to the lord mayor, who passed them to the master of the company of barber-surgeons. Later, however, when the needs of the troops became greater, it was more usual for the council to authorize captains to find their own surgeons without making formal application to the company. This was done in 1591 for Essex's expedition to France. Twenty captains were given warrants to enlist one surgeon and two drummers each, and the lord mayor was instructed to give them all possible help.¹

The captain was responsible for seeing that the medical officer attached to his company carried out his duties satisfactorily. Answering an accusation that the Portugal expedition was inadequately provided with surgeons, a writer says that if in fact there were too few, it was the captains who were to blame. It was for them to provide capable surgeons rather than the principal officers, who could hardly be expected to deal with matters of detail. The writer goes on to observe that English surgeons had seen little active service, and were in consequence not very expert in treating gunshot wounds.²

Contemporary theory on the medical service (as indeed on most branches of military organization) was well in advance of practice. According to one authority the surgeon had to be 'honest, sober, and of good counsel, skilful in that science, able to heal and cure all kinds of sores, wounds and griefs, to take a pellet out of the flesh and bone and to slake the fire of the same'. His equipment was expected to include a full set of instruments, and oils, balms, salves, splints, and bandages.³

It is easy to imagine how far short of this standard fell the average surgeon. It was said that those who attended Sir Philip Sidney after he had received his immortal wound at Zutphen were there 'some mercenarily out of gain, others out of honour of their art, but most of them with a true zeal (compounded of love and reverence) to do him good,

¹ *APC.* xvii. 27; xviii. 122; xxi. 22, 242-3.

² A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 480-1.

³ T. Steward, *The Pathway to Martial Discipline*, 40.

and (as they thought) many nations in him'.¹ But Sidney was an exceptional patient, and the wounded ranker can hardly have had the same attention. Moreover, medicine and surgery were still far from being exact sciences, and the unlucky private more often than not found himself in the hands of a medical officer who would have learned something from a witch-doctor. Most surgeons were in the habit of using curious ointments made up by themselves. One French surgeon specialized in a balm the ingredients of which included two whelps boiled alive and two pounds of earthworms purified in white wine. In some cases the recognized treatments were probably more deadly than the ailments they sought to cure---for example, gunshot wounds were normally cauterized with boiling oil.²

The most enlightened army surgeon was William Clowes. He went with Warwick to Le Havre, and later served with the navy. In 1585 he was ordered by the queen to accompany Leicester to the Netherlands, and in his book *A Proved Practice for All Young Chirurgians*³ says that while incompetent surgeons were responsible for more deaths among the soldiers than were the enemy, he himself had not lost a single patient who had the slightest chance of recovery. The book contains detailed case-histories of many gun-shot casualties, chiefly among the men in the Netherlands, which he had treated successfully. Even if he does draw a veil over his failures, it is clear that Clowes was in every respect well in advance of his colleagues.

The incompetence of the average surgeon was an undoubted weakness in military organization. In the Netherlands the officers were often dissatisfied with the facilities provided. It was said that surgeons were so unskilled that they often failed to cure slightly wounded men, who ought easily to have recovered had they had proper treatment, and the privy council was asked that instead of a single surgeon for each company at a wage of a shilling a day there should be only two for each regiment of ten companies. It was suggested that these should be paid at a much higher rate, and that out of their extra remuneration

¹ F. Grovdl, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 131.

² F. Grose, *Military Antiquities*, i. 273 n.

³ London, 1591.

they should employ several assistants. After careful consideration these proposals were accepted by the council. The general was authorized to appoint 'two able, expert, and skilful surgeons' each with a salary of five shillings a day, part of which they were to set aside for their subordinates. Of these two surgeons only one was to have leave of absence at a time.¹

The new system had considerable advantages. It was now possible for the skill and experience of the better surgeons to be systematically passed on to their less expert colleagues, who found it more difficult to try out random personal theories on their unfortunate victims. At the end of the century a similar system was introduced into the forces in Ireland. The captains there protested against the deduction of one man's pay from the company funds for a surgeon who was never seen. They added that the absence of the surgeon had a bad effect on morale, for it meant that the men knew that if they were wounded they would have no skilled attention. It was therefore suggested that the allowances from each company should be collected, and paid to a highly skilled man, who would appoint subordinates, as was done in the Netherlands.² These recommendations bore fruit, and soon afterwards orders for the garrisons at Lough Foyle and Ballyshannon made provision for two surgeons in both places with a salary of ten shillings a day each, out of which they were bound to keep three assistants.³

It seems that women were occasionally employed to look after the wounded. Evidence on this point is scanty, but in the disciplinary code devised by Leicester for his forces in the Netherlands it was stipulated that while as a general rule no woman was to be allowed in the troops, an exception was to be made in favour of nurses.⁴ And in the military hospitals 'old women' were appointed to look after the inmates.

There was a marked improvement in the treatment of sick and wounded men during the reign. In 1591 an

¹ *Cant. MSS.*, Gal. 1 D IX, f. 311b.

² *Ibid.* f. 156v, 160v, 381.

³ see Appendix (no. 13, article 5).

⁴ *Ibid.* 396.

official was sent to France for the specific purpose of arranging the discharge of sick men who seemed unlikely to make a speedy recovery.¹ In the Netherlands sick leave was authorized in 1594, when the captains had agitated for it after disputes with the muster-master about the inclusion of sick men in the muster rolls. The privy council gave the captains' complaints a sympathetic hearing and decreed that all sick men were to have their usual weekly wages, and, moreover, that they should be given a month's pay in advance. If a man survived, the money advanced was deducted from his future weekly wages at a rate which would enable him to exist comfortably (or perhaps no more uncomfortably than usual) until the full amount had been recovered. If he died, the loss to the captain was made good by the treasurer-at-war.

Secondly, if any man fell sick and had to return to England for treatment, he was now retained on the muster roll. Provided that he returned to his unit within three months, and brought with him a certificate from the hospital he had been in, or from a justice or high constable, he was paid for the period of his absence at the ordinary rate of his rank.²

In 1601 a captain from the Flushing garrison was allowed leave to return to England. He was accompanied by two batmen, and all three drew their regular pay.³ Sick leave with pay was allowed in Ireland also, where the lord deputy was warned by the privy council that a captain who had returned to England because of ill health should not have his pay stopped.⁴

The establishment of military hospitals was a comparatively late development. The so-called 'guest-houses' in the Netherlands, private houses in which invalids were quartered, were the forerunners of the hospitals proper. These were houses whose owners were made responsible for looking after a number of sick men and reporting on their condition at regular intervals to the muster-master and treasurer-at-war. This method of caring for the sick and wounded was quite satisfactory in the Netherlands or

¹ S P. France, *xxvi*, f. 290.

² *A.P.C.* *xxviii*, 22.

³ Cott. MSS, Galba D IX, f. 310b.

⁴ *Ibid.* 194.

France, where the country was thickly populated, provided with good houses, and comparatively healthy, but in Ireland the position was reversed in every particular, and only regular hospitals could cope properly with large numbers of sick.

In 1598 some of the leading citizens of Dublin were attracted by the possibility of doing a good work at a reasonable profit. They offered to provide in the city or its outskirts a hospital with fifty beds capable of accommodating twice that number of patients. The beds and bedclothes, a surgeon, and half a dozen nurses were also to be provided—all for a thousand pounds a year. It was pointed out that an institution of this sort would greatly encourage and comfort the poor soldiers who for want of medical treatment when wounded or sick were dying in the streets. If properly looked after many would be restored to health, which would not only enable them to fight another day, but would encourage their fellows to risk their lives more willingly.¹

Apparently nothing was done at this time, but in the following year the question was again raised. It was now suggested that if the queen intended to continue fighting in Ireland improved provision would have to be made for the sick and wounded there. There were two main points in favour of the extension of the medical services in Ireland. First, most of the men who died from dysentery—‘the Irish ague’—would have stood a good chance of recovery if they had had prompt medical attention; and secondly, if it were possible to give the men treatment locally the number of malingerers who contrived to find their way back to England with the genuine cases would be reduced. In any case, so many recruits fell ill through lack of decent food and lodging that even if only genuine cases were allowed to return to England the facilities there would be heavily taxed.²

It was clear that men could not be expected to serve with much enthusiasm if they were accustomed to see their wounded comrades dying in the streets merely for want of medical care. If soldiers saw their fellows dying as a result

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1598-9, 296 7

² *Ibid.* 1599-1600, 314.

of slight wounds, said one captain, they would hardly be encouraged to give of their best in battle. But if they knew that speedy and efficient treatment awaited even the slightest hurt their bravery would be multiplied manifold.¹ Another captain made the same point when he suggested that churches and abbeys should be converted into military hospitals. He had been horrified by the sight of sick and wounded men dying in the streets for want of proper attention. He pointed out that men who survived their first attack of dysentery were afterwards worth three recruits, and that for this reason alone the establishment of hospitals would pay a good dividend.²

The attitude of the native population made the need of adequate provision for invalids all the more pressing. Irish folk were very well disposed towards each other, but their natural hatred for the English kept them from giving the slightest help to ailing soldiers.³

In 1600 Buckhurst recommended that hospitals should be provided in every province in Ireland, and that officers should be appointed to have charge of them.⁴ Soon afterwards the idea was developed by him, some members of the privy council, and some of the senior captains in Ireland. It was proposed that the government should hire suitable buildings and have them converted to hospitals. This and the provision of bedding was to be the direct responsibility of the government, but funds for the running expenses of the hospitals were to be raised by levying one man's pay from each company. According to the plan the hospitals were to be supervised by two worthy householders in each town, and in addition were to have a master, who was to be either a physician or a surgeon, and a servant and four nurses. The two householders were expected to give their services free, but the master was to have five shillings a day.⁵ It is not clear if this plan was in fact put into operation, but a hospital had been erected in the outskirts of Dublin by the middle of 1600.⁶

Sir Henry Docwra was responsible for building a hospital at Lough Foyle in the same year. He started on the hospital

¹ *Irish Gal.* 1745, 9, 386.

² *Ibid.* 35.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* 1599-1600, 377.

⁵ *Ibid.* 394, 396, 448.

⁶ *Ibid.* 1600, 209.

before any of the other camp buildings on the assumption that the men would be more willing to work on a building which was intended for their own good. But he was mistaken, for the men had, in fact, to be driven to complete the place. Eventually a ruined church was renovated and fitted out with twenty-eight beds. Docwra was instructed to see that no malingerers were admitted, and that sick and wounded men were given reasonable treatment. Although this hospital represented an important new development Docwra complained that it was far too small to cope with the incredible seas of sick and wounded men who flooded it.¹

The inadequacy of the hospital at Lough Foyle was confirmed in a later report which said that, while the arrangements were the best which could have been made in the circumstances, it was hardly surprising that the hospital had been unable to cope with the demands made on it, since all the hospitals in London could not have met them. It was suggested, however, that the running of the hospital would be improved if men suffering from infectious diseases were to be excluded. Less than one in ten survived, whereas men who were only wounded had an infinitely better rate of recovery. Apparently there had been a complaint that soldiers from other garrisons who had fallen ill at Lough Foyle were refused admission, but this was dismissed as untrue. It was also suggested that the use of the hospital as an ammunition dump (because of shortage of storage space) was undesirable.²

At least one hospital was founded in England specially for disabled soldiers. This was in Buckingham in 1599 and was intended to house thirty-six 'maimed unmarried soldiers'. This, of course, differed from the institutions in Ireland and the Netherlands in that it was intended to be a permanent home for disabled men.³

The climate of the countries where they served was responsible for much of the sickness among Elizabeth's soldiers. France and Portugal were too warm for Englishmen, while Ireland was too wet and the Netherlands too cold. It was suggested in some quarters that proper

¹ *Irish Cal.* 1600-179; 1600-1, 113; Sir H. Docwra, *Narration*, 288-9.

² *Irish Cal.* 1600-1, 113.

³ *Dom. Cal.* 1598-9, 13.

precautions had not been taken against disease in Portugal in 1589, but one of the men who had been there indignantly refuted the suggestion. He pointed out that strange climates had always taken heavy toll of the English forces. The cold, raw air in the Netherlands had been too much for them, and had caused many deaths even when the men were in billets. The warmth of France aided by the abundance of fruit and wine, to which Englishmen were unaccustomed, had always undermined their health. In any case, even when the Spaniards campaigned in the summer months they could not avoid heavy losses owing to illness. Finally, the critics of the arrangements in Portugal were reminded that the plague in London had killed in six months more than twice the strength of the whole expeditionary force. Why, then, should it be expected that the troops should escape illness, especially when they had to drink wine instead of the beer which was their normal ration?¹

France was probably the least severe on the English soldier. While sickness was usually widespread it had fatal consequences less often there than elsewhere. It was said in 1585 that evil feeding and cold and wet bedding had caused much sickness, but fortunately most men recovered.² About this time it was reported that over 200 men were in hospital.³ In 1587 the governor of the garrison in Ostend asked for special rations for the invalids in the garrison, as in nearly every case they had fallen ill through eating bad food. He said it was impossible for men to recover from sickness or dangerous wounds with nothing to eat but stale cheese and unwholesome bread.⁴ In Ireland the bad climate coupled with doubtful food and poor lodging were responsible for most of the sickness. One soldier told Burghley that his health had not stood up to the sudden change in diet. He had had a bad time from seasickness on the voyage over, and had fallen a speedy victim to dysentery, as a result of having nothing but the hard ground to sleep on, and scant medical attention.⁵

¹ A. Wingfield, *Discourse*, 479.

² *For. Cal.* xx. 165.

³ *Ibid.* 177.

⁴ *Ibid.* xxi, pt. ii, 385.

⁵ S P. Irish, 44, nr 49.

The question of relief for disabled soldiers is thus dismissed by Sir J. W. Fortescue :

Elizabeth was not friendly to soldiers, and hated to be troubled with obligations towards men who had faithfully served her. An Act had been passed in 1593 throwing the relief of crippled or destitute soldiers on their parishes, and she could not see what more they could want. Bloody Mary had shown them compassion:¹ not so would Good Queen Bess; she would not be pestered with the sight of the 'miserable creatures'.²

The facts hardly justify this criticism. Indeed, they suggest that for humanitarian reasons as well as from motives of policy the queen, the privy council, and members of parliament were more than slightly interested in the welfare of old and disabled soldiers.

In the first place provision was frequently made for men with long or distinguished service, even although they were in good health. Occasionally this took the form of an appointment to a sinecure. In 1594 a private was given the post of gunner in the Tower as a reward for his services overseas.³ More often a pecuniary reward was given. In 1586 four pensions ranging from 1s. 8d. to 6s. a day were authorized for services in Ireland.⁴ This type of pension was at least awarded to a soldier's widow. In 1576 lands of the annual value of twenty pounds were given to one in consideration of the long and faithful service of her husband.⁵ But it seems that widows' pensions were most exceptional.

These pensions were greatly outnumbered by those given as compensation for injuries sustained on active service. The pensions act of 1593 provided for a weekly levy from every parish of sums varying from a minimum of one penny to a maximum of sixpence, with the saving clause that the sum was not to exceed an average of twopence in counties with over fifty parishes. In practice the amount

¹ This refers to the increase in the private's daily pay from sixpence to eightpence in 1557, and to the home that Mary established in London 'for the relief and help of poor, impotent and aged soldiers'.

² *History of the British Army*, I. 157.

³ *Dequet Book*, 1594 6 (30 May 1594).

⁴ *P.C. vol. 2*.

⁵ *Dequet Book*, 1594 6 (7 September 1594); Patent Roll, 19 Eliz., no. 15.

thus raised proved far from adequate. As a result several counties tried to satisfy all claimants for relief by reducing the amount of the pension paid to each, only to meet with a severe rebuke from the privy council, which ordered them to adhere to the rates laid down by statute.¹

It was obvious that the rate of the tax had to be increased, and this was accomplished by a new statute in 1597. The new rate was twopence to eightpence from every parish with an average of fourpence in counties with over fifty parishes. A special clause was now inserted for London. The corporation was authorized to raise the rate to as much as two shillings in any one parish, so long as the average did not exceed eightpence. Even this provision was inadequate, and the county treasurers were driven to take advantage of every loophole in the statute. For example, the Norfolk treasurers put forward the plea that as a man had served as a volunteer he was ineligible for relief. The privy council most properly disallowed the plea, and ordered that the man should be paid at the usual rates.²

Again, a native of Hertfordshire, who had been levied in Middlesex, was sent from one county to the other without receiving any benefit until the council intervened on his behalf. It explained that it was impossible to expect Middlesex to support all the men levied there who had been maimed, and instructed treasurers to make provision for the man.³ The inhabitants of Northumberland did not accept responsibility for the provision of relief, and the council, feeling no doubt that its hold on the northern counties was none too strong, did not attempt to force them to come into line with the rest of the country, but appealed instead to the generosity of other counties. Thus the bishop of Durham was asked to look after a man from Northumberland who had lost both his legs and who was refused assistance in Northumberland, which was legally obliged to support him.⁴

The relief rates were again raised in 1601. The new rate varied from twopence to tenpence in the provinces, while the London rates were to aim at an average of one

¹ *A.P.C.* xxv, *passim*.

² *Ibid.* xxix. 235.

³ *Ibid.* xxviii. 391.

⁴ *Ibid.* 261.

shilling a parish, with an individual maximum of three shillings.

Such a system of parochial relief does not merit unre-served praise, for there was always the danger that the heaviest burden would fall on those least able to bear it. But there was much to be said in its favour. An attempt was made to spread the burden more equally by the saving clause for counties with over fifty parishes, while the active interest of the privy council in the working of the scheme was an additional safeguard against unfairness. Moreover, it must be remembered that the most satisfactory method of investigating a claim was through the authorities in the county where the claimant had been levied. Thus to a certain extent the parochial system was forced on the government as a simple method of ensuring that genuine cases would be treated with justice, and at the same time of clearing the disabled men out of London, and separating them from the ordinary rogues and vagabonds.

CONCLUSION

IT would perhaps be unwise to use the preceding chapters, which are no more than an outline of the main features of Elizabethan military organization, as the basis for a final judgement. It can safely be said, however, that earlier judgements are not entirely satisfactory. Sir Charles Firth's statement that 'the military system which the Tudors bequeathed to the Stuarts was completely inefficient' is true as far as it goes, but is unfortunate in its implication that the Tudors in general, and the immediate testatrix in particular, were guilty of criminal negligence.

More sweeping is Sir J. W. Fortescue, to whom Elizabeth was a selfish and incapable woman :

She hated straight dealing for its simplicity: she hated conviction for its certainty: above all she hated war for its expense. She loved her money as herself, and to these twain she would sacrifice alike the most faithful servant and the most friendly state. . . . In truth, throughout the long reign of Elizabeth we feel that in military matters, one effort, and only one was made, namely, in Carlyle's words, to stretch the old formula to cover the new fact, to botch and patch and strain the antiquated web woven by the Statute of Winchester, and newly dyed by the Statute of Philip and Mary to some semblance of the pattern given by the armies of France and Spain.¹

Thirdly, Sir Charles Oman draws a dismal and accurate picture of the inefficiency of army organization,² but again no attempt is made to explain the position of the Crown.

These judgements might have been more favourable if the difficulties in the path of the government had been considered. For example, Professor J. E. Neale, in his study on the finances of the troops in the Netherlands in 1586-7, points out that it was seriously handicapped by the general's incompetence, by the failure of the Dutch to bear their agreed share of the expenses, and by deeply rooted corruption in the forces. He suggests that other expeditions may have been similarly affected.³

¹ *Cromwell's Army*, 1.

² *History of the British Army*, i. 130; 131.

³ *Art of War in the Sixteenth Century*, 373-6.

⁴ *E.H.R.* xiv. 371.

The principal evil was undoubtedly the corruption which flourished throughout the army. The fraudulent supply of uniform in Ireland was perhaps the most spectacular transaction, but there may well have been others which would have been equally astounding had they ever come to light. Fraud among the merchants was all the more reprehensible, as in tendering for contracts they must in any case have allowed themselves a generous profit margin. It has been shown how a new offer to supply uniform revealed that the previous suppliers had been grossly overcharging the government.¹ If we assume that this new offer allowed only a reasonable margin of profit (which is unlikely) it means that the previous suppliers were making about 25 per cent. more than they deserved on privates' outfits, and about 40 per cent. too much on officers'. Profiteering at this rate was probably rife in most branches of organization.

Nor were the merchants the only offenders. Some of the rumours about the doubtful probity of several treasurers-at-war must have had their foundation in sordid fact. It may be argued that the Crown should have ensured loyal service from its direct employees, either by appointing honest men or by paying others enough to make dishonesty unnecessary. Neither method was feasible. There was not enough money in the exchequer to satisfy the greed of the dishonest, nor were there enough upright men at hand to fill the administrative posts. The lords lieutenant served the country well enough, but this cannot be said of their deputies, or of the sheriffs and justices of the peace, who were usually more than willing to forget their obligations to the Crown in return for a cash payment. The captains were tarred with the same brush, and almost without exception subjected their unhappy companies to an infinite variety of exploitation.

They encouraged men to buy their way out of the army, hired substitutes to satisfy the muster-master, and pocketed the subsequent pay of the missing ranks. They sold the arms and equipment of dead or discharged soldiers. They conspired with the clothing suppliers to receive cash instead of uniform, while the troops went unprovided for. When

¹ p. 77.

the government sought to help the private soldier through the dead-pay fund, they promptly seized the opportunity of further lining their own pockets. They were no more honest when commissioned to levy troops in the counties. Shakespeare is doubtless drawing from life when he shows us Captain Sir John Falstaff rejecting (after a few pounds had changed hands) the services of the able-bodied Mouldy and Bullcalf, and accepting for his company the C3 Wart, Shadow, and Feeble.¹ So profitable were the captains' activities that they could easily afford to buy the silence of officials who should have exposed them.

A second difficulty was the change in weapons. The introduction of fire-arms elsewhere in Europe put England temporarily at a disadvantage, for there was much reluctance to lay aside the nation's traditional weapon. The use of the bow had been encouraged by statute in the reign of Henry VIII,² while under Philip and Mary the domestic forces still had twice as many bows as arquebuses.³ Late in Elizabeth's reign there was a considerable volume of opinion in favour of retaining the bow.⁴ In the hands of a properly trained archer it was accurate at more than a hundred yards' range, could be discharged six times a minute, was easy to maintain, and took little harm from wet weather. On the other hand, the sixteenth-century fire-arm was inaccurate even at short range, had a much slower rate of fire than the bow, and was very fragile. Moreover, the gunpowder and match on which it depended might be made useless by rain. So strong was the case for the bow that in gradually discarding it, and substituting 'weapons of fire', the privy council showed courage as well as foresight, particularly in view of the greatly increased expenditure which the issue of the newer weapons necessitated.

A third factor contributing to the difficulties of the

¹ *Henry IV*, Pt. 2.

² 3 Henry VIII, c. 3; 6 Henry VIII, c. 13.

³ 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, c. 2.

⁴ Writers who advocated the bow were Barnaby Rich (*Allarme to England*, 1578) and Sir John Smythe (*The Book on Weapons*, 1590; and *Instructions, Observations and Orders Militarie*, written in 1591 and published in 1595). Roger Ascham's *Tetrastichus* was republished in 1571 and 1589. Humfrey Barwick (*A Brief Discourse*, 1594?) and Sir Roger Williams (*A Briefe Discourse of Warre*, 1590) favoured the modern weapons.

government was the uninterrupted demand for men. From 1585 to the end of the reign the average number of new levies for foreign service was well over 5,000 a year. If there had been a lull in the army's requirements it might have been used to put the organization of the forces on a sounder basis; but there was no lull. The Crown was given no breathing-space in which to build a completely new organization out of the experience gained in the course of the war.

Lastly, there was the attitude of the nation as a whole to contend with. Some citizens may have founded their objection to the Crown's military policy on constitutional principles, but there were many more who did not trouble to take their stand on the constitution. The evasion of military service by one device or another became more frequent as the reign progressed. Burghley sadly exclaimed that the country was weary of the ceaseless expenditure of money and life in foreign service, while the privy council became apprehensive at the increasingly hostile attitude of the people. By the end of the century it was wellnigh impossible to raise money for troops. In 1600 Gloucestershire was unable to find enough for half a dozen cavalry for Ireland. Sums raised for troops from the legal profession, gentlemen, knights, all fell short of the amounts required. No fewer than eleven counties failed to pay a single penny.¹ Even in London—which was the nearest that England had to a military cornucopia—150 musketeers had to be changed to pikemen to save expense; and even so it was still found impossible to provide the men with armour.

There were two main sources of change in military organization—the privy council and queen, and the forces themselves. Groups of captains were constantly asking the government to make innovations, usually with an ulterior motive. The council carefully sifted their proposals, and was not unwilling to accept those which were practicable and likely to be of general benefit. Fortescue says that the queen did nothing to improve organization: 'but when we turn from the queen to the people, we perceive the energy of a very different force. The English army was not created

¹ E. P. Cheyney, *History of England*, ii; ch. xxxiv.

by a sovereign or a minister : it created itself in despite of of them'; but once again the judgement seems a little harsh.

On the other hand, the queen and council did a reasonably good job of work, despite the limitations imposed on them by lack of money and the thinly disguised hostility of the people. Campaigns could no longer be conducted by self-governing and self-supporting feudal armies. The forces had come to depend on the co-operation of the new merchant class for their rations, their clothing, their pay, and to some extent for their arms. By the end of the century the framework devised by the government was comparatively strong, but it could never be entirely satisfactory so long as the merchants were corrupt.

Perhaps the council deserves most credit for its efforts to improve the lot of the private soldier. At first privates were of all ranks comparatively the worst off: they were no more than raw material which unscrupulous captains used to make sizeable fortunes. To the higher officers, and in a lesser degree to non-commissioned officers, a military career offered rich rewards; but it was all the private could do to support life. The council made a conscious effort to make life easier for him, but as usual its benevolence was limited by shortage of money. It could not afford to do as much for the common soldier as it would have liked.

In the eyes of most military historians the great shortcoming of Elizabethan policy was the failure of the government to provide a permanent paid army. Sir J. W. Fortescue has pointed out that by Elizabeth's time war had become a profession, and could no longer be regarded as a mere appendage to the everyday life of the citizen.

Now therefore if ever [he exclaims] was the time for the establishment of a standing army in England. She was menaced by foreign enemies on all sides, and in perpetual peril of intestine insurrection. There was unceasing trouble in Ireland and eternal anxiety on the Scottish border. The forces of the shire had been proved to be worthless, and the service was not only inefficient, but unpopular: the people came unwillingly to the muster, and would gladly have paid to be relieved of the burden.¹

It is easy to visualize the benefits which would have

¹ Fortescue, i. 110.

accrued from the establishment of an efficient standing army, but it is less easy to see how the government could in the circumstances have set up such a force. In practice people would have been no more willing to give their money than they were to give their personal service to the national forces. It has already been shown that the whole community was either unable or unwilling to support the soldiers disabled in the foreign expeditions—a much smaller body than would have been necessary for an effective standing army. It is surely logical to conclude, therefore, that the men who had to make an appearance at the musters—those between sixteen and sixty—could not, or would not, support a whole army, which, unlike the disabled men, needed arms and equipment, necessities made more and more expensive by recent developments in tactics.

In any case, even if it is accepted that those liable for military service would gladly have paid to be relieved of their obligation, there is still some doubt as to where the men were to come from to take their place. It seems that the standing army would have had to consist either of mercenaries, or of men below sixteen or over sixty!

So many schemes were put forward in Elizabeth's reign for the establishment of some sort of a permanent force that it is difficult to believe that the government, which proved itself willing to adopt sound proposals as to the organization of the forces, rejected them without good reason. The reason probably was that the people were not yet prepared to maintain a standing army as we know it.

¹ e.g. Add. MSS. 4104, no. 14; Lansdowne MSS. 110, no. 9; 820, no. 1; Cott. MSS., Otho E XI, no. 41.

APPENDICES

No. 1. *Levies in England and Wales for Service Abroad,* 1585-1602¹

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Destination</i>
1585	7,500	Netherlands
1586	4,870	Netherlands
1587	4,800	Netherlands
1588	6,000	Portugal
1589	4,850	France
1590	4,270	Ireland
1591	8,425	France and Netherlands
1592	2,490	France
1593	3,025	France
1594	4,800	France and Netherlands
1595	1,806	Ireland
1596	8,940	Cádiz and Ireland
1597	8,835	Ireland and Azores
1598	9,164	Ireland and Netherlands
1599	5,250	Ireland
1600	4,885	Ireland
1601	12,620	Ireland
1602	3,300	Netherlands

No. 2. *Origin and Destination of Troops levied in the Welsh* *Counties between 1585 and 1602*²

<i>County</i>	<i>Ireland</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Total</i>
Anglesey	251	..	..	251
Brecknock	825	..	30	855
Cardigan	500	..	30	530
Carmarthen	960	..	30	990
Carnarvon	566	..	..	566
Denbigh	980	75	..	1,055
Flint	765	75	..	840
Glamorgan	970	..	30	1,000
Merioneth	450	..	..	450
Monmouth	901	..	30	931
Montgomery	621	75	..	696
Pembroke	610	..	30	640
Radnor	530	75	..	605

¹ Only the principal destination of the troops is shown in this table, but in most years considerable numbers went to reinforce the English armies in the other theatres of war. There are no satisfactory figures for 1603.

² The figures for the Netherlands in this table are derived from an order in the state papers for 'two hundred men from the six south shires of Wales' (S.P. Dom. Eliz. 181, no. 3). There is no record of the numbers levied from the individual shires, and the total has therefore been equally divided between the counties.

No. 3. *Origin and Destination of Troops levied in English Counties between 1585 and 1602*

County	Ireland	France	Netherlands	Total
Bedford	419	250	600	1,269
Berks.	469	480	675	1,624
Bucks.	636	380	675	1,691
Cambridge	572	150	450	1,172
Cheshire	902	..	150	1,052
Cornwall	595	350	..	945
Cumberland	..	..	..	..
Derby	773	..	75	848
Devon	1,490	750	150	2,390
Dorset	470	600	260	1,330
Durham	..	..	..	..
Essex	1,199	800	1,100	3,099
Gloucester	1,692	500	400	2,592
Hampshire	641	1,400	525	2,566
Hertford	1,110	..	300	1,410
Hertford	539	600	675	1,814
Huntingdon	398	150	50	598
Kent	750	2,257	1,600	4,607
Lancashire	1,146	..	300	1,646
Leicester	547	150	..	697
Lincoln	1,345	300	300	1,945
London	1,600	4,420	3,495	9,515
Middlesex	195	250	600	1,045
Northfolk	900	450	600	1,950
Northampton	1,059	450	600	1,859
Northumberland	..	..	..	..
Nottingham	737	150	..	887
Oxford	544	440	650	1,634
Rutland	220	50	..	270
Shropshire	871	118	..	1,009
Somerset	1,194	1,200	460	2,854
Stafford	648	..	75	723
Suffolk	1,100	450	700	2,250
Surrey	85	200	550	835
Sussex	500	2,060	550	3,010
Warwick	761	150	475	1,386
Westmoreland	..	..	..	..
Wiltshire	795	350	560	1,705
Worcester	1,151	..	..	1,151
Yorkshire	1,810	400	400	2,610

No. 4. *Early Indenture for Troops*¹

THIS Indenture made the Thirteenth day of August in the six and Thirtieth yeare of the Reigne of our soveraigne Ladye Elizabeth by the grace of god Queene of Englande, France, and Irelande

¹ S.P. Dom. Eliz. 249, no. 75.

Defendor of the Faythe: Betweene Sir Thomas Scott and Sir John Leveson knightes Deputee-Lieutennants to the righte Honourable the Lords Cobham Lieutennant of the countie of Kent to our said sovereign Ladie in the one partie, And Captaine George Morton on the other partie witnesseth that whereas the nombre of Two hundred and Fifty Souldiers have been leveyed and furnished within the same countye by ordre from our sayde sovereigne Ladie, for her Majesties servise, whereof Fourescore and fyve are Armed men Threescore and fyve Musketyres and one hundred calyver men nowe by the said Captaine George Morton doth by these presentes acknowledge, that he upon the daye of the date hereof hath had and receaved at Gravesend in the sayde countye of Kente by the delyverye of the saide Sir Thomas Scott and Sir James Leveson aswell the nombre of Fourescore and fyve good and suffycient Corselets furnished, Three score and fyve Muskets furnished, and one hondred Calyvers furnished, And two hundred and fifty grey russet suitable lyveries for the said two hundred and fyfye: As also the nombre of Two hundred and fiftie hable and serviceable men whose names followeth viz.

William Totwell George Lightfoot (and 248 others)

And the said Captaine doth further more by these presents that they the sayde Sir Thomas Scott and Sir John Leveson by the handes of their men in his sighte have payed to everye of the saide souldiers the some of two shillinges before the ensealinge hercof. In witnesse whereof the sayde parties to these presentes have interchangeblye sett their handes and seales the day and yere above written.

JOHN LEVESON.

GEORGE MORTON

No. 5. *Late Indenture*¹

THIS Indenture Tripertite made the Fift day of August in the Three and Fortieth yere of the Raigne of our Souvereigne Ladie Elizabeth by the grace of god Queene of Englande Fraunce and Irelande defendour of the faythe etc. Betwene Sir Thomas Lucy knight high Sheriff of the Countye of Warwick Sir Thomas Leigh and Sir Edwarde Greuill knightes and Richard Darney Esquier Commissioners with others for musters in the saide countye of Warwick of thone partie And Tymothie Fieldinge gent. of thother partie. Witnesseth that the said Commissioners by vertue of letters to them and others directed, Aswell from our said souereigne Ladye

¹ Exchequer Accounts, Q.R., bundle 65, no. 5 (2).

the Queenes Ma^{ties} as also from the Lordes of her highnes most honorable Privie Counsell have according to the tenor of the same leavyed and mustered out of the said out of the said [*sic*] Countye Fiftie able men to supplie her Ma^{ties} forces in Irelande and also have leavied the some of Three pounds and ten shillinges for every man. Whose names and surnames with the places of their habitacions are in these present Indentures mencioned and expressed which men the said Commissioners delivered at Stratford uppon Avon in the said countye the day of the date hereof to the charge of the said Tymothie Fieldinge to conduct them to the Port of Bristol. And there to deliver them over to such captaines as shall be sent thither by her Ma^{ties} privie Counsell to receive them by Roll Indented subscribed by him the said conductor And which said money is levied and sent up to her Ma^{ties} Exchequer according to the tenor of her Ma^{ties} and their Lordships said letters.

Knighlowe hundred

Richard Burdett of Bulkenton, and 13 others.

Barlichway hundred

Michael Piggot of Rolaington, and 10 others.

Hemlingeforde hundred

Richard Pope of Chastocke, and 13 others.

Kynton hundred

William Poole of Tanworthe, and 10 others.

In Witnes whereof to the first part these Indentures remayninge with the said Commissioners the said Tymothie Fieldinge hath putte his hande, and to the seconde part remayning with the said Tymothie the said Commissioners have put their handes, And to the third part to be sent to the Privie Counsell the said Commissioners have lykewise putte their handes the day and yere above written.

THO. LUCY EDW. GREUILL

No. 6. *Prayer for the Troops*¹

A PRAYER for the good successe of her Maiesties forces in Ireland.

Almightie God and most mercifull Father, which by thine holy Worde declarest thy selfe to be the first ordeiner and continuall upholder of all Princely power and right, and by thy terrible iudgements against Core, Dathan, and Abiram, in opening the earth to

¹ Elizabeth's Proclamations, f. 386. Probably the prayer submitted by the archbishop of Canterbury for the queen's approval on 2 April 1599, and stated to be already in use in the 'Church of the Straungers'. *H.M.C. Salisbury*, ix. 126.

swallow up them and theirs, And which like vengeance poured upon Absalom, Achitophel, Adoniah and Sheba, diddest manifest to the whole world, how much thou hatest all resistance and rebellion against thy Diuine ordinance: Vouchsafe (we humbly beseech thee) to strengthen and protect the Forces of thine anointed our Queen and souereigne, sent out to suppress these wicked and unnaturall Rebels. Be thou to our Armies a Captaine, Leader, and Defender. Let thine holy Angels pitch their Tents round about to guard them, and give them victorie against all such as rise up to withstand them. Let not our sinnes (O Lord) be an hindrance to thine accustomed mercies towards us, neither punish our misdeeds by strengthening the hands of such as despise thy Trueth, and have wickedly cast off the rightfull yoke of their due allegiance: That so thy blessed Handmayde our dread Souereigne, may always reioyce in thy Salvation, And we her loyall subiects still haue cause to magnify thy glorious Name, and to offer to thee with ioy the sacrifices of praise and thankes-giuing in the midst of the great Congregation. Grant this (O most righteous Lord God of Hosts) we beseech thee through Jesus Christ our only Sauour and Redeemer. Amen.

Imprinted at London by the Deputies of Christopher Barker, Printer to the Queenes most excellent Maestie.

Anno 1599.

No. 7. *Soldiers' Oath*¹

THE oathe to be ministered unto the souldiers upon their enteringe into Paye.

Wee doe sweare and promise to doe all loyall true and faythfull sarvice unto the Queene of Englande her most Excell. majesty: and unto the provinces and citties united in theis countries and their associates, under the charge and obedience of the Right exelent the Earle of Leicester Governor generall of the said provinces and citties and their associates, and of her majesties Army and forces within the same: And all lawfull and due obedience unto the Governor and to any other superior that shall have charge under him for the governement in this Army: And further we do endevore our selves to keep and fulfill all such lawfull ordinances as his Exelencie hath or shall set forth and establish for the better ordering of this Army as much as concerns us, so long as we shall serve under him, so help us God by Jhesus Christe.

¹ Harl. MSS. 168, f. 109b. Cf. S.P. Holland, Eliz. 18, f. 105, and Cotton MSS., Galba C X, f. 315b.

No. 8. *An Admonition before the Musters*¹

Souldiers and bretheren, as by longe experience we haue fonde the greuous inconueniences whiche are chanced by reason of the fraudes, and abuses in the musters, and that thereby townes, and places of great importance are loste, the meanes and reuenewes of the Countrie unprofitably spent, being the principall cause that the poore and vaillant soldiers, to the great greife of his Excell^{tie} very ill payd whiche might be remedied, by remouing the saide abuses: I praye you and by vertue of the charge I haue, I doe ordeyne you generally and perticulerly uppon the othe, which you haue taken to his Excell^{ty}, and the Countrie to declare freely if ther be among you any passevolant, borrowed soldiers, Burgers, victuallers, freebutters or others not beinge in standinge seruice under your Companie, and that dothe not orderly keepe, watche, and warde and every waye goinge withe you to the warres, for suche be unworthie to be accounted amongst valiant soldiars and stand you in no steede, then² to charge you with more trauayles watche ward and centinels, and for one howre and make you stande twoe. Also doe cause you to loose your honor if necessitie cause you to meete the enemye, when as for the smal number whiche is in your Companie, you are forced to tourne your backes to the Enemye, or geue place, wheras if your companie weare stronge and compleat of good and valiant souldiars, you should be often able to beate and defeate them, to your great honor and aduancinge: and especially to the honor of God and prosperity of your countrie, so many yeares alreadie afflicted. Wherefore I pray you once againe to reveale them to the end dewe punishment may be done. I doe also commande all them that are not in standinge seruice bound to this company, that they depart this muster uppon payne that being knowne to be hanged as Villaynes without grace or fauour.

No. 9. *Oath for Musters*³

An Oth before the muster particuler.⁴

We sweare and promise that all the persounes and names which we present in the rolle by us deliuered, be soldiars in standinge and actuall seruice of our companie, watching and wardinge euery one in his degree. And that they are bounde to followe the company

¹ SP. Holland, Flit. 18, ff. 144-144b.

² 'but', marginal note.

³ SP. Holland, Flit. 18, f. 144b. The oath was taken by the captain, quartermaster, and clerk of the company.

⁴ Marginal note.

every wheare, and there whether the same maye be sente. Also that we have not borrowed nor taken any soldiers in seruice, or sett them in the rolle but those whiche haue had absolute and dewe pasport of ther Capitaines or otherwise haue bin free. And finallie that in no sorte, directly or indirectlie, we pretend by this muster to defraude his Excel. the country, or any other body.

No. 10. *Examples for Musters Certificates*¹

PRECEDENTS of Billets for receaving and discharginge of souldiers to be delivered by the Commissioners of Musters resident, unto the Capitaines.

To Captaine: A:B: on of the Capitaines in her majesties paye now resident in the garrison of C:

Theis shall testifie that D.E. hath taken his oath and is this present xth day of August anno RR Elizab: xxix^o admitted and entered into your bande, wittnes my hand.

These shall testifie that D.E. your souldier beinge orderlie discharged this xth of September accordinge entred in my Muster Bookes, witnes my hand.

Theis shall testifie that D.E. your souldier beinge dead or ronne away without licence the xth September as hath been orderlie approved, is accordinglie entered in my Muster Bookes, witnes my hand.

Theis shall testifie that D.E. having pasporte beringe date the xth of September to returne before the xxth of October next ensuinge is accordinglie entered in my Muster Rolles witnes my hand.

Theis shall testifie that I have receaved from the commissarye resident of the garrison of Flushing the Muster Rolle of Captain G. whose Bande is entered into this Garrison of H. this present 12th day of February, witnes my hand.

No. 11. *Warrant for Payment*²

SIR PH. SYDNEY, knight.

Theis are to require you to paie unto Sir Phillip Sidney knight capitaine of a cornet of c. launces for his owne enterteignment at viii^s per diem, his Lieutenant at liij^s per diem, his Guydon at ij^s per diem, one Trumpet, one Clarcke and one Surgeon at xx^d per diem le peece, fourscore ten launces, and ten dead paiers at xviiij^d per

¹ Harl. MSS. 168, f. 109. (F. S.P. Holland, Eliz. 18, f. 104^b.)

² Add. MSS. 5751, f. 277.

diem le peece for iij^cxxxiiij daies, beginning the xijth day of November, 1585, and ending the xjth day of October last past the some of two thowsande eight hundred twentie twoe pounds six shillings sterling. Provided allwaies that yow doe not only default the some of Thirteene shillings and foure pens sterlinge checked within the said tyme, but also all former Imprests to him delivered and all victualls and munition, together with all other deductions defaultable upon this Account by certificate from the ministers thereof approved by the captaines hand. And theis together with his Acquittance confessing the receipt of the same shalbe your sufficient warrant in that behalf. Geven at Gravenhage the viijth day of November Anno Reginae Elizabeth xxviii^o

R. LEYCESTER.

To Richard Huddilston esquier, her majesties Threasurer at Warres.
Ex. Tho. Digges.

ij^mviiij^cxxij^{li} sixe shillings.¹

Ex p. Edmond Hunte.

No. 12. *Receipt for Payment*²

RECEYVED by me Captayne Edward Cromwell at the hands of the ryght worshipfull Rycharde Hudleston esquyre treasurer at wares for her majesty in the Lowe Countreyes the some of thirtye and eyght pownds ster. monye to be defaulked owt of the first paye or impreste made to me and the companye under my leadynge wyttnes wherof I have subscriybed this quyttance with my owne hand. Datted the 8 daye of September anno dom. 1586.

ED. CROMWELL.

No. 13. *Leicester's Disciplinary Code*³

LAWES and Ordinances set downe by Robert Earle of Leycester, the Queenes Maiesties Lieutenant and Captaine Generall of her Armie and Forces in the lowe Countreyes: meete and fitte to be observed by all such as shall serue her Maiestie vnder him in the said Countreyes, and therefore to be published and notified to the whole Armie.

Forasmuch as there is not any gouerned Estate, which in peace or warre can be accounted sure, or preserued from dishonour and ruine, unlesse it be supported and borne up by Justice duely administered, and discipline orderly obserued: And for that no man can

¹ Marginal note

² Add. MSS. 4753, f. 252.

³ From the printed copy in the Bodleian Library. This code also appears in Add. MSS. 3217, f. 35 and 38139, f. 166.

be so ignorant as not to knowe that honor, fame and prosperitie, doe duely followe that common Wealth or Nation, wherein good lawes are established, the Magistrate ministring Justice is duely regarded, and the people fearing to offend, are drawn under the rules of Justice and obedience: And seeing that martiall discipline about all thinges (proper to men of warre) is by us at this time most to be followed, aswell for the aduancement of Gods glorie, as honourable to gouerne this Armie in good order: And least that the euill inclined (pleading simplicitie) shoulde couer any wicked facte by ignorance: Therefore these martiall Ordinances and Lawes following are established and published whereby all good mindes endeououring to attaine honour, may stand armed, and receiue encouragement to perseuere in well doing, and such as are inclined to lewdnesse, be warned from committing offences punishable. Which being embraced with carefull respect, and followed with obedience, doe promise good order and agreement amongst our selues, with victorie and good euent against our enemies.

1. First, euery chiefe Magistrate, Captaine, inferiour Officer, Souldiour, Pioner, or what person els receiuing her Maiesties paye in Fielde or Garison, shall solemnely sweare, and by corporall othe be bounde to perfourme the under written Articles, so farre as to eache in their seuerall qualities shall appertaine: the violating or breaking whereof, is to be punished by the Generalles direction, according to the quality of the offence.

2. Forsomuch as the holy Name of our most mightie and inuincible God, with all reuerence ought to be regarded, and that destruction is pronounced to such as blaspheme or abuse the same: it is therefore ordeined and commanded that no person whatsoever, either in common conference or communication, or for any cause whatsoever, shall blaspheme being thus admonished, or take his Name in vaine, upon pain of losse of v. s. to the releife of the poore for the first offence: for the seconde, fve dayes imprisonment: for the third losse of his place and wages.

3. And because the continuall and unspeakeable fauours of our Almighty God, by our unthankfulnesse may be taken from us, and that no good euent of any action can be expected, wherein God is not first principally honoured and serued: It is therefore especially ordeyned and commanded, that all persons whatsoever, shall upon generall warning giuen either by sound of Trumpet or Drum, repaire to the place appointed, where the Diuine service is to be used, there to heare the same read and preached, unlesse for the present by sicknesse or other seruice he be impeached upon paine to lose his dayes wages for the first, two dayes wages for the second, and so to be encreased by the discretion of the Judge, and for euery such

default in the Souldier, aswell the Captaine as his inferiour officers, to be punished with like penaltie.

4. And seeing it well beseemeth all Christians, especially such as professe the militarie seruice, to passe away the time in matters requisite for their profession: And because no time can be more vainely spent, then that which is consumed in unlawfull games, besides the breeding of much contention, and quarrelles: And for that there be many allowable and commendable exercises for all sortes of men to use: Therefore it is streightly commanded, that no priuate Souldiour or inferiour Officer shall frequent the playing at Dice and Cardes, nor any other unlawfull games, upon pain of two dayes imprisonment for the first time, and for after committing the like, to be further punished by the Judges discretion.

5. And for that it often happeneth, that by permitting of many vagrant idle women in an armie, sundry disorders and horrible abuses are committed: Therefore it is ordeined that no man shall carrie into the fiede, or deteine with him in the place of his garrison, any woman whatsoever, other than such as be knowen to be his lawful wife, or such other women to tende the sicke and to serue for launders, as shall be thought meete by the Marshall, upon paine of whipping and banishment.

6. And insomuch as clemencie amongst men of warre in some respects is a singuler vertue: It is ordeined that no man in any part of this seruice that he shall doe, shal lay violent handes upon any woman with childe, or lying in childebed, olde persons, widowes, yong virgins, or babes, without especial order from the Magistrate, upon pain of death.

7. What person soeuer that shall be commonly giuen to drunkennesse or riotously behaue himselfe, shall be banished the Armie.

8. Whosoever shall conceale, or in any sort keepe secrete Treason, any dangerous Conspiracie, or other practice which may be hurtfull, and may concerne the perill of her Maiesties person, or of her General, or the estate of the Armie, and shall not with all diligence reueale the same either unto the Generall, or some other Officer of especial trust, shall incurre the paines of death with torments.

9. No man shall haue speeche or conference, send message, deliuer or receiue letters to or from the enemie, or any of his confederates, either secretly or openly, without manifesting the same presently unto the Generall or Marshall, or having former authoritie so to doe upon paine of death.

10. No man being in this seruice shal depart ye Campe or place of Garrison for any cause whatsoever, without the Generals especial Passport, or other head Officer authorized, upon pain of death.

11. No man shall breake out or leaue the order of his ranke,

being once ordered in the field by the Marshall or Sergeant Maior, without some great occasion first made known unto the saide Officer, upon paine of losse either of life or limme, at the discretion of the Generall or of the Marshall.

12. No man appointed to watch or warde, shall shun or depart the place, neither shall sleepe, or neglect his duetie therein especially after the watch is set and the woorde giuen, unless he is orderly relieued, or for some great occasion enforced, with licence of his Captaine or Officer, upon paine of death.

13. No man shal bewray the watchworde to the enemy or to any other, or giue any other woorde than is deliuered by the Officer, upon paine of death with torment.

14. No man shal raise any mutinie, or procure unlawfull assemblies upon priuate, secrete, or hidden purpose, whereby to disturbe the peace and quiet of the Armie, upon paine of death.

15. No man shall lift up his weapon against the Magistrate his Captain or Officer, upon paine of death.

16. No man shall quarrell, brawle, or make any affray within the Campe or Toun of garrison, upon olde malice, or newe occasion whatsoever, but shall complaine to the Officer, who is to decide the cause and punish the partie offending, upon paine of losse of life or limme, at the discretion of the Generall or Marshall.

17. And whereas sundrie nations are to serue with us in these warres, so as through diuersitie of languages occasion of many controuersies may arise or happen to growe: It is therefore ordeined, that if any person of English nation shall finde him selfe agriued with any wrong profered him by any foreiner, that then without profering further reuenge he shall signifie the same unto his Captaine or other officer, whereby order may be taken so, as no further quarrell growe thereof, but that quietnesse in all respects may be preserued, upon pain of such punishment as the head officers shall thinke meete, either by losse of life or limme.

18. No man appointed to the defence of any Breach, Trench, or Streight, either Captaine or Souldiour, shall willingly leaue it, or upon any false or imagined cause or excuse, shall absent himselfe from the place, without sufficient warrant, upon paine of death.

19. No Captaine, officer, or other person, shall receiue or entertaine any other mans Souldiour or seruant, without consent of his former Captaine or Master, neither shall entice another mans Souldiour from him, upon paine of losse of a Monethes wages, and to retere the partie to his former Captaine or Master.

20. No man shall enrolle his name under two Captaines, nor muster in seuerall companies at one time, or otherwise pass in another mans name, or lende Armour, weapon, or other furniture

upon the muster day, whereby to abuse her Maiestie, and weaken the present seruice, upon paine of a moneths imprisonment, and banishment.

21. No man shall embezill or diminish any of his Armour, weapon and furniture, which is appointed him by his Captaine, unlesse he can prooue that he lost the same in seruice: And that no man shall take in pawne any Souldiours weapon or furniture, upon paine to the Souldiour of loss of his place, and to the other that shall take it in pawne, the losse of the double value.

22. No man shall play away, engage, or lende away his furniture, but shall alwayes keepe his Armour and weapon cleane and seruiceable, upon paine of being discharged.

23. No man shall deceitfully take away his companions prouision, victuals, or furniture, upon paine of imprisonment.

24. No person traueyling, lodging, or abiding in any the Tounes or Countires of her Maiesties friendes or Allies, shall in any wise exact or take by force from the people either victuall or other goods whatsoever, without present payment, or other sufficient order to the iust satisfaction of the partie, upon paine of death.

25. No man shall forestall any victuals brought for the Campe or place of garrison, but suffer the same peacefully to come into the Market place, there to be rated and priced by the Marshall or his officer, before he buy the same, upon paine of death.

26. No man shall robbe or spoyle any Shop or Tent, or any victualler or Marchant comming for the relief of the Campe or garison, but in all good sort shall entertaine and defend them, upon paine of death.

27. No Souldiour commanded at any time to take victuals for certaine dayes, shall exceede the same dayes, or spend the same otherwise then according to the proportion and time allowed him, upon paine of imprisonment or other such punishment as the lawfull officers shall appoint.

28. No man shall distress or spoyle any person standing on her Maiesties partie, or being under the Generals protection, upon paine of death.

29. No man shall disobey or transgresse any Proclamation made by Drumme or Trumpet, set forth by the generall, upon such paine as he shall set forth.

30. No man shall resist the Prouost or his other officer in apprehending of any malefactor, but if need require, shall ayde and assist him therein, or otherwise if by such occasion any escape be made it is ordeined that euery person by whose defaulte the escape was committed, shall suffer like punishment that the parties so escaped should haue endured.

31. No man shall molest or trouble any person beeing under his owne regiment, or the leading of any other, once placed by the Marshall forrier, or Harbinger in the Campe or Toun, but quietly to permit and suffer euery one to enioye his seuerall rounge or lodging, unless it be by mutuall consent and agreement, neither shall any man lodge out of his Captaines quarter without licence, upon paine of imprisonment.

32. No man contrarie to order shal set on fire or burne any house, milne, or corne, nor at dislodging or remoouing shall set the Campe on fire, without speciall commaundement from the Generall or other head Officer present, upon paine of death.

33. No man without great occasion shall make Alarme, but if any chaunce to arise, then shall euery man presently repaire in all haste unto his appointed place, unless some true excusable cause do hinder him, upon paine of death.

34. No man shall harbour or receaue into his lodging any person being a stranger, or of our owne nation not being enrolled in her Maesties paye, but shall presently acquaint the Generall or Marshall with his name, countrey, the time of his coming, and busines, upon paine of imprisonment, and losse of his place and wages.

35. No man shall talke or haue conuersation with any Trumpeter or Drummer of the enemies, or other sent in message, but such as be appointed by the Generall, upon paine of death.

36. No man shall attende upon the cariages, but such as are appointed to that charge, neither linger, or loyter behind with them to ride or ease themselues, unlesse it be such as by sicknesse, hurtes, or other infirmities knownen to the officers, to be permitted so, upon paine of imprisonment and loss of wages.

37. No man shall attempt to goe a foraging, without the officer appointed for that purpose deliuer them a sufficient garde for their defence, upon paine of death.

38. No Captaine shall sende forth any men to doe any enterprise, twithout knowledge of the Generall, or chiefe officer appointed hereunto, upon paine of losse of his place.

39. All priuate Captaines, being no head Officers, shall watch and warde with their Ensignes, unlesse it be by speciall leaue, upon paine of the losse of a months paye, and for the second time, loss of his place.

40. Euery Souldiour shall present such prisoners as are taken, to their Captaine immediately at their return to the Campe, and none shall either kill them, or licence them to depart, without commaundement or leaue from the Generall, or other head Officer thereunto appointed, upon paine of being disarmed, and banished the Campe.

41. Euery Souldier at all times in service shalbe obedient and fauthfull, aswell to their Captaines as other inferiour Officers, and not to refuse direction of any under whom they are appointed to serue, upon paine of imprisonment, and losse of a moneths wages.

42. Euery man shall support and defende his owne Ensigne both night and day, and shall resort unto the same upon the first warning, and not depart untill it be brought into safetie, upon paine of death.

43. Euery souldier shal diligently obserue and learne the sound of Drums, Fifes, and Trumpets, to the end he may know how to answere the same in his seruice.

44. No man shall slaughter or kill any beast of what nature soeuer within the Campe or Garrison, but in such places as are appointed for that purpose, nor shall suffer the garbage to remain unburied, neither shall any man trouble or defile the waters adioyning, but in the lower part of the streame some good distance from the Camp, upon payne of imprisonment.

45. No man shall ease himselfe or defile the Campe or Toune of Garrison, save in such places as is appointed for that purpose, upon paine of imprisonment, and such further punishment, as shall be thought meete by the chiefe Officers.

46. No Captaine shall sell or ransome his prisoner without license of the Generall, and shall not suffer them to depart without making the high Marshall priuie to the same, upon paine of losse of his prisoner, and imprisonment.

47. If any man doe take a prisoner or hostie, he shall immediately after hee is returned unto the Campe or Toune of Garrison, make his Captaine or Governour acquainted therewith, and the Captaine shall declare the same unto the Marshall, who euery eight dayes shall make certificate thereof unto the Generall, upon paine of imprisonment, and further punishment as the Generall shall set doun.

48. In Marching by the fieldes, no man at the putting up of any Hare, or other beast shal make any shout or crie, whereby to disquiet or stay the rest of the bands, but to use all quietnesse and silence in their march, upon paine of imprisonment.

49. No man shall give up or deliuer unto the enemies any place left to his charge or keeping, upon paine of death.

50. If any man flie to the enemies, or be taken upon his departure towards them, he shall suffer death.

51. Any Captaine finding any Souldiour of what band or company so euer, which hath transgressed any of these Lawes and Ordinances, may take him and bring him unto the Marshall to be punished.

52. That who soeuer shall be enrolled into paye after the othe be ministred to others and he not present, and if afterwards he shall

transgresse any of these Ordinances, he shall be as well punishable by vertue of these Articles, as if he had bene present at the first.

53. That no Captaine shall receiue or enroll any person into his paye under him, but that he cause the sayde Souldier to receiue the othe, as is set doune in the first Article, upon paine to the Captaine for not obseruing the same, of losse of a months paye.

54. That no person whatsoever shal passe by any other way either in Toune or Campe, but at the ordinarie gates and passages, upon paine of death.

55. All other offences and Actes that may tende to disorder not comprised within these articles, shalbe subiect to such manner of punishment, as the Lieutenant Generall shall inflict upon them, as if it had been specially expressed and set doune.

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