GEORGE II was the last king of England to lead an army in battle, and it may be recalled that his strategic grasp and tactical understanding were by no means of a high order, since that same battle of Dettingen in 1743 saw George's mistakes redeemed only by the folly of the French commander who threw away the advantages proffered by royal ineptitude. Brave but stupid must be the verdict upon his abilities as a commander.  

Unfortunately for George his shortcomings in the field mask the very real services that he rendered the British army in the course of forty-five years, as Prince of Wales and, from 1727, as king of England. This was in the nature of a family contribution. The royal house of Hanover rendered the army service of considerable worth in three generations, in the persons of George I and II and the latter's second son William Augustus, duke of Cumberland, whose merit is perpetually obscured by his unfortunate nickname of "the butcher", acquired during the suppression of the Forty-Five in Scotland. By personal effort they preserved the army from the dangers that threatened its efficiency from parliamentary influence and interference, and from the hazards of peace which its unco-ordinated state made it ill-qualified to meet. In so doing, in introducing various highly necessary measures and, above all, in giving the army and its officers a personal lead, they created the efficient and experienced force which helped to win the Seven Years' War on land for Britain. The battle of Minden, all the military glories of the annus mirabilis, and the successes of other years, were as much due to the Hanoverian monarchs and

1 For a description of the battle see Sir J. W. Fortescue, History of the British Army, ii (1910), pp. 93-102. The king behaved with great gallantry. He was in the field of battle the whole time, and on being beseeched by his attendants not to expose himself so much he replied, "What do you think I came here for, to be a poltroon?" (Historical Manuscripts Commission, Chequers Court MSS. (1900), pp. 253, 260-1).
their royal prince as to the bravery of the officers and men who fought their battles. This has not been given the recognition which is its due.¹

To appreciate this it is necessary to return to the time of the Hanoverian succession. When peace was signed in 1713 the prospects of the officers and men of the army were unassured. A war which, with one intermission, had lasted a generation had just been concluded and a long period of uninterrupted peace was confidently forecast and eagerly expected by all. The army was greatly reduced in size. Most of its members were cast upon half-pay with little prospect of returning to full employment and the happy few retained for service were conveniently forgotten.²

¹ This side of their activities has long been neglected, if not altogether ignored, and has certainly never been explored in detail. Fortescue’s History and his contribution to the symposium Johnson’s England (1933) are very perfunctory in their notice and are of little use in this respect. The relevant passages of Basil Williams’ volume in the Oxford History of England are no better, though he does acknowledge that George I and George II “insisted on having a decisive voice in the organization and direction of the army” and concedes that Cumberland “initiated several useful reforms” (p. 207). The articles in the Dictionary of National Biography hardly mention their interest in military affairs and neglect to consider the duke’s reforms, whilst the two-volume life of Cumberland by Evan Charteris (1913, 1925) is disappointing on the subject of reform. F. H. Skrine’s “Fontenoy” (1906) is interesting but insufficient, whilst S. Pargellis’ Military Affairs in North America 1748-65, compiled largely from the Cumberland Papers in the Royal Archives at Windsor, contains some material relevant to the present subject.

In short, detail is almost completely lacking, and nothing new has been produced for many years. This article is an interim attempt to remedy the omission and is based on material collected, for the most part, during two years of study for an M.A. thesis in the University of London on an allied subject. Its justification lies partly in the present lacuna, and partly in that, though unable for the present to continue the study in detail because of overseas service, the material already collected appears to warrant an attempt at synthesis. Respecting the Cumberland Papers, which date for the most part from 1745 onwards, though useful for the period of the duke’s reforms, they are of little use for the military activities of his father and grandfather, save for 150 letters written by George II in 1757. There are very few of their papers at Windsor, and it is not certain whether the main body of them have survived. They may be in Hanover, and the Royal Librarian is enquiring into the possibility at the moment.

² The rising of 1715 caused a great many to be recalled for service, but its suppression saw the majority relegated once more to slender means and obscurity. Many of these officers stayed ten or even twenty years on half-pay before being restored to employment. Walter Molesworth, an experienced captain of dragoons, deprecated his own and his brother Richard’s chances of getting back to full pay.
The army that settled down to peace-time soldiering was ill-fashioned to withstand the onslaught of privilege, and even less so to combat the insidious dangers of peace itself and the lethargy it would bring in its train. At this time it was an army only in name. It consisted of a congeries of separate regiments, unco-ordinated save for the barest administrative supervision. There were no brigades, divisions, or headquarters staffs, as we know them today, and the regiments were entirely individual entities, responsible for recruiting, clothing, equipping, training and generally looking after themselves, under shadowy government directives. There was no such thing as a prescribed and uniform system of drill and weapon-training, nor were there any concerted manoeuvres above the level of an occasional field day in which a few companies or, at best, a regiment or two took part. With regiments scattered about the face of the country in small detachments, instead of being grouped in larger formations and housed in camps or barracks, little else could be expected. Duties in aid of the civil power, in effect home-policing, were the lot of the military in the united kingdoms. There was no organized system of inspection in time of peace. All that was done depended almost entirely upon the colonels and lieutenant-colonels of the individual regiments. Generally speaking, their imagination or lethargy had scope to run its full course. It is easy to see how such an army could deteriorate when the spur of active service was removed.

Privilege, however, constituted the more pressing danger, "Things stand as they did in regard to the gallant colonel and I", he informed his eldest brother. "These dragoon captains and colonels are immortal". It was seven years before they were both employed again (Molesworth MSS., H.M.C., Various Collections, viii. 280).

1 With the exception of arms and ammunition which were supplied by government from the Tower of London and other arsenals.

2 For an account of the administrative machinery of the army at this time see volume i of Major-General A. Forbes’ three-volume History of the Army Ordnance Services (1929), which is the most useful and the most detailed account available. Though relating to a later period, E. E. Curtis, The Organisation of the British Army in the American Revolution is also of use. Fortescue’s relevant volume is weak on administration. A valuable contemporary account is the Report on the State of His Majesty’s Land Forces and Marines, June 1746 in Reports from Committees of the House of Commons (1803), ii, Miscellaneous subjects 1738-65, pp. 75-211.
since it provided the means to encourage and accelerate the disintegratory influences already in being. In the army privilege was construed by influence—"interest", as the eighteenth century designated it—and by parliamentary influence in particular. The social composition of the officer group and the manner in which officers were obtained and their promotion regulated made the army particularly susceptible to parliamentary wire pulling. At least one-quarter of the officers of the army were obtained from among the immediate offspring of the titled and untitled landowning class, and since this class provided the majority of members of parliament its political predominance ensured that its sons, relatives and protégés would not want for assistance in their chosen career.¹ The highest posts went invariably to officers from this class, who throughout the period under review held most of the senior appointments, including the majority of the financially-rewarding colonelcies of regiments.² This situation obtained largely because of two things: the fact that promotion

¹ In his autobiographical fragment Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons 1728-61, narrates how he established his younger brother Richard in the Army and did his best for him thereafter. Richard became a lieutenant-general, colonel of one of the troops of Horse Grenadier Guards and governor of Plymouth. "What part I have had in all except the last (Plymouth) of particular military commands in his after promotions, and in other benefits to him", commented Arthur obliquely, "he best knows" (H.M.C. 14th Report, Part ix (1895), pp. 501-2).

² Between 1714 and the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763 there were 374 appointments to the proprietary colonelcies. (This number is exclusive of the twenty colonels who were dismissed from the army because of their Jacobite leanings within a year of George I's succession, and of the regimental commanders of many of the new levies raised during the second half of the Seven Years' War who, probably for political considerations, were not colonels proper but had the rank of major or lieutenant-colonel commandants.) Of this number around 170 were owners of landed estates at the time of their death, and a further 100 who were younger sons of peers and baronets, and of untitled country gentry, equally divided, may be added; for though not themselves men of property they were close to the landed interest and formed an integral part of it. Of the group remaining, about a third came from the educated middle and professional class, including a number who were the sons of career officers with little besides their pay; another third were first or second generation Huguenot refugees; and the remainder I have been, up to the present time, unable to trace. These figures were compiled during work on a thesis now deposited in the University of London library and the Institute of Historical Research, which examined the social and professional background of the officers of the Army 1714-63.
went essentially by purchase, that is, by the acquisition of rank for money; and the way in which preferment was managed. The first ensured that as a rule only men with the necessary wealth would qualify for the higher ranks, and the second, which was conditioned by "interest" of one kind or another, especially by parliamentary "interest", ensured that only those who could command influence would usually be successful. The channels through which promotion matters were conducted made this almost a certainty. The king decided all matters of promotion: his signature was an essential feature of an officer's commission. But for all save the highest appointments, applications went first to the War Office whose head, the secretary at war, in effect the king's private secretary for military affairs, placed them before the monarch. Since this official was a politician it follows that parliamentary "interest" was a powerful adjunct to successful promotion. It could hardly be otherwise.

The army was thus bedevilled by the inescapable fact that its promotion was in large measure determined by political "interest". Military preferment was essentially a branch of political patronage, in which jobs could be managed to placate, induce and reward men with votes and followings in parliament.1 In this way was the king's government maintained. Everything conspired to make privilege the dominant influence in the army and without a curb on purchase and some restraint on parlia-

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1 The period is noteworthy for a marked increase in the number of serving officers sitting in both Houses, colonels and above for the most part. They could therefore take an active part in securing their own promotions. The number of colonels sitting in Parliament was high. Significantly nearly all of them came from the landed group detailed above. 113 of the colonels were members of the lower house at some stage of their career, usually during the latter part of it, and twenty-seven who were English peers and twelve who were elected Scottish peers sat in the upper house during this period, making a total of 152 parliamentarians out of the 374 colonels under consideration. This figure is confined to officers actually holding regimental colonelcies, and it would be increased were officers included who held colonel's or general officer's rank alone, that is, without a regiment. There were also a considerable number of colonels in the two houses of the Irish parliament. Besides the group of colonels, there was a lesser number of regimental officers in the English parliament, so that the total military "interest", which was part of the landed "interest" rather than one in itself, was quite appreciable.
mentary "interest" the situation could be exploited almost indefinitely, with most serious results.

Among the many dangers arising from the undue exercise of privilege two were particularly serious, because of their impact upon the regimental officers and the efficiency of their regiments. It was too easy for officers with parliamentary interest to represent their various needs, particularly for leave of absence, direct to the secretary at war instead of to their regimental superiors, and in the absence of a secretary with scruples and some sense of the responsibilities of his office this could lead to great injustice. Moreover, this kind of privilege superimposed on their initial advantage in promotion matters might be calculated to have the worst effects upon the moral of the rest of the officer group, many of whom did not possess any "interest". The discipline, morale and efficiency of the regimental officers were gravely endangered in consequence. Over-privilege had a vast potential for doing harm, so weakening the already precarious structure of the army. From the direction of purchase another danger threatened, and this was a serious one since it might well have impeded the Crown's ability to make changes for the better. It was occasioned by the gradual extension of purchase to include even the colonelcies of regiments which was becoming increasingly noticeable by the year 1714. If colonelcies were to be bought and sold like so many commercial concerns a business ring would come into being that would by its very nature make reform very difficult to achieve, particularly since the colonels were securely buttressed in parliament. This was a peril of which, it would seem, the Crown was not aware, and it was only averted because George I detested purchase in all its manifestations and was concerned to find that its operation would prevent him from rewarding deserving officers whose means did not measure up to their merit.

All these were evils capable of effortless expansion were their progress allowed to continue unchecked. In the first few years

1 Action must speak in place of words in this matter since recorded utterances on the subject are few; but what evidence there is leads one to conclude that such was the case, and that the army was saved from the menace of complete "ownership" only because the Georges disliked "purchase" and did not like to see colonelcies changing hands between rich officers to the virtual exclusion of others who were deserving men but not so well endowed with this world's riches.
after the peace the traditions of the war and the liveliness caused by the Jacobite rising prevented their full potential being realized; but had not a prince come to the throne who was intensely interested in his army, was resentful of undue parliamentary interference with it, and was by no means willing to let his politician secretary at war be anything but his servant and mouthpiece, the probability is that the worst features of the

1 The position of the secretary at war in this period bore many anomalies, besides the one that is generally cited when the office is discussed, i.e. that he had power without parliamentary responsibility. His power itself was subject to fluctuation, in that he could have much or very little. Measured by the extent to which he could control military patronage and effect favours for people, it would vary in direct proportion to the interest his sovereign took in his army. All military patronage was the king's, to be controlled and dispensed as he willed. In theory the secretary at war was the latter's private secretary for military affairs and was only the mouthpiece and instrument of his royal master; but under a weak or a disinterested king he could usurp the royal powers and could make himself a powerful personage through the control he could exert over army patronage, particularly if he was able to view his charge with cynical indifference. Under the early Georges the practice of the situation did correspond with its theory, although Sir John Fortescue did not think so when he wrote the second volume of his History (1910). This view did not escape challenge at the time. See C. Dalton, George the First's Army, 2 vols. (1912), ii, p. xxv.

Fortescue's exaggeration sprang from his conviction that even in his own day political influence in the army was too powerful; and since he had a poor opinion of the army in the first half of the eighteenth century, whose shortcomings he traced to Walpole and his system of government, whereby "politicians had assumed command of the army", he was prompted to conclude of the earlier period, "The roots of the evil lay far deeper than now in the overweening supremacy of the Secretary at War" (ibid. ii. 27). He does not do justice to the figure of the monarch in control of the army, nor to the amount of improvement which the Hanoverians managed to achieve by their reforms and their wholesome attitude. It is inevitable therefore, that he apportions too much power to the secretaries who, in reality, remained such, though their opportunities for effecting jobs was still considerable. The secretaries themselves seem to have been aware of the niceties of their position. William Pulteney, later earl of Bath, wrote in 1717, "A Secretary-at-War is a ministerial, not a constitutional, office, bound to issue orders according to the King's directions" (Dalton, ii. p. xxv), which, as he told one sufferer, "I must own do's Sometimes subject me to the performance of some ungratefull tasks, as it does in this Particular." Deploring his inability to help, he continued, "... I am conscious my Self how little Weight my Opinion or Advice can deserve with his Ma'ty. And therefore I have hitherto on no Acct ever presumed to give it. All I aim at is faithfully to Execute Whatever Commands his Ma'ty shall give me and by my fidelity (the only way I have) endeavour to render my Self in some measure deserving of the hon' he has done me in putting me into this Office" (Public Record Office, W.O.4/17, fols. 136-7). The actions and
army's situation would have been exploited, with disastrous results.

George I appears to have been horrified with the army he inherited from his predecessor. Quickly he decided that action must be taken to curb the iniquities that marred it in his sight. The greatest of these was the purchase system. The buying and selling of the various commissioned ranks had been regarded with disfavour by William and Anne;¹ but against the vested interests constituted by the vast corporation of serving officers they could do little but introduce regulations that were largely ignored. Coming from a German state where purchase was not a feature of military promotion, George was determined to put a stop to the practice. He made no secret of his attitude which was one of the strongest disapproval. In 1714 he stigmatized it as "that Evil Practice", and two years later his secretary at war wrote to one colonel, "... it is scarce possible for any who has not applied to the King to conceive the great aversion he always expresses upon the mention of leave for any officer to dispose of his commission, and everybody is discouraged from speaking on that head".² However, even George with his authoritarian tenets was powerless against the business ring. Although he made determined efforts to prohibit purchase several times in his reign³ the system had

phraseology adopted by later secretaries seem to indicate a similar attitude. The whole question of the relations between the first two Hanoverian kings and their secretaries at war, and their relative share in the direction of the army, has yet to be the subject of a detailed modern investigation.

¹ For an account of William and Anne's warrants see C. M. Clode, The Military Forces of the Crown (2 vols., 1869), ii. 75-9.
² Quoted by Clode, ii. 606-7.
³ Several royal warrants endeavoured to encompass the practice within strict regulations which emphasized the sole authority of the king in such matters, restricted selling to those who had already bought, regulated price and enjoined strict adherence to the tariff-scale introduced. The royal warrants of February 1720 and March 1722 are quoted in Clode, ii. 79 ff. It is unfortunate that so few copies of these and other warrants seem to have survived. No collection of them has been made at the British Museum, the Public Record Office or the War Office Library. Where copies have been preserved, it seems to have occurred by chance. There is a copy of the 1720 warrant in the P.R.O., S.P. (Domestic) 41/5; and a copy of George III's warrant of 1766 is included among Lord John Murray's papers deposited with the Bagshawe Muniments in The John Rylands Library, in the bundle 5/2/16-57. There must be others. Besides the warrants, which were not altogether successful, George from time to time would become obstinate
roots which went too deep to be easily dislodged. Too many officers had purchased and had a recognised right to sell, violation of which would occasion serious dissatisfaction with the monarch. The army was powerfully entrenched in parliament among the land-owning classes who provided the army with so many of its officers. George could not afford to make such a blatant attack on property.¹ At the same time there was much that he could do to reduce the number of purchase negotiations and to ensure that less fortunate officers were treated with some degree of fairness and consideration. In his capacity as commander-in-chief the king had the final word in the selection of officers to fill vacancies. He could therefore refuse to countenance the more objectionable transactions that were put before him, and he could appoint whom he wished to fill the non-purchase vacancies created when any officer died or when he himself decreed that the officer making the vacancy had no right to sell.² All of these things he did, paying due regard to merit and seniority whenever he could. It was also a cardinal point of his policy to bring back deserving officers from the half-pay list, to which they had been consigned against their will at the end of the wars. In so doing he earned the loyalty and gratitude of all professional officers who felt, rightly, that here was someone with a real concern for their interests.

By making his influence felt in this way George accustomed his officers to look to the monarch rather than to the politicians about permitting purchase negotiations to proceed. In February 1717 Richard Worthington, agent to Rich, fifth viscount Irwin’s 16th Regiment of foot, was told by Mr. Merrill, the Secretary at War’s deputy, that the king “wou’d not any longer give leave to the Custom of Selling and buying Commissions but more especially when the Seller had not bought . . .”, and at the same time Lord Cobham was refused permission to change two of the officers of his regiment of dragoons by purchase. See Irwin Papers, Central Library, Leeds, fols. 82, 87. A later instance is to be found in P.R.O., W.O.4/25, fol. 21.

¹ The Journals of the House of Commons might provide useful material for an assessment of the parliamentary opposition to George’s purchase reforms, nothing of which is known at the present time.

² The letterbooks of his secretaries at war in the P.R.O. provide much evidence of this, e.g. W.O.4/22, fols./24-5, W.O.4/25, fol. 116. George II felt exactly the same on these points, e.g. W.O.4/46, fol. 338 and many places elsewhere, also Bagshawe MSS. 2/2/317.
for a lead in military affairs,\(^1\) and his son's equally great interest in his army ensured that the situation continued to develop in this way. The assumption of this key position at the summit of the military pyramid was stressed by Frederick the Great, later in the century, as being of the utmost importance in the creation of a professional *Offizierkorps* such as he and his predecessors established in Prussia.\(^2\) To a lesser extent George I and George II did this in England, under the different social and political circumstances in which they found themselves. Officers did become accustomed to look to the king for their rewards and encouragement,\(^3\) although they did not always receive them from suspicious and ungracious majesty.\(^4\)

The success of any attempt to create a professional *Offizierkorps* on the German model, which is what the Hanoverian monarchs

\(^1\) In 1734 Cuthbert Ellison of Hebburn, a north country gentleman who was major of the 8th Dragoons in Ireland, wrote from his quarters in Dublin to say he would shortly be home on leave and must go to London, "since it is both my Duty and Interest to pay my court to his Majesty, as I have never been presented to him since he pleas'd to make me a Field Officer" (Carr-Ellison MSS., Central Library, Gateshead-on-Tyne, A 18, letter of 19 March 1733/34).

\(^2\) For a detailed account of Frederick's measures, and for those of his father, see K. Jany, *Geschichte der Königlichen Preussischen Armee* (4 vols., 1928-30), i.722-37, ii. 219-36.

\(^3\) Although they still looked to politicians in hopes of preferment, particularly to the important members of an administration who could reasonably expect to have some at least of their wishes gratified. When George II refused to give a regiment to George Stanhope, a Guards officer of reasonable seniority, Lord Chesterfield, his patron and at the time one of the secretaries of state, was so put out by this display of royal intransigence that he said, "he believed he was the first Secretary of State that could not get an old Lieutenant-Colonel, though before it was his rank, into a regiment, and that he was not sure his protection had not hurt him" (Marchmont Papers, ed. Sir G. Rose (3 vols., 1831), i. 225-7, 214, 252 for the whole affair).

\(^4\) Samuel Bagshawe, a Derbyshire country gentleman and a protégé of the duke of Devonshire, and by all accounts a first-class officer, was refused promotion to a colonelcy by George II. "How can he serve, wanting a leg and an eye?", he enquired testily of Sir John Ligonier, the commander in chief, who had presented his petition, unmindful of the fact that poor Bagshawe had lost both in his service (John Rylands Library, B 15/1/28). For a full account of Bagshawe, the regiments in which he served, and his brother officers and acquaintances of a generation's soldiering (1730-62), see his papers which are deposited with the rest of the Bagshawe Muniments in The John Rylands Library, Manchester, probably the largest collection of papers relating to the military history of this period, and certainly the most important.
seem to have tried to do almost as a matter of instinct, was bound to be affected by the degree to which political influence in promotions and appointments could be excluded or controlled. The mechanism of eighteenth-century government in England made it impossible to exclude political influence from the army, but the Georges did their best to keep it under reasonable control. They felt very strongly on the subject, and any display of undue parliamentary "interest" was calculated to rouse them thoroughly. Lord Hervey records what Sir Robert Walpole had to say to him about George II in this connection:

How many people there are I could bind to me by getting things done in the army you may imagine, and that I can never get any one thing done in it you perhaps will not believe; but it is as true as that there is an army that I never ask for the smallest commission by which a Member of Parliament may be immediately or collaterally obliged, that the King's answer is not "I won't do that; you want always to have me disoblige all my old soldiers; you understand nothing of troops; I will order my army as I think fit; for your scoundrels of the House of Commons you may do as you please; you know I never interfere, nor pretend to know anything of them, but this province I will keep to myself".1

Sir Robert was probably speaking in a moment of exasperation, since there was much that he could accomplish in the army;2 but if the detail is exaggerated the substance is correct. George II did not like parliamentary "interest" to operate in his army, but this could not, unfortunately, prevent politicians from exercising a profound influence upon military promotions. As has already been pointed out, military patronage was one of the means employed by government to produce favourable political results,


2 A good example is to be found in *H.M.C., Carlisle MSS.*, in 15th Report, part 6 (1897), pp. 137-8. In 1734 the Hon. Charles Howard, a younger son of the third earl of Carlisle, became colonel and aide-de-camp to his majesty, after eighteen years service. He had been in parliament as member for Carlisle since 1727, and was a supporter of Sir Robert Walpole, to whom his new post was entirely owing. How it came about is detailed in a letter to his father: "Towards the latter end of this session Sir Robert shewed me a good deal of civility, and told me he had something to propose to me which he believed I should like. I went to him; his proposal did not suit my inclinations, so after thanking him for his offer, told him, if he thought me deserving any mark of the King's favour, I rested it with him, and did not doubt but that he might have an opportunity of taking notice of me. In about a fortnight after, he told me there was Groom of the Bedchamber to the King, or his Aid de Camp, vacant; that he could carry either for me; which did I choose?"
and for this reason alone the army could never be free from parliamentary influence.

This was particularly the case when colonelcies and posts of profit had to be filled. These frequently became the pawns in political manoeuvres. The appointment of William, eighth earl of Home to the colonelcy of the 48th Regiment in 1750 was the result of protracted bargaining between the ministers and the duke of Argyll, whose protégé Home was. The substance of the agreement was that if Home was given a colonelcy Argyll would withdraw his opposition to the re-election of Lord Marchmont as a representative Scottish peer, which was effectually blocking Marchmont's return to the political scene. And when William, first earl Cadogan died in July 1726 the disposal of his regiment, the First Guards, was bound up with the expediency of conferring a regiment upon John, second duke of Argyll who, although restored to favour since he was removed from all his employments in 1717, had not been given back his regiment. Ten days intervened between the earl's death and the reshuffle of appointments, during which time frenzied intrigues took place. "I never in my whole life time was possessed with so many hopes and fears as I have been since Saturday last", wrote one of Duncan Forbes of Culloden's London friends, "The whole Ministers say and swear, that they will do their utmost to satisfy him [Argyll], I hope they will, for their own sakes, the Kings and Countrys sake and the honest worthy gallant mans quiet". Argyll got a regiment, but the issue was long in doubt.

It seems fairly clear that as far as the distribution of colonelcies

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1 See the story of the transactions, narrated in rather equivocal and evasive language, in Marchmont Papers, i. 224, 265-7. Such manoeuvring was quite common, and widely recognized. In 1721 Colonel Richard Molesworth had been three years on half-pay after his dragoon regiment had been disbanded, and there was no sign of his re-appointment as colonel of another, whereupon his father, the first viscount, told his elder brother that he might be sure they would do nothing for Richard out of his turn, "and upon the falling of a regiment they make such bargains that nobody can guess when it will come to his turn...." (H.M.C., Molesworth MSS., in Various Collections viii (1913), 313). The father was in a position to know since he had been a member of the English Commons for many years and was a junior office holder. Richard was a keen and competent officer; see ibid. preface and pp. 268-9.

2 Ed. D. Warrand, More Culloden Papers (1923-30), iii. 6-8.
was concerned the king’s hands were partially tied and that his
decisions were largely made for him by the politicians who carried
on his government. It was difficult for it to be otherwise. On the
other hand, a survey of the appointments to colonelcies in the two
reigns shows that despite the limitations imposed by political ex­
pediency the officers promoted to colonelcies were deserving of
them, by virtue of their experience and length of service in the
subordinate ranks. This, in turn, indicates that the officer-
structure of the individual regiments of the army was fundamen­
tally sound, and that George could assent to these “political”
promotions without having to make any undue compromise with
his conscience and opinions. This situation was undoubtedly the
fruit of the Hanoverians’ general policy which ensured that officers
could arrive at lieutenant-colonels’ rank, and so be eligible for
promotion to colonel, only after a certain period of time. There
were no real short-cuts.

In the disposal of the junior commissions the king had a more
effective say, since they were not, to some extent, such important
tokens of political power. “Interest”, however, was still the
predominating factor, and merit was in consequence often put
on one side. Unless it was possessed to a superlative degree,
merit was unlikely to advance any poor and obscure officer far
upon the promotion ladder, unless he could attract the attention of

1 Of over 290 officers appointed to colonelcies between 1714 and 1763 (there
were also 81 colonels appointed in previous reigns who continued to serve the new
monarch) nearly 20 had served for over forty-five years before being given a
regiment; another 60 had served between thirty-five to forty-four years; and a
further 70 had served for over twenty-five. In other words, over half the colonels
appointed within the period had served for upwards of a generation before
receiving a regiment as the reward of their labours. Of the remainder, 90 had
over fifteen years service and 40 had served ten years or over.

2 This was, unfortunately, too often the case; but there were commanding
officers high-minded enough to help their less fortunate brethren. In 1762
Samuel Bagshawe assisted Lieutenant Hercules Ellis of his regiment to purchase a
company out of his own pocket, an act that was much appreciated. Of this
officer, a veteran of the earlier war of 1739-48 who had been wounded at Laffeldt,
Bagshawe’s Scottish major wrote, “Was Ellis to Call for a Character I should
very readily say what I know to be true, that he is a Diligent Carefull Officer in the
Station he is in. Tho I do not think him fitt to Command Armys, You cannot
imagine what Pleasure it gives me that you have taken a care of that Man.”
(John Rylands Library, Bagshawe MSS. 2/1/36.) Bagshawe’s action was by no
means unique, which helped to redress the balance.
influential men. In some respects personality was a more useful quality for such an officer to have. The situation was quite disheartening, and to none more so than a conscientious secretary at war and a monarch who wanted to do what was right. The stream of applications and recommendations never ceased to flow, coming, for the most part, from members of both houses and their friends, or bearing their name. After years of office as secretary at war (1755-61, and again 1765-78) Lord Barrington told one of his correspondents that he had adhered to fixed principles in adjusting promotions, "despite dangers from some hundred unreasonable Parliament men, supported by unreasonable but powerful patrons". He harboured no illusions on the subject of parliamentary "interest" and its exponents in the House. "Many years of my life have been spent in warfare against these gentlemen", he remarked in the same letter.¹

It was quite impossible, without a complete change of system, to make an effective stand against the torrent. Since this was not practical, all that could be attempted was a refusal to countenance the worst cases that were placed before them. Jobbery did continue, seemingly unabated in volume, but it was jobbery within bounds, reduced to manageable proportions. There were very few regiments that were not commanded by mature and experienced officers, with seasoned majors and captains to assist them, even at the height of the great expansion of the army in the Seven Years' War. In fact, the officer-structure of any regiment in the latter half of the period under review would bear a close comparison with that of any infantry battalion of today, when regimental promotion is regulated solely by seniority. Under the circumstances of the time this amounts to quite an achievement and it was due very largely to the Hanoverians' dislike of purchase and undue parliamentary interest, and to their determination to regulate promotion according to fixed principles whenever that was possible. Their attitude counted for a great deal.

Besides doing their best to curb parliamentary "interest", the Georges turned their attention to the discipline of their officers, more particularly to their tendency to be absent from

¹ Shute Barrington, The Political Life of William Wildman, viscount Barrington.
duty whenever it suited their private purposes or inclination. There seems to have been a tacit recognition of certain rules before the accession of the Hanoverians, but how far these had or would have any effect in time of peace when duty was slack is indeterminable: the country had been at war too long. The merit of the latter’s work lies most likely not in the fact that they introduced anything new, but in that they re-formulated the existing regulations and did their best to see that officers complied with them in time of peace. It was the insistence upon compliance with their regulations that marked the Georges one and all. Early in his reign George I drew up the “Regulations for the Attendance of Officers in their Quarters”. No copy of this has come to my notice, but it appears to have limited legitimate leave of absence to include up to one-third of each rank at any one time and it reiterated the old ruling that under no circumstances were both the lieutenant-colonel and the major of any regiment to be away from it together. That George meant

1 See P.R.O., W.O.4/17, fol. 39 for one instance.
2 For references to it see P.R.O., W.O.4/25, fols. 19, 125 and elsewhere in the series of letterbooks: but despite recurrent mention of it no actual copy of the regulations appear therein, not even for the year and month of its appearance; and there seems to be no copy retained in the relevant S.P. (Dom.) 45, though it is possible there is one tucked away haphazardly in one of the volumes in that series. However, it was copied for the better regulation of the regiments on the Irish military establishment and there is a hand-written copy of the Irish order in that volume of the Tyrawley Papers relating to Ireland 1716-29, during part of which time the second Lord Tyrawley was a general officer on the staff there (B.M., Add. MS. 23, 636). The provisions of the regulation are obviously the same as must have appeared in the English version, and only the preamble and style have been changed to suit the Irish government. The London Gazette, too, contains no copy of the original instruction, but there is an indication of the fact that the king’s patience was exhausted several months before it went forth in the following order, which appears in the Gazette under the date 14 February 1716-17. “It is His Majesty’s Pleasure, that all Officers belonging to the Land-Forces, in Great Britain, do repair forthwith to their respective Posts, notwithstanding any Furlow or Leave of Absence whatsoever to the contrary upon pain of His Majesty’s severest Displeasure. And it is His Majesty’s further Command, that all Colonels or Officers Commanding in Chief any of the Regiments in His Majesty’s Service in Great Britain, do return to the Secretary at War’s Office, within 15 Days at the farthest from the Date hereof, a List, attested by them, of the Officers absent at that Time from their Posts, with the Reasons of their Absence. By His Majesty’s Command, William Pulteney” [Secretary at War]. This outburst appears to have been prompted by no other motive than righteous indignation.
business is evident from his secretary at war's letters to offenders. They were ordered to return to their duty and warned that they would be superseded if they failed to comply, which was the penalty several of them paid for their prolonged absence and their neglect of the royal instructions.  

Writing in 1724 to one colonel the then secretary at war, Henry Pelham, said he found His Majesty “every day more and more determin'd that all Officers should attend their Duty”. This was no whim of the moment but a set purpose that is evident in the letter-books of his secretary at war throughout his reign. Obviously the king's attitude had most beneficial results. At the same time it must not be imagined that the army was officered by men whose sole thought was how to escape from duty. Leave of absence was not paid, and many officers could not afford to have their pockets lightened in such gratuitous fashion. Moreover, a study of such of their private correspondence as has survived creates a strong impression that the army contained a good leaven of career officers who took a genuine pride in their tasks and in the regiments in which they served. Although leave of absence was

1 For examples see P.R.O., W.O.4/22, fols. 130-31 ; W.O.4/25, fols. 47, 107, 113-14, 117. This kind of thing is to be found in all the letter-books for George I's reign, and conflicts with Fortescue's appraisal of the situation in which he speaks of "unlimited leave of absence" could an officer "bring political influence to bear" (ed. A. S. Turberville, Johnson's England (1933), i. 68), which seems to be rather an exaggerated estimate.

2 P.R.O., W.O.4/25, fol. 120. Henry Pelham was secretary at war from 1724 to 1730.

3 Complaining about his lack of money whilst on leave from his military duty in Ireland, Captain Cuthbert Ellison said his income from the service was "next to Nothing, the Arrears [of pay] being so exceedingly ill-paid, and the Deductions from Officers that are absent so exceedingly high" (Carr-Ellison MSS., A 18, letter of 15 August 1730. See also Bagshawe MSS. 2/2/301).

4 Two collections which give an excellent idea of how officers worked and thought at this time, the good and the bad, are the Bagshawe Papers already mentioned, and the letters of Colonel Charles Russell of the Foot Guards from Flanders between 1742 and 1748, which were published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission as long ago as 1900. (Frankland-Russell-Astley, Chequers Court MSS.) Other collections of considerable value are the Carr-Ellison Papers in the Central Library, Gateshead, which include the letters of General Cuthbert Ellison (1700-85) and his brother Colonel Robert Ellison (1710-55); the Whitefoord Papers edited by W. Hewins published in 1898, much of which relate to Colonel Charles Whitefoord (1700-52); the second and third volumes of the papers of the Mackenzies of Suddie in the British Museum, (Add.
plentiful and, in the main, easily obtained, many of them were loath to leave their commands to the tender mercies of other people.

George had tried to deal with "purchase", parliamentary interest, and with the prevailing indiscipline among his officers. Efficiency and uniformity were his next concern. Within a few years of his accession he introduced a system of annual inspection for all regiments at home. In the summer of each year selected general officers were allocated to different districts, given a list of regiments which they were to inspect, and ordered to report, under certain headings, upon their general condition and efficiency. For the regiments the review was the highlight of the year; being the time when their training and administration during the previous twelve months were put to the test. All officers were obliged to be present, unless allowed to be absent by special certificate that was only given for properly valid reasons, and the number of men in the regiment was expected to tally with the number fixed for its establishment. Clothing, arms and equipment were inspected and reported upon, after which the regiment performed for the inspecting veteran, going through its drill movements and the various firings, that is, the rather complicated fire-maneuuvres used on the battlefields of the day. Some inspecting officers made terse routine reports, others had more to say, much depending upon the calibre, standards, and perversity of the individual concerned. All reports went to the king himself. After the annual inspection the regiment went back to its scattered quarters, many officers and men went on leave, and the recruiting parties set out on their six month task of finding men to make good the MSS. 39,189-90), which include many letters from Lieutenant-Colonel John Mackenzie of the Marines, mostly written in the 'thirties and 'forties; and the Burrard letters in the same place (Add. MS. 34,207) which relate to Lieutenant-Colonel William Burrard (1715-70), mainly during his varied service in the West Indies, 1740-8. Many useful letters written by the military friends and correspondents of Charles, 2nd duke of Richmond (d. 1750) are to be found in A Duke and his Friends (2 vols. 1911) by the earl of March.

1 Fortescue, History, ii. 51.

2 For a description of these evolutions and an account of the development of infantry tactics in this period see Colonel E. M. Lloyd's A History of Infantry (1905).
expected wastage that would ensure before the next training season, the prelude to the review in late summer.¹

George I was no respecter of rank. He was more interested in the good of the army than in wounded feelings. Shortly before annual inspections were introduced he caused grave consternation among certain of his colonels by the manner in which he approved the ungentlemanly conduct of an obscure but over zealous deputy-commissary-general of musters, Gumley by name, who, in addition to satisfying himself that the numbers of the regiments he mustered tallied with their establishment, jotted down his gratuitous comments on their appearance. Gumley was careless enough to leave his muster-rolls in a hackney carriage. The coachman, on discovering them, took them to the marquis of Winchester whose name was prominent on the outer covers, being the colonel of one of the regiments concerned. Assuaging his curiosity before forwarding them to their proper destination, the marquis was overcome with anger and resentment when he found that his own regiment was described in unfavourable terms. Hot words were exchanged

¹ Reviews were taken seriously by some people. In 1752 Major John Irwin of the 5th Regiment was sent round the various quarters by his colonel to report on the progress and relative showing of other regiments at the time of the annual review. He omitted to mention neither the good nor bad points of each regiment that he saw. For example, describing the 16th Regiment he said: "The former is the largest Size Regiment except the Guards I ever saw, but they are neither Handsome nor well-looking men, their Clothing bad, ill-appointed, officers not at all au fait, salute wretchedly, and no two alike. The men exercise faster than the Horse Guards, but pretty well, they fired ill, and too slow, and marched indifferently." The following day he saw two better battalions, the 27th and the 44th, of whom he had this to say, "Both fine Battallions [sic]. Halkett's (44th) the greater size and rather the best dressed and best appointed. They exercised together both in exceeding good time and mighty well, they fired in general pretty well, and marched in sub-divisions, companies, etc. : very well, particularly Halkett's, but not well in Battallion. The officers of both Regiments very carefull and attentive, salute in general well, some few ill. Each Regiment had a method of their own, but each salute alike with their own Regiment." After describing five battalions with complete frankness and impartiality he concluded: "Now I have seen nothing equal to our Review, nor to the Regiment, taking one thing for another. Halkett's beats us in looks, and they are better appointed and look more uniform..." (Whitefoord Papers (1898), pp. 107-8). Government seems to have taken reviews seriously, too. There are many references to "very strict" reviews, "in every particular", here and there in the Bagshawe MSS., e.g. 2/2/7; 2/2/348, 361; 2/2/626.
between the two and his lordship tried hard to prevent Gumley from handing in his reports. Despite all efforts to stop him, Gumley saw the king who was delighted with his zeal and gave him the right of direct access to the royal presence for the future. This so alarmed colonels that Gumley’s later movements were well-reported by spies, in order that ample preparation could be made for the arrival of this dangerous individual whose proper duty was simply to muster, and not to inspect.¹

That a uniform system of drill movements was practised at these reviews was again due to the Hanoverians. Although a general pattern had been worked out in the years of hard campaigning under Marlborough in Flanders and under Stanhope in Spain, there was no guarantee that it would continue to be taught and practised in time of peace. No prescribed regulations were in existence, and the gradual elimination of experienced senior officers with the passage of the years would result in these hardly-won lessons being forgotten or disregarded by new colonels who were free to indulge themselves in what they did. Until George I’s regulation² each colonel could determine how his regiment should be drilled and how it should execute the “firings”. One or two officers of experience drew up manuals of instruction based on the successful practice of the late war,³

¹ Irwin Papers, fols. 121, 126, 130-32, 138. For a whole month the northern regiments were apprehensive about his arrival amongst them, and Irwin’s major remarked in a letter to the agent, rather defensively one feels, that Gumley would find Irwin’s as good as its neighbours! This was John Gumley of Gumley House, Isleworth, Middlesex. One of his daughters married William Pulteney, first earl of Bath.

² See Fortescue, History, ii. 51.

³ Humphrey Bland, later a general officer of dragoons, produced his Treatise of Military Discipline in the reign of George I, and by 1762 it had run into nine editions. General William Blakeney, famous in his old age as the defender of Minorca in 1756, seems to have written some “books of Exercise” that “were not yet put in print by him” about the end of 1716 (Irwin Papers, fol. 107). There were other guides, also produced by officers who had served under Marlborough and Stanhope in Queen Anne’s wars, which appeared later. Richard Kane, colonel of the 9th Regiment, had already written his short New System of Military Discipline for a Battalion of Foot, but it was published posthumously in 1745; and in 1740 General Adam Williamson brought out his Military Memoirs and Maxims of Turenne, to which he added Observations and Remarks culled from his own experience. It is due largely to these officers that any detailed information on the practice of soldiering in their day has survived.
but these were only guides for the enthusiastic and not directives for the eccentric or the indolent. It was left to the monarchs to establish a pattern to which regiments should conform. Uniformity and technical precision had to precede all more imaginative developments, a fact not always appreciated by those who decry Teutonic rigidity, and George and his successors were intent upon securing them. The precision and accuracy of fire that were marked features of the British infantry in Flanders in the campaigns of the Austrian succession war are the measure of their success.¹

The sustained interest of the Hanoverian royal family in the army and its constructive efforts to improve it and protect it deserve a recognition they have seldom been accorded. To George I belongs the credit of taking the measure of a precarious situation, introducing measures to combat the disruptive forces which were at work upon his army, and, by the force of his disapproving attitude, discouraging the more subtle forces that threatened its cohesion. He was the reformer, and his son followed up his measures with equal vigour. Of the two the father was undoubtedly the more original, a trait which the grandson was to inherit, rather than the son. George II was a consolidator and not a military thinker. This did not prevent his acquiescence in the reforms of his son, the duke of Cumberland, all of which were done in his name although the credit for them was entirely the duke's. His military outlook is exposed in the letter-books of his secretary at war,² who took his commands

¹ Curiously enough, the firepower that won the day at Dettingen was not that of "Hyde Park discipline", as Colonel Russell styled the manner of the regulation practice by platoons, but by irregular rolling fire. He described the British foot as "behaving like heroes..." and has this to say of their method: "The whole three ranks made a running fire of their own accord, and at the same time with great judgment and skill, stooping all as low as they could, making almost every ball take place...almost kneeling down by whole ranks...but for ten or twelve minutes 'twas doubtful which should succeed, as they overpowered us so much, and the bravery of their mason du roy coming upon us eight or nine ranks deep; yet our troops were not seen to retreat, but to bend back only, I mean our foot, and that only whilst they fresh loaded; then of their own accord marched boldly up 'em, gave 'em such a smash with loud huzzas every time they saw them retire, that then they were at once put to flight" (H.M.C., Chequers Court MSS. (1900) pp. 260, 278). This flexibility, however, presupposed an underlying measure of discipline such as had apparently been secured by the regulation.

² To be found in the Public Record Office, series War Office 4.
from the king, and in the remarks and observations of his servants, rather than in actual measures emanating from himself: but in all his actions and opinions George showed himself to be his father's faithful disciple. They pursued the same end and used the same means. Like his father he disliked purchase and the operation of parliamentary "interest", had a strong concern for the poorer and more obscure among his officers, particularly if they were deserving men, and took a keen and critical interest in all things military. He was unwavering in his opinions in all these matters, even though it was not always that he got his own way. He had a close connection with the army for almost half a century dating from the time he became prince of Wales. The Irwin Papers show him deputising for his father during the latter's visit to Hanover in 1716, so that the duties of a royal commander-in-chief must have been well known to him long before he succeeded his father as king. He must have been well-acquainted with the names and faces of a great many of the

1 For example of his attitude see W.O.4/46, fol. 338 and elsewhere; Bagshawe MSS. 2/2/317; Chequers Court MSS., pp. 333, 275 and elsewhere. Colonel James St. Clair of the Third Guards has this to say about one of the first reviews George II made as king. To Duncan Forbes of Culloden he wrote: "At our shew in Hyde Park from the King to the Cobler we had the applause and really deserved it in all the operations of the day but the last, which was our Firings, and in which the Second Regiment (i.e. of Guards) certainly outdid us, much contrary to their owne expectation ... the encouragement the King gave me, who said severall most gratious things to me, amongst others that he knew we did our bussiness much better than the other two. Sir Charles [Wills, colonel of the First Guards] got severall rubs, the King not being able to stifle his anger although he endeavoured it" (Culloden Papers, ed. D. Warrand, iii, 23). His zeal extended to his pocket. In November 1716 a correspondent wrote from town to Lord Fermanagh: "The second Regiment [and] the Sco[ts] Regiment of Guards exercised yesterday in High Park, the Prince layed five hundred pounds with General Tatton that the Sco. Regiment performed best but lost, the Wager was decided by the Gen. officer in Town" (M.M., Lady Verney, Verney Letters of the Eighteenth Century (1930), ii. 33). He carried his interest in military affairs to the extent of favouring individual regiments. In 1739 Cuthbert Ellison of Hebburn was appointed lieutenant-colonel of the 23rd Regiment, the Welsh Fusiliers. This, he told his brother Henry, was "a favourite Corps of the King's ... which he does the Honour of calling his Own". (General John Huske, its colonel from 1743 to 1761, was a particular favourite of the old King). Carr-Ellison Papers, Bundle A 19, letters of 25 Dec. 1739 and 30 Dec. 1740.

2 Irwin Papers, fol. 65, 66, 67. Concerning officers, wrote Richard Worthington to Lord Irwin, "the Prince hath a very good memory" (fol. 66).
officers of his small army. Nearly all promotions had to be approved by him in person and he made a great number of reviews, besides which he had been in constant contact with his troops in the Dettingen campaign in which he led them in person.

His favourite son, William Augustus, duke of Cumberland, known familiarly throughout the army as "the duke" was the most closely connected of the three with the internal functioning of the army. In March 1745, just before his twenty-fourth birthday, he became captain-general of the army, and for the next twelve years exercised supreme control over it, subject only to the desires and dictates of his ageing father who, on most things, was content to approve his son's decisions and accept most of his recommendations. ¹ William's whole life had been closely connected with the army and at the time of his appointment he was already an experienced soldier. He had campaigned in Flanders and Germany and had been wounded in the leg at Dettingen. ² Further experience was to bring great respect, esteem and affection. A few months after he took up his responsibilities he won golden opinions for his leadership at the particularly fierce battle of Fontenoy, ³ and the following year he was responsible for the defeat of the Highlanders at Culloden and the suppression of the rebellion in Scotland. He was to go again to Flanders for the campaign of 1747 in which he commanded the British contingent and reinforced his reputation by his conduct

¹ The duke did not act as though his father's approval was axiomatic. See S. Pargellis, *Military Affairs in North America 1748-65* (1936), pp. 398-9, for instances of his caution in this respect.

² The duke acted with his usual personal bravery at Dettingen, which delighted his royal father. "William, I'm glad you behaved so well, you acted like my son," said the latter, "if you do well, I shall not be sorry for your wound." In one of his letters home at this time Colonel Russell wrote to say that the duke was "thought to be in some danger, his wound being attended with a fever, and his body being gross makes it go but ill with him; his Papa, they say, was in tears for him yesterday morning..." (*Chequers Court MSS.*, pp. 259, 263).

³ Captain Joseph Yorke of the Guards wrote of him: "I never saw or heard of such behaviour as the Duke's: he rode everywhere, he encouraged the wavering, he complimented the bold, he threatened the cowards. ... Had the nation seen him they would have adored him" (P. C. Yorke, *Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke* (3 vols., 1913), vol. i. pp. 392-3).
at the hard fought action of Laffeldt. His popularity in the army, particular with the junior officers and the men was enormous. After Culloden his troops shouted as he came down the line "Huzzah, now Billy, for Flanders!", a hint for him to take them over to the continent once more, to even scores with the French. He was equally popular with their dashing young officers, and his prestige was very high. This is something over which the epithet "Butcher Cumberland" has cast a dark shadow that has obscured the force of his courage and ability and the more important side of his work.

The duke was responsible for the extension and consolidation of his grandfather’s schemes of reform. He laid down a pattern of exercises for drill and the "firings" and demanded a fixed attention to them that permitted no deviation. He introduced

1 For an account of his personal conduct in the thick of the fight see Russell in Chequers Court MSS., p. 372.
2 When the duke left the expeditionary force for the winter of 1746/7 he was sorely missed by many people in it. Captain Richard Meggott of the King's Regiment told the duke of Richmond: "You have gott our Duke once more from Us, My Lord, and I give your Grace Joy of it, with all my Heart, for I am satisfied, Nobody tastes it more, but I hope, Wee only lend him you till Spring, for, for my own part, and I am sure, at ye same time, I speak ye Sentiments of the Whole Army, Wee shall eternally regret him, when he is from Us, and tis with Some Concern that I add (but for all that I firmly believe it true) that Our Fellows will never fight, with so much Coolness and firmness, as under his Eye and Command." (Lord March, A Duke and his Friends (1911), ii. 526). When he took up command of the forces in Scotland before Culloden many regretted that he had not been sooner appointed. "Had he been at Falkirk", wrote an officer of the 10th Dragoons, "those brave Englishmen that are now in their graves had not been lost, his presence doing more than six thousand men. . . ." See article in the Dictionary of National Biography, which does full justice to his courage, is fair about his qualities as a general, but pays no attention at all to his military reforms which were undoubtedly his greatest contribution to the good of the army.
3 In 1757 Sir John Mordaunt who was to command the troops on an amphibious operation against the French coast exercised his regiments in a more flexible manner than that laid down by regulation. When he heard of this the duke was furious and wrote to Barrington, the secretary at war: "I must desire that you will acquaint Sir John Ligonier, for the Army in general; and to all General Officers commanding Corps, Sir John Mordaunt not excepted, that I am Surprised to hear that my orders as to Fireing and Posting of the officers, approved and confirmed by His Majesty, are changed according to the Whim and Supposed Improvements of every fertile Genius; and that therefore, it is my positive order, that in the Forming and Telling off of Battalions, they conform exactly to those Standing orders, which they have all received; and that no one presume to
a set of standing orders governing the routine and conduct of cavalry and infantry that were the fruit of his own extensive experience in Flanders and Scotland. An attention to the outward signs of uniformity accompanied these measures, and were but part of a general scheme of reform although they have attracted separate notice and are therefore better known. The duke paid great attention to the promotion of efficient and deserving officers and gathered round himself a body of competent and clever men whose social background might not otherwise have made them eligible for the rank and position to which their merit elevated them under his careful eye, while the headquarters introduce new Schemes, without their having been approved by His Majesty, or by my orders." See Pargellis, op. cit. p. 398. However, not everyone shared this view. Charles, third duke of Richmond, an enthusiastic soldier who was then Lieutenant-colonel of the 33rd Regiment, thought that Mordaunt was in the right and he admired his courage in carrying out schemes which he deemed essential to the success of the expedition in the face of the duke's certain displeasure. See H.M.C., Bathurst MSS. (1923), pp. 679-81.

1 See the Journal for Army Historical Research for a reprint of these orders. Selections from the duke's order books in Scotland and Flanders were reprinted in Campbell MacLauchlan's life of Cumberland (1876), mainly for the years 1745 to 1747, with biographical notes. Several order books for the campaigns in Flanders 1742-8 have survived. There is one, by an unknown hand, in Chetham's Library, Manchester, and several of John, 20th Earl of Crawford, who served as a lieutenant-general there have recently been deposited in The John Rylands Library. Others very probably, still exist. A printed copy of Cumberland's "Rules and Articles for the Better Government of His Majesty's Horse and Foot Guards and all Other of his Forces" (1749), which deals with a variety of subjects, under headings, is deposited with the Bagshawe Muniments, B 5/3/5.

2 His concern with dress and the outward semblance of military regularity led Horace Walpole to state, rather unfairly, that he was "as intent on the establishing the form of spatter-dashes and cockades as on taking a town or securing an advantageous position" (quoted by Basil Williams, The Whig Supremacy 1714-60, p. 207).

3 Among their number was Robert Napier, adjutant-general of the army for many years, Studholme Hodgson who performed the considerable feat of capturing Belleisle in 1761 and lived long enough to become a field-marshal when that rank was reintroduced in 1793, David Watson, a little known Scot who became Quarter-Master-General, and William Strode, who erected a statue to his old master in Cavendish Square in 1770. These were all men of obscure origin whose ability and personality had caught the duke's eye, and without his patronage it is doubtful whether they would have got as far as they did. Napier came from the Scottish merchant class, one of his uncles being sometime provost of Stirling (Burke's Landed Gentry (1906 edn.), i. 318). Cumberland got the 11th regiment for him in 1757 (Calcraf Letter Book, vol. i., fol. 106; B.M. Add. MS. 17,493).
staff of the army was probably more efficient and worked more to a system and set policy than it did at any time previous to his term of office. In this he was aided by an intelligent secretary at war in the person of Henry Fox who worked in close co-operation with the duke for over a decade. It is rather appropriate that the present Horse Guards building dates from the duke's day (1751).

Cumberland was undoubtedly a man who cared a great deal for the army and took his military duties very seriously, and if he tended towards teutonic rigidity, as even his contemporaries insinuated, it was at least by no means without good results and should not be deplored without taking into consideration the shortcomings of the army of his day, whose indiscipline when in incompetent hands was a constant threat to efficiency. He was

1 To take a small example, the business of demanding returns had long been established, but it was under Cumberland's supervision that Robert Napier devised and introduced printed forms which systematised the information required instead of leaving it to the vagaries of regimental adjutants (Bagshawe MSS. 2/2/440).

2 The co-operation of Fox and Cumberland in the selection of officers and the work of reform has never been properly investigated, and might well be the subject of a profitable detailed study. For an instance of co-operation in marking down good officers see H.M.C., Rutland MSS. II, in 12th Report, part v (1889), 197, for the recommendation of Lieutenant-colonel John Stanwix who later became a lieutenant-general and colonel of the 8th Regiment.

3 "So outrageously and shockingly military", as Colonel Russell described him in 1743, although biased on this occasion since the duke had just refused him leave to go to England. It would appear that regimental officers who had to endure the proximity of the duke were not so enthusiastic about him as were officers in the army at large. When the duke received his wound Russell wrote, "We are in hopes, as he has now seen some service, and what a farce there is in so much high (Hyde) park discipline, that he will in some measure have a contempt for the superfluous part of the latter, and must own that we are not very sorry for his having lately been tied by the leg, as he is now likely to do well again, since it has been some relief to us." His Royal Highness was at this time Colonel of Russell's regiment (Chequers Court MSS. pp. 265-6, 299).

4 There is an interesting description by John Calcraft, the army agent, of the incredible disorders of the Second Guards when they marched from London to embark for Germany in 1760. "Hogarth's March to Finchley was nothing to the Scene of that Day, All Drunk, no Kind of Order and more Men of the Mob and Women than Soldiers in the Ranks, but if You name your Author they'll cut my throat, tho' this Opinion is universal and Mr. Pitt happen'd to be on his Road to Town and see all" (Letter book, B.M., Add. MS. 17,495, fol. 144). George II had a low opinion of British discipline (Chequers Court MSS., p. 260).
responsible for elevating the morale of the army and improving its order and efficiency at a time when both tasks were necessary, and his contribution to the victories of the Seven Years' War was not insignificant. He was the architect of victory, though the task of achieving it was carried through by other hands. The army was the poorer when in the autumn of 1757 he was dismissed from his post after he had concluded the Klosterzeven capitulation, following his defeat by the French at Hastenbeck.¹

A system of control so personal in its direction was bound to reflect the personality on the monarch and to be affected by it and therein lay weakness as well as strength, since the early Hanoverian princes were obstinate, prejudiced and passionate men.² Their personality affected their principles and they were, in consequence, neither partial nor impartial in their dealings, showing an excess of neither one quality nor the other. The army at large was the beneficiary of their immediate control, but individuals were apt to suffer from their foibles and prejudices. George II in particular was possessed of certain attributes and opinions which reacted unfavourable in certain cases. It was, for instance, very difficult for officers to whom he had taken a personal dislike to rise in the service. Charles Leslie, a younger

¹ For another estimate of the Duke's position in the army see Sir William Draper's reply to Junius in the Public Advertiser, 17 February 1769 (printed in the Letters of Junius, ed. C. W. Everett, London, 1927). Draper was the conqueror of Manila and a thoroughly competent and experienced military officer. "Junius repeats the complaints of the army against parliamentary influence. I love the army too well, not to wish that such influence was less. Let Junius point out the time when it has not prevailed. It was of the least force in the time of that great man, the late Duke of Cumberland, who, as a prince of the blood, was able as well as willing to stem a torrent which would have over-borne any private subject. In time of war this influence is small. In peace, when discontent and friction have the surest means to operate, especially in this country, and when from a scarcity of public spirit, the wheels of government are rarely moved, but by the power and force of obligations, its weight is always too great". This is at once an indication of the power of "influence" and a good illustration of Cumberland's mental weight and firm intent. For all that he was a Cumberland protégé, Draper's public tribute rings true.

² The duke of Cumberland shared the family failings. Lord Waldegrave described him as a man of "strong parts, great military ability, undoubted courage" but with a judgement "too much guided by his passions which are often violent and ungovernable." On the other hand his lordship conceded that the duke's "notions of honour and generosity are worthy of a prince".
brother of the tenth earl of Rothes, found his promotion blocked because of his adherence to Frederick, prince of Wales. He had been in the Third Regiment of Foot Guards since 1716, and twenty years later was still a captain. He then served in the campaigns in Flanders for three years as an aide-de-camp to Lord Stair, the British commander, in 1742-44. The king must have had an intense dislike for him, since even Stair was unable to do anything for him, as one of Duncan Forbes of Culloden's correspondents narrated.

My Lo Stair gott all the commissions he ask'd, except Cha. Leslie's, which the K. refused to sign. As the Earle would not trust the ministrie's report, he applied himself to the K. and received four No's before he left him. The commission not being given away, Charles still remains in London upon his aid-du-camp's pay, expecting better times, which cannot readily happen in this reign.¹

Charles went into the service of the Estates of Holland the following year, "being disgusted with the service of his country" and "by no means to win his bread, but promotion and rank"². Then, too, George had a fixed resolution that no officer who had ever drawn sword against his royal house should ever attain a rank of any consequence. James, fifth earl of Balcarres served thirty years in the Scots Greys and did not succeed in getting beyond the rank of captain. He had been "out" in the Fifteen with his father and this, despite a pardon, prejudiced his chances. After he had distinguished himself in action at Dettingen his name was mentioned to the king who "fell into a passion and told the minister that he had occasion to know before, that no person who had ever drawn his sword in the Stuart cause should ever rise to command, and that it was best to tell Lord Balcarres so at once", which being the case someone should have done a good deal earlier.³ In a sense, this prejudice

¹ Ed. D. Warrand, More Culloden Papers, iii. 232.
² For the background to this story see J. Ferguson, The Scots Brigade in Holland (3 vols., 1899-1901), ii. 451-3.
³ A. W. C. Lindsay, Lives of the Lindsays (1840 edn.), ii. 140. Lord Balcarres, despite his early errors, had a genuine regard for the service and thought having to leave it "a hard choice" but, he wrote "as our family has hitherto produced none but men of worth and honour, I can no longer bear being treated as if I were without either, and drudge on a captain, after having been thirty-seven years an officer [he had served in the navy before 1714] and lived in peace and war without reproach" (ibid. pp. 122, 132).
was only natural, but it extended to mar the chances of those Scotsmen who, though not involved in person, belonged to families whose members bore the Jacobite taint. Lord Balcarres' brother Alexander, the fourth earl, remained a captain in the Third Guards after twenty-nine years unblemished service because of the family allegiance.¹

George was supremely obstinate, and in matters on which he had definite views tended to have what Henry Legge styled "a dead refusal, which can never be got over", though it sometimes was.² His obstinacy had many loopholes. It extended in another direction. Though reasonably impartial in his management of promotions and appointments, he had a weakness for his Hanoverian subjects which was demonstrated during his campaign on the Rhine in 1743, on which he showed himself excessively "national". He upset his English subjects very thoroughly by a partiality for his Hanoverian troops and officers that he was at no pains to hide. "In short", wrote Colonel Russell, "so impolitic a head was scarce ever known, and his treatment of the people of the island almost insupportable, scarce lending an ear to any other advice or counsel but his own natives. . . . It is a great misfortune that our Captain shows such partiality to his

¹ Scottish officers were fully alive to this peril. Major James Murray, later Wolfe's brigadier at Quebec in 1759, was anxious about the consequence of his family's connection with the Jacobite cause and told his father-in-law, who was a political ally of the duke of Newcastle, that he was "likely to have the whole punishment of it unless protected by your influence" (R. H. Mahon, Life of General James Murray (1921), p. 52). Despite the two risings a quarter of the officer-strength of the army throughout the period was provided by Scottish families, and many Scottish officers gained high rank. An article on the subject of Scottish Officers in the British Army, 1714-63, appears in the current number of the Scottish Historical Review.

² James Oswald, Life and Memorials of James Oswald of Dunnikier (1825), p. 394. This particular instance was in connection with giving regimental surgeons combatant commissions and allowing them to change over to regimental soldiering, thus renouncing their profession. Despite his strong feelings on the subject several instances of this change can be cited. The same is true, to a much greater degree, over giving cavalry troop quarter-masters commissions, a common road to advancement for young men of slender means. George II is stated (Chequers Court MSS., p. 275) to have been much averse to this, but a great many commissions were gained in this way during his reign. See the MS. Army Lists compiled by Mr. A. S. White, the War Office Librarian, which are kept in the Library.
own people, which our men of spirit never bear." 1 George seems to have followed his inclinations rather than his discretion in most things. His conduct during this brief excursion appears to underline the value of the clauses of the act of succession by which his father and his natural successors had been prohibited from appointing Hanoverians to posts in the army and elsewhere.

These personal prejudices, however distressing they may have been to individuals, had little effect upon the army itself which benefited greatly from the royal interest, with its essentially continental standards of soldiering, a profession which has, by tradition, ever been taken more seriously there than in England. To what extent their work, that of George I in particular, was influenced by the organization and administration of their Hanoverian army, and by continental military practice in general, is difficult to determine in default of adequate evidence 2; but it is almost certain that, being the keen soldier he was, George I must have been influenced by the precepts and routine in which he had been trained since childhood. His experience of troops had extended for forty years before he became King of England, ranging from the Hungarian operations of 1675 to the command of the imperial army on the upper Rhine in 1707-9, and he had taken a part in actions as famous as John Sobieski’s relief of Vienna in 1683 and William III’s battle at Neerwinden in 1693. He was a thoroughly experienced soldier, far more so than his son, whose active service had been confined to the Oudenarde campaign of 1708. 3

1 Chequers Court MSS., pp. 259-60. Besides deprecating the value of his troops, George gave much offence to those officers engaged about his person by his marked preference for Hanoverians, and several of them resigned in consequence of the snubs they received (p. 260). There is an excellent account of George’s daily routine during his service in the field on p. 273. This conduct finally resulted in Lord Stair, the British field commander, tendering his resignation, because, wrote Russell “he has for some time past thought himself extremely ill-used; greatly neglected, seldom consulted, and when so, his schemes rejected and disapproved of” (p. 284).

2 L. von Sichart’s Geschichte der Königlich-Hannoverschen Armee, 3 vols., 1870, is of little use for anything but the campaigns in which the Hanoverian regiments were engaged. No more recent history of use in this connection seems to have been compiled, and it would be necessary to consult manuscript material to establish the precise administration and regulation of the army in 1714.

3 See the article in the D.N.B., which pays no attention to his military reforms when king of England.
There can be no doubt that the Hanoverians made a considerable effort to improve their army, both by their positive measures of reform and by the attitude they adopted towards the forces which were undermining its morale and its efficiency. Against the measure of their achievement, their rigidity of ideas, their worship of discipline for its own sake, and their foibles of personality would seem to be of lesser concern; discipline and uniformity, the two attributes for which they have been pilloried, being, in truth, the very qualities which were most sadly lacking in the army of the day. It would be claiming too much to suggest that their efforts were always systematic, ever continuous or entirely successful; but at the same time it should be conceded that the disciplined forces commanded by competent officers which were encountered by Britain's enemies in many theatres of operations in the Seven Years' War owed something of their internal homogeneity and their success in battle to the reforms and example of the early Hanoverian princes.