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Mahaffey, Corinne Lydia (2004) *The fighting profession: the professionalization of the British Line Infantry Officer Corps, 1870-1902*. PhD thesis.

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**The Fighting Profession:
The Professionalization
of the British Line Infantry Officer
Corps, 1870 – 1902**

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PhD Thesis**

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June 2004

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Abstract

The following thesis is an examination of the professionalization of the British line infantry officer corps from 1870 to 1902. Beginning with a discussion of the extant theories of professionalization, it then looks at civil military relations and its relationship to the international situation in general. The deployment of the line infantry at home and abroad is then analysed. Finally, the organisational changes made to produce professional structures for education, remuneration and promotion are discussed.

This work contains 92,045 words, including footnotes, introduction and bibliography.

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Introduction

Compared to the ranks, the Victorian officer corps has been an enigmatic group. Little work has been done on the officer class; of what exists, most looks at their social antecedents or mentions them in passing, or with respect to other issues. Though histories do exist, no organisational study has been done, nor has the process of professionalization been looked into. This thesis attempts to rectify this, at least for the case of the line army officer corps. It will be argued that professionalization was a process of dialogue, and sometimes dictation, between the officer corps and the state. Officers disagreed among themselves over what professional reform was and what it was supposed to accomplish. This dialogue tended to result in efforts to solve the immediate problem, and to solve further problems as they appeared, rather than in any thinking further ahead for a more broad or integrated solution. This process produced and refined professional structures such as an educational system and a standard curriculum, and systems of remuneration and education-linked promotion. This thesis will also look at the deployment of the regiments so as to more clearly define the professional world within which they lived.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the following individuals and institutions for their assistance in making this work possible. Dr Jeremy Crang, Dr. Omissi, and the members of the Scottish Centre for War Studies, for their helpful comments; Bill Leeson and friends, for introducing me to the *Kriegsspiel*; the staffs of the Public Record Office, the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, the Library at the University of Glasgow, and the Library at the University of Calgary, Canada; the staff, both academic and clerical, at the Department of Modern History, University of Glasgow; the very patient staff of Graduate Studies; William Buckingham, who assisted me with last-minute research; my family, and especially my husband, for their unconditional support, and last, but certainly not least, my academic supervisor, Professor Hew Strachan, whose guidance, patience and advice were incalculable.

CHAPTER ONE

Professionalism, Professionals, and Professional Theory

The contemporary standard of military professionalism was the German, and particularly the Prussian, army. There was general agreement among the European armies, including the British army, that the Prussian army was highly professional. That given, there was no agreement on either what aspects of the Prussian army to emulate, or how to incorporate those aspects into the British army. Was a general staff useful to Britain? Could it be grafted onto Britain's very different administrative structure without bringing other, unwanted, elements of the Prussian system with it? How relevant was German officer education, geared to the expectation that the German army would be a principal in a future major European war, to an army that was currently fighting in small formations against non-European opponents? It was by no means clear to the British how, or even what, elements of German professionalism were applicable to the British context.

In the British context, the strategic question was whether the army should direct its efforts to the possibility of a continental war, in which Britain might send an expeditionary force and risked invasion, or the myriad small colonial wars the army faced every year. This is a professional issue in that the former implied that the army required a general staff and to emphasize mobilization plans and the administration and control of large formations in the field. The latter implied an emphasis on small unit tactics, and strategic logistics.

Thus strategic questions became in turn issues of training. There was general agreement among British officers that they should be trained in their profession, and there was no question that they alone held the legal and constitutional right to act as military officers serving the crown. However, exactly what they should learn was a matter of debate. Should their education should include elements of a broader, liberal education, or be more narrowly focused on topics of direct relevance? How they should be trained was also an issue of debate. Was formal classroom training

(itself under debate) sufficient, or was direct experience of battle the only true teacher? They generally agreed that leadership was to some degree intrinsic, and therefore not entirely teachable. To the degree that it was teachable, it was taught in the public schools, which were increasingly the source of officers, and whose students were the sons of the upper middle class – the professionals, the businessmen, and the civil servants. This innate leadership ability was initially presumed inherent to the nobility, but as the nineteenth century progressed, allowed to be an assumed aptitude of the upper middle classes as well.

When government fiat ended the purchase of commissions, there was no question but that the state should provide a salary and pension to replace purchase. Since both pay and pensions were directly related to rank, and rank, at the regimental levels, was deliberately linked by government reforms to education, pay and pensions in turn related back to training. The British debated the issue of pay and pensions through the minutiae of fair and appropriate levels of compensation for officers who joined under the purchase system or under other various systems of compensation. Since this compensation was never even moderately generous in the regimental ranks, it also served to support a financial, and hence social, barrier to entry into the officer corps.

Pay was also linked to promotion. Promotion could occur through purchase, merit, or seniority. Edward Cardwell eliminated the option of purchase in 1870, but there was no agreement over the proper balance between merit and seniority, and no real agreement as to how to define merit. In the absence of a clear definition, and therefore clear standards by which to compare officers, the cliques headed by Lords Roberts and Wolseley sought to advance officers that drew their positive attention.

The period between the end of purchase in 1870 and the South African war of 1899-1902 was one of shifting ground. There was no consensus as to what it meant to be a professional officer. However, a consensus was slowly building through a process of debate, argument, and individual and government action. The argument was not explicitly over the definitions of professionalism, and less so over the desirability of professionalism: there was general agreement that an officer should be

trained in his profession, but not over what “professional” actually meant in practice. The reforms during and after South African war marked how far that consensus had been made since the end of purchase. The war showed the limits of the officer corps’ education and experience, and brought to a head many issues that had been under long debate. This thesis describes the often-halting process by which the British army officer corps attempted to build a consensus on the meaning of the word professional *between 1870 and 1902*.

Ever hovering in the wings of the British debates, the British saw the Prussian army as the standard by which professionalism should be judged. While the British tended to hold an idealized picture of the Prussian army, this thesis presents a more nuanced and less idealised picture. The details of the Prussian system were known to the British, while its flaws were often overlooked because they were similar to the flaws in the British system. It is important, nonetheless, to understand the implicit standard of comparison the British held themselves to.

A young man applying to the German army had one of two routes open. He could either apply to a regimental commander for a direct appointment as an aspirant officer, or graduate from a cadet school. After 1861 he was required to produce a certificate of fitness for the Prima class of a gymnasium or from a Realschule to apply for a direct appointment. This had been the object of serious opposition from Field Marshall Count von Moltke and others, on the grounds that it would screen out the aristocracy that made up the corps of officers, so this requirement could be bypassed by an appeal to the emperor for dispensation.¹ At the same time, the number of men who applied with a leaving certificate from a secondary school, that is, a higher level of education than that demonstrated by a Prima certificate, was increasing.² As a result, the intake of upper middle class officers rose, while the access of nobles into the officer corps was protected, the latter being of great importance to both British and German officers who believed that nobles were inherent leaders.

A quarter to a third of officer candidates came from the cadet schools, whose diplomas were treated as equivalent to a Prima certificate. The academic work was not demanding, but they were by most accounts a very unpleasant experience: physical discomfort, unquestioned discipline and mild to serious hazing.³ Much of the point of this was to create “character” and what Showalter describes as an “emotional toughness”, and to foster a sense of loyalty to the crown and an ethic of self-sacrifice.⁴ The curriculum favoured physical fitness, mathematics, modern languages, and military history, over a more liberal education. Excepting the emphasis on physical fitness, this curriculum was very unlike that of the British public school system from which most British officers came. The academic exams proved difficult to fail.⁵

Appointment as an officer required the unanimous approval of all the officers of the regiment. As Kitchen pointed out, “the prejudices of the Officers Corps were given ample opportunity for expression in the selection of officers”.⁶ A candidate was well advised to find a commanding officer willing to support his candidacy. The commanding officers, in turn, wanted candidates of acceptable political leanings and of suitable social status.⁷ The army was large enough that there was likely to be some regiment that the candidate fit in with, though it was easier for an applicant from a cadet school to meet the unofficial social criteria.⁸

About ninety regiments were open only to the nobility or the sons of families with a history of service, including the guards and many cavalry units.⁹ The nobility were also disproportionately represented in the higher ranks, though the middle classes slowly increased their presence.¹⁰ Even so, the nobility retained a solid grip on the higher ranks, maintaining an absolute majority.¹¹ By contrast, in the British army the nobility failed to do this. Though they retained a disproportionate presence in the higher ranks, they slowly lost their possession of the majority of the higher ranks during the later 19th century.¹²

A Prussian officer candidate had two further requirements before joining a regiment. He had to spend some months as a ranker in the unit he wished to join, to give the officers a chance to see what he was like and whether he would fit in. This

time slowly slipped from 6 months to 3 months between the 1870s and the 1890s.¹³ Secondly, he had to, at some point, pass the ensign's exam, though until 1880 passing was not officially required before joining his regiment.¹⁴ Along with his application to take the exam, the candidate had to provide a report detailing his age, physical fitness, educational background and ancestry. The ensign's exam was very formal – the candidate was expected to attend in evening dress – and taken very seriously. The exams extended over several days.¹⁵ It is generally agreed, nonetheless, that it took serious effort on the part of the candidate to actually fail these exams.¹⁶ As with the British, candidates had already passed the critical social barriers before facing the exam.¹⁷ Also, because the German army was being expanded, the need for more officers was well known, and this may have helped to enforce tolerance for officers from other than noble backgrounds. In the case of Britain, the increasing shortage of officers became apparent only slowly, as the army expanded out of the need to police colonies rather than due to official expansion policies. As result, the shortage of officers in the British army did not become a crisis until the Boer War, so the British army did not change its recruitment procedures and standards.

The last step prior to Prussian commissioning was attendance at a War School and passing the officer's examination. These War Schools were a result of educational reforms made in 1859, and were specifically intended to prepare students for the officers' examination. Three schools opened initially, followed by several more in the 1860s, 1870s and two in the 1890s throughout Germany, excepting Bavaria, which maintained a separate War School in Munich.¹⁸ A candidate who held an Abitur (high school certificate) and a year of university, or who had taken the Selekt course (the advanced class at cadet school) could take the officers exam without going to a War School. However, a candidate who went to university was commissioned a year later, thereby losing a year of seniority. It was not until 1900 that holders of the Abitur were granted two years of automatic seniority.¹⁹

The War School curriculum was composed of entirely military subjects, including tactics, fortification, military administration, topography, surveying and map drawing. There were also lessons in riding, fencing, gymnastics, parade drill,

servicing field guns, and on the duties of other branches of the military. Through the 1880s the course was divided into eight and a half months of class work and one and a half of field exercises.²⁰ These latter included not only field exercises per se, but also visits to artillery ranges, industrial establishments and local fortresses. The students were expected to write a report, which was graded. In 1887 four hours per week of French and German language instruction were added.²¹ The students were also expected to demonstrate obedience, loyalty to the crown, and awareness of their position as both a member of a profession, and as possessing a social status outranked only by the nobility.²²

A student could avoid the final exams if his subject grades were high enough, but a certain amount of leeway was granted to students whose grades were slightly below that mark, if he had shown competence in non-classroom subjects and his conduct had been acceptable. Like the ensigns exam, the officers' exam was in no way challenging – though this was not seen to be the case by those facing it.²³ Successful students returned to their regiments and their commander applied for a certificate of fitness for commission, and also sent a statement to the effect that the officers of the regiment felt that the candidate for commission had the necessary knowledge to be an officer.²⁴

The German army was expanding throughout the 1880s and 1890s, creating a corresponding shortage of officers. This had two results for the war schools. First, in 1890, classroom instruction at the War Schools was shortened to just over five months, but no reduction was made in visitations or field exercises. It was raised to a total of eight months in 1893, leaving the course two months shorter than it was in the 1880s. Second, the percentage of middle class applicants without any military background rose after 1880, though by the turn of the century the number of civilian applicants had dropped again, aggravating the shortage of officers. Despite the increasing numbers of applicants with Abiturs, the authorities nonetheless claimed that the shortage of officers meant that the admission standards could not be raised because the increase was insufficient to meet demand.²⁵ In Britain, the length of the course at Sandhurst changed intermittently, dropping for set periods to produce surges of officers in response to shortages due to colonial wars.

Prussian officers joined at around nineteen or twenty, and, if they did not have connections or attend the War Academy, could expect to become a first lieutenant in about eight years and a captain in about fifteen years. An officer would remain a captain for about ten years. The bottleneck for German officers, as for British regimental officers, was the rank of major and most officers retired in their mid-forties having failed to get this promotion. No one appears to have mentioned whether Prussian officers left with a pension. Those who did attain the rank of major could expect to become a lieutenant colonel in five to eight years, and full colonel in another year to year and a half.²⁶

Marrying well improved the likelihood of gaining the rank of major. Officers placed advertisements in the newspapers, or hired the services of matrimonial agencies, hoping to obtain a suitable wife: one with a good reputation and social status, who would come with a large private income, and the officer's new father-in-law often covered his outstanding debts in exchange for the social status gained by having a daughter marry an officer. The commanding officer had to give consent to marry, and only did so if the prospective wife was found to be socially acceptable, and if the officer could demonstrate a private income of 2500 RM, if a lieutenant, and 1000 RM if a captain.²⁷

Most Prussian officers were posted to the German frontier in regiments without much prestige. In the opinion of German officers, such frontier garrisons were considered to be "the last place vacated by the Evil One." The only worse option was to be sent to the colonies.²⁸ British officers might, perhaps, have held scant sympathy for the privations of a Prussian officer's life on the German border. A junior Prussian officer was expected to train recruits, including the supervision of drill and lectures on geography, military history, and the different elements of the army. He himself received further training in fencing, gymnastics, and riding, which he in turn taught his men. He also attended courses on cavalry and musketry, played war games, submitted essays on tactics, fortifications and military history, and participated in field manoeuvres. The packed, but unexciting, routine of drill and training occupied the entirety of most careers.²⁹

Large-scale manoeuvres, known as the Kaiser manoeuvres, were an annual event, unlike the British, who held no large-scale exercises between the early 1870s and the late 1890s. The exercises became, under Moltke, a continuous campaign in which combat formations and means of attack were tested against an enemy using French formations and tactics. At the end of the manoeuvres, the General staff issued a detailed critique of the operations.³⁰ After the ascension of Wilhelm II, however, their educational value declined. While very enthusiastic about these manoeuvres in the sense that it displayed the army to foreign powers, Wilhelm II did not understand their value as a training exercise. Because the Kaiser was not particularly competent as a commanding officer, the manoeuvres became an exercise for general staff to make sure that the Kaiser won.³¹ Eventually, General Moltke II convinced him to cease to be directly involved, and the manoeuvres became more realistic.³²

Those officers fortunate enough to attend the War Academy had a very different career. Graduates got promoted faster and received better assignments.³³ The best students joined the General Staff. General Staff officers, in turn, were significantly more likely to reach field rank than other officers, and to hold corps and army commands. Their postings alternated line and staff positions.³⁴ As its reputation grew after 1860, competition to enter the War Academy became more serious, and its importance as a key to joining the General Staff grew. By 1900 it was an unwritten requirement that officers in the General Staff and field staff be graduates. However, as the need for staff grew, commensurate with the expansion of the army, enrolment rose from 148 in the 1870s to 400 by 1895.³⁵ The reputation of the Staff College in Britain also rose, and graduation assisted promotion, but because Britain lacked a formal General Staff, passing Staff College did not guarantee accelerated promotion.

A candidate attempting to enter the Prussian War Academy had to have three to five years of time in service, and still be five years from promotion to captain. This is a window of about five years. He also had to have the support of his commander, who nominated him and submitted a document stating the applicants'

preparations for the entrance exam, and that the candidate demonstrated competence in his duties as an officer, that he had an interest in further training, that he displayed the proper character for higher command, and that he was healthy and financially secure.³⁶

From the early 1870's, Field Marshall Count von Moltke (the elder) used his influence to give the General Staff control of the Prussian War Academy, and the curriculum became more specialised.³⁷ Over the later part of the nineteenth century, as was the case in Britain's Staff College, the emphasis was increasingly towards military subjects over more general ones, and towards tactical and practical lessons over strategy, towards specialisation and away from a broader education.³⁸ Only history, and mathematics or foreign languages (French or Russian), were required studies aside from military subjects at the War Academy. Military subjects included administration, arms and ordinance, communications, field fortifications, general staff service, military administration, military geography, military history, military hygiene, military justice, military surveying, siege warfare, military law and tactics. As of 1871, optional subjects included chemistry, geodesy, geography, history, history of literature, history of philosophy, international law, mathematics, physics, and surveying.³⁹ By 1882, philosophy had been dropped, and classroom time was increasingly dedicated to military subjects over options. In 1888, Moltke supported curriculum revisions that were implemented for the 1890 class. Time for compulsory subjects rose by 30%, and military subjects were almost 60% of all instruction time. The optional subjects were reduced to history, math, physics, chemistry, Russian, and French.⁴⁰ Education increasingly centred on tactics. Students studied the battles of Frederick the Great, the French Revolution, Napoleon, and Wilhelm I, while general history became the history of Germany. Foreign military practices, strategy and the impact of politics or economics on war were not explored.⁴¹ That said, the comparatively tiny Bavarian War Academy operated independently, and had a wider curriculum that included liberal arts courses taught by university faculty, and the study of foreign tactics. The Prussian War Academy students were also given practical training outside the classroom: they solved surveying problems, visited gun foundries, powder mills, fortifications, local technical institutes, observed the exercises of the Railway Brigade, and rode a troop

train. During summer breaks the students spent time with other branches of army. Before 1874 this was a reward for superior academic performance and in 1874 became an option for all students. These summers of attached duty became requirements in 1888 with infantry officers attached to the field artillery and the cavalry in subsequent summers.⁴²

Assuming a Prussian officer passed the entrance exam high enough to gain a position at the academy - that is, in the top 20% of the year's candidates - continued attendance depended on passing each year. The entrance exam tended to favour the old elites because officers from such backgrounds were able to join the more prestigious regiments, which could afford tutoring for their junior officers and also tended to be near Berlin and thus had better access to study materials. A disproportionate number of the War Academy students came from the nobility, and the social network assured that a noble would get a place over a commoner.⁴³ Given that the nobility retained possession of the upper ranks, social screening obviously existed not only in the entrance to the War Academy, but within the General Staff as well. By contrast, the British system was less successful at retaining the highest ranks as the preserve of the nobility.

The War Academy final exam was difficult compared to the end of term exams - and extraordinary exacting compared to officer's entrance examinations - and grades were critical for an officer's future career. Military history and siege warfare exams were composed of problems handed out ahead of time, while the rest of the exam was done under supervision. Officers also evaluated on personality, character, personal behaviour and general education. The final part of exam was a three-week exercise in which the students were graded for their performance under stress and expected to solve problems at a division level.⁴⁴ The students with the best final grades went on to two years of probationary training with the general staff. Of those, about one in nine of those were accepted as permanent members of the staff, and access to the highest levels of command. The other grades, in descending order, were "qualified for higher level adjutant duty", "qualified for instructor at military schools" and "qualified for line duty", which last was considered to be failure.⁴⁵ However, simply having been to the War Academy was advantageous to

an officers' career. Interestingly, while Prussian junior officer education was perhaps less stringent than the British, it was somewhat easier to pass Staff College than to pass the War Academy. Equally, however, passing the War Academy was a guaranteed ticket to high promotion, while passing Staff College conferred no such guarantee.

The Civilian Professions

Also present in the background of British thinking about military professionalism were the examples of the civilian professions in Britain. Many officer's fathers were likely to be engaged in one of these professions. While rarely mentioned in the British debates on military professionalism, these professions none the less provide some of the backdrop on British comparative expectations about the meaning of professionalism, an issue which came to the fore at the turn of the century because the British government discovered that potential officers were increasingly choosing one of these professions instead of a military career (see chapter 5).

Medicine

Of the liberal professions, the medical profession was by far the most conscious in its efforts to gain respectability and raise its social status. The first element among the groups that dabbled in medicine to expect minimum standards of knowledge were the apothecaries, who got an act passed to regulate their profession in 1815. It gave the society of apothecaries the right to supervise apprenticeship, examine apothecaries and licence practice, though they did not gain the right to exclude anyone from practising without the society's approval.⁴⁶ It was not for another forty years that the medical profession as a whole gained an act that placed all practitioners under one umbrella.

The medical act of 1858 recognised all licensing and educational bodies, and placed them under the supervision of the new General Medical Council. It was the

result of two select committees convened during the previous decade. They were platforms for reformers to attack the current state of medical education and expose the prevalence of unlicensed and unqualified practitioners.⁴⁷ The act was a major step towards creating a sense of corporate unity and self-awareness. It erased the distinctions among physicians, surgeons and apothecaries and encompassed them within a professional boundary between those who offered the service of medicine and the lay public. It also opened the way to distinguish between general practitioners and more specialised consultants, which was eventually resolved by instituting a referral system.⁴⁸

Another piece of legislative reform earlier in the century was the Poor Law reform. There were proposals for a national and publicly paid medical service, wherein parliaments' duty was to provide income, but not restrict individual clinical freedom. But these hopes to create a relationship between state and medicine, on the medical profession's terms, died with Chadwick's new Poor Law of 1834. By the 1860s the general practitioners were sufficiently secure in private practices they wanted no part of state medicine.⁴⁹

The other major organisational element in the continuing professionalization of medicine in the nineteenth century was the creation of the British Medical Association in 1836, which represented much of the profession. One of its professionalising acts was to begin to discipline and punish its own members. In the mid-century, the BMA established a court-medical to handle unprofessional conduct and keep unsavoury occurrences out of the courts and newspapers. Unfortunately, it lacked authority and it was often difficult to convince the parties of a dispute to accept its judgements. This court did, however, create precedents for later General Medical Council tribunal. The court-medical refused to hear charges of 'incompetence', and 'incompetence' was not incorporated into 'infamous conduct'. The court-medical also tried to rule that a patient was not permitted to summon a consultant, and permitted separate fee structures for general practitioners and consultants. It was not until the 1880s that the latter two precedents became common practice.⁵⁰

There were a number of tactics, activities and behaviours that were intended to increase the professions' autonomy and establish their professional status and credentials. The most important group of innovations changed the image and practice of the general practitioner. They often tended to be exclusionary, barrier-raising changes. There were also a number of changes in societal expectations of doctors that also helped.

Perhaps most importantly, the doctors became able to regulate their own numbers in the market. This was partly due to making the exams more difficult, but much of it was due to the 1858 act, which required registration, and due to the doctors' continuing and deliberate efforts to exclude foreign practitioners from practice.⁵¹ Another change was to regularise the fee structure, which minimised intra-service competition between doctors and projected the image of a more unified professional body.⁵² The Lancet began printing in 1824, and became the leading journal of the profession, likewise promoting a sense of community among doctors.⁵³

Advertising was condemned by the BMA because it promoted competition among doctors.⁵⁴ By the 1860s, it was noticeable that the more respectable of physicians began charging for prescriptions rather than actual medicine because charging for goods smacked of 'trade'. It was probably no coincidence that the fashion had changed towards less excessive dosages of medicine which resulted in a loss of income from that source.⁵⁵

Families who could pay for lengthy vigils awaiting crisis or death also supported respectability. Doctors could develop a personal relationship with the family, though in practical terms they could do relatively little. One author speculates that as the importance of the doctor's presence rose, the vicar's dropped.⁵⁶ In fact, the demand for physicians rose many years before any real advances in medical practice should have justified it.⁵⁷ Sliding fee schedules made it exorbitant, but not prohibitive, for the middle classes to retain a general practitioner.⁵⁸ Medical incomes correspondingly rose from the 1860s, as the Victorian economy expanded.⁵⁹ As well, the relative status of doctor and patient shifted; patients' status grew relatively lower as the doctor's increased, thereby increasing the doctor's authority.⁶⁰

Interestingly, the drive for status narrowed clinical practice. The increasing presence of trained nurses let general practitioners shun as unprofessional some of the less pleasant jobs in the service of their patients they had previously performed. It also led them to shun as irrelevant, or beneath their professional interest, the diseases of children and much of obstetrics. Infectious diseases were not of clinical interest until at least the 1880s, as they were regarded as dangerous and socially degrading because the majority of such patients were of the lower social classes.⁶¹

Changes in the hospital system also supported the increasing professionalism and status of doctors. Over the later decades of the century, the hospitals changed their mandates from refuges (for those who could get in) to curative institutions as they widened their entry and tightening the requirements and arrangements for nurses. This was partly as a result of the declining power of the governors and the increasing power of hospital doctors.⁶² The importance for the doctors of a hospital appointment was the associated prestige. It gave access to the patrons of the hospital and enhanced the doctor's reputation among his own private patients. The related honorarium was of relatively little monetary importance, but the appointment attracted students and their associated fees.⁶³ Over time, the hospital doctors would have significant control over the profession through the control of education.⁶⁴ It also had the effect of increasing the sense of professional community, as doctors began to have similar experiences in the process of becoming professionals. They began to have about the same education, influenced by relatively few teachers who could preach professional values.⁶⁵

Still, a number of things militated against the medical professional's social status. As a profession, it was relatively inexpensive to enter. A minimum budget for a year's study in London in 1884 was around £331 to £411, over a total course of study of five to six years.⁶⁶ Compared to the cost of studying at the Inns of Court (a minimum of £600 per annum for 4 years), meant that the higher end of costs for medicine were around the lower end of costs for law. Neither could the technical education that medicine required compete with the prestige of the classical liberal education. As a result, it tended to attract the younger sons of the other professional and merchant classes, and the elder sons of artisans and non-professionals.⁶⁷ A

breakdown of the social origins of physicians in the nineteenth century (though limited by not breaking it down by years) shows, that excepting some 42.5% whose fathers occupation was not reported, 22.4% were the sons of doctors, 9.2% came from the clergy (8.9% of which was Church of England), and 3.3% were gentlemen or landowners. Revealingly, military officers are not listed as a separate group.⁶⁸

Law

The standard for professional respect for the doctors was probably the legal profession. Though they, too, had been subject to reforming interests in the mid-nineteenth century, the legal profession had not directed its efforts to upward mobility, but to successfully maintain and defend their considerable professional independence and social prestige.

The two mid century royal commissions concerned themselves with the inadequacies of legal education for barristers and solicitors. They recommended a more systematic and thorough education. Relevant lectures at the universities were few, and the Inns of Court expected little more than the students presence for a certain period. They recommended examinations (for barristers, solicitors and attorneys already had them) and that the Inns set up some form of university for the study of law. Little was done to implement these recommendations, in part because many members of the bar did not care for the implication that the bar and solicitors would have some degree of overlap in their educations, arguing that the barrister required a much higher degree of learning, and it favoured the public interest in that the bar was a check on the bench. However, the Inns did establish some teaching positions and voluntary examinations.⁶⁹

There were further debates in 1872 over compulsory university legal education. The more radical reformers favoured a school of law established “by public authority” (i.e. outside the influence of the Inns of Court) and examinations, that were to be the necessary qualification to be admitted to the legal professions. Students should “lay the foundation of their legal knowledge in *principles*, and ... study the law upon a large, wide, liberal, and *scientific* basis.”⁷⁰ “Scientific” was

presumably used in the sense of an organised or systematised information or knowledge. The hitherto voluntary exams did in fact become compulsory for aspiring barristers at this time, as a reforming measure.⁷¹

In general, however, opposition to reform was successful. It was based on the asserting the importance of practical knowledge gained through a practical apprenticeship over academic knowledge. Education was not going to be permitted to transform the profession. The anti-reformers considered English law to be too unorganised to be effectively taught, making the only effective way to learn was through practice. A. V. Dicey, well known writer on law in the later nineteenth century, stated the argument this way: "If men were to live by rules, and these rules were to work properly, soundness of judgement based on a long apprenticeship in practical affairs was essential. Only in this way could men develop appropriate understandings - only in this way could they reinterpret old values in novel circumstances. Suitable recipes for change could not be torn out of textbooks."⁷² This is an argument in favour of the traditional mode of educating a law student on the grounds that it was the best way to pass on professional traditions and values and to maintain a sense of community.

As a result, through the rest of the nineteenth century students of the bar learned from a mentor, supplemented by some months of study to pass the exams. They could also buy the additional help/advice of one of a number of published guides to lead them through the intricacies of the sub-culture of the Inns. These guides give a reasonably good idea of the expectations of the bar. The leading student guide, Walter Rouse Ball's Student Guide to the Bar estimated that a capital sum of £ 2433 (at 4% interest) was about minimum, over 4 years of study, a cost that also included the first few briefless years. It was upfront about the criticality of 'influence' in advancement, given that the profession was attracting talented and educated students. A university degree (a general degree, not a law degree) was recommended to ameliorate (though far from negate) these effects, although this in turn inflicted its own further expenses.⁷³

Many of those called to the bar did not intend to practice. They had gained the education because it was useful to administer one's own property and to gain access to appointments and patronage that required legal knowledge.⁷⁴ Though the available data on parentage is limited, the law was a preferred profession for the sons of the gentry. It was also a career for the children of professions such as medicine, the military and the civil service and of course, law itself. Another indication of law's high status in relation to medicine and the clergy is that it tended to be the choice of elder, not younger, sons.⁷⁵ A sample taken in 1885 shows that almost three quarters of the fathers of members of the bar were from the urban middle and upper middle classes, including members of the legal, medical and other professions, the civil service, businessmen and urban gentry. Barristers and solicitors made up 19% of all careers, and 40% of the professionals. Of the barristers 96% were sons of barristers, clergy, officers, civil servants, physicians and teachers.⁷⁶

Throughout the century, the legal profession was able to maintain, and even expand its autonomy. Not only did they manage to maintain their preferred educational system in the face of reformers, they were also able to increase the level of their own self-regulation. The Solicitors Act granted the Law Society (formed in 1825) the right to strike a solicitor off the roll.⁷⁷ The barristers were policed by the benches at the Inns of Court who could disbar a member for dishonourable conduct, a category that included incompetence for neither attorneys nor solicitors.⁷⁸ By end of century the 'tradition' of independence (that is, lack of public accountability) was viewed as a necessary part of the administration of justice; a protection from the appointed judiciary, rather than a privilege in need of justification⁷⁹.

A lawyer's income was, very roughly, comparable to that of the clergy or doctors, but the range was substantial. Estimates of the average, or representative income range from £ 500 to £ 1000.⁸⁰ A minimum fee in Poor Law cases was 3s. 4d., as compared to a doctor's 1d.⁸¹ The manner in which fees were paid expressed awareness of how it would reflect in social standing: a virtue was made of the fact that etiquette forbade them to sue for fees due. This is possibly because it was not considered fitting for one gentleman to pay another for services rendered.⁸²

3. Clergy

Like the other liberal professions, the establishment clergy came under attack by the reform movement. However, unlike medicine and the law, by the end of the century it was several decades into a period of genteel decline.

The church came under attack during the period of utilitarian reform in the 1830-40s when membership in the church was still a prerequisite for many social positions. The reformers questioned the value of a church whose ministers often had no theological training. In reaction, movements like the evangelicals and the Oxford movement (also known as the Tractarians) were established. These groups attempted to redefine the churches, and implicitly, the clergy's role in society.⁸³ The Oxford movement emphasised priestly powers and religious autonomy emphasis on authority of the church whereas evangelicalism emphasised the centrality of the salvation of souls. These two movements combined with a move toward organisational and financial reforms.⁸⁴

By mid-nineteenth century the clergy's duties had narrowed to a more strictly ecclesiastical role rather than the many secular functions (politician, Poor Law administrator, land tax administrator, provider of medicine and social welfare, teacher, magistrate) he once took on in his parish that were gradually being taken up by civil servants, teachers and police. Greater emphasis was being placed on priestly role, where he had monopoly of legitimacy.⁸⁵ One author has suggested that the clergy had little choice but to emphasise and specialise in their central role, as other roles available to them were being taken away.⁸⁶

As their role became defined on strictly spiritual grounds, rather than a wider social utility, there were noticeable changes in the clergy. There was a growing tendency, both within the church and among the laity, to treat the clergyman as a man apart. Both the Evangelicals and the Tractarians emphasised the independence and autonomy of the clergy, set apart and consecrated for a particular and sacred duty. By last quarter of nineteenth century the clergy began to develop a distinctive professional sub-culture. The mid-century had already seen an increase in meetings,

which had started with the evangelicals (aided by the spread of better transport), the creation of professional publications, and the establishment of theological colleges.⁸⁷

The clergy made its greatest advances towards professionalization when it gained control over training. As with other forms of professional education, the colleges helped develop a professional ideology and ethos.⁸⁸ However, passing a classical course at an older university was a still better qualification and had greater status than success at strictly theological studies. By end of century there were effectively two groups of clergymen: one still linked to rural aristocracy and the other more evangelically oriented. The latter, partly because of their ideological stance and relative lack of wealth, did not have the formers' social standing.⁸⁹

The period from the later nineteenth century to the First World War are spoken of in some texts as a golden era for clergy in rural areas. If the income from the parish was sufficient, the clergy could maintain a standard of living comparable to that of the local gentry, and place his sons into professional careers in the army, empire and church. However, it was also a period of decay, as incomes declined with agricultural revenues. This effect also showed up in the numbers of clergy. While overall numbers of clergy rose through the century, the numbers relative to the population declined, except in the 1870's and 1880's. There was also a decline in the number of university graduates who chose a clerical vocation. A number of things contributed to this problem. The clergy remained relatively expensive to enter, particularly when set against their prospects of income. The career prospects were very uncertain, except for the well connected, since the church retained a patronage as part of the system.⁹⁰

Again, using the honours sample from Cambridge of 1871 to 1873, recruitment to the clergy shows considerable self-recruitment (52%), but also a fairly even level of recruitment among the established professions (37%) and non-professional groups (36%), and somewhat lower levels among the gentry (27%), business (31%), newer professional groups (25%). This is a much flatter distribution than that of law, suggesting its lower relative social status.⁹¹

Though they gained significant control over their own training, the clergy had barriers to gaining the autonomy of the other professions that proved beyond their control. First, they could not claim monopoly of spiritual services in the face of dissenting churches. Neither were they in a position to control their own income. The state was not about to enforce a monopoly and it was state-supported reform that returned the clergy to the parishes. Neither could they control their own professional structure, which remained in the hands of the church.⁹²

Among all these professions are some similarities. They have consistent and overlapping patterns of recruitment: physicians' sons become physicians, barristers, clergy or officers, barristers' sons become clergy, officers or physicians, and so on. Most of the pressure for reform was in the early and mid-century, and the impetus to reform and died down by the early 1870's. There was also an increasing use of educational standards and requirements to define the professions. Moreover, there was a high initial financial cost for entry into both these professions, and into a career as an officer, while the potential monetary rewards of a military career were far more limited than those of a civilian career.

Conclusion

All of these professions, civilian and military, have a number of consistencies. All have a high initial financial cost, both to pay for the public school education that was prerequisite, to pay for the professional education, and to support the new professional in the first years of his career. All had some form of school at which those subjects considered necessary to master to be admitted to the profession were taught. All had some form of state sanction for the monopoly of practice by members of the profession, though the clergy suffered since their monopoly was restricted to practicing in the established church. However, the military profession was distinct from the private professions in that the government directly controlled its education, pay, promotion and pension.

While the Prussian army was the contemporary standard of a professional army, this standard did not necessarily apply. Reforming officers desired a general

staff and a regularised staff system, but the government distrusted the increased political power that appeared to be attendant on this. The function of the Prussian army was directed towards controlling their own borders and preparing for a hypothetical continental war. The British army was necessarily aimed at controlling Britain's colonies and fighting colonial wars, while at the same time casting a wary eye at possible continental commitment. The British army was significantly smaller than the Prussian army, but costly for its size because the ranks were not conscripted. The former were imperial police, the latter the imperial arm of a European policy.

Thus while numerous standards were available to apply, none actually fit the situation faced by British officers. As a result, while the other professional examples served as models, none could be adopted directly, but instead provided samples of tested policies on which the British, often implicitly, based their own debate.

¹ Karl Demeter, *The German Officer-Corps in Society and State 1650-1945* trans. Angus Malcolm (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) p. 80-1, 86, Holger H. Herwig, "'You are Here to Learn How to Die': German Subaltern Officer Education on the Eve of the Great War", *Forging the Sword: Selecting, Educating, and Training Cadets and Junior Officers in the Modern World* ed. Elliott V. Converse III, (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 1998), p. 32.

² Demeter, *The German Officer-Corps*, p. 88.

³ Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", *Forging the Sword*, p. 34, Steven E. Clemente, *For King and Kaiser! The Making of the Prussian Army Officer, 1860-1914* (London: Greenwood Press, 1992), p. 62 and chapter 5.

⁴ Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", *Forging the Sword*, p. 34, Clemente, *For King and Kaiser!*, pp. 111, 133,

Dennis E. Showalter, "'No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer': Officer Selection and Education in the Prussian/German Army, 1715-1945", *Military Education: Past, Present, and Future* eds. Gregory C. Kennedy and Keith Neilson (London: Preager, 2002), p. 42.

⁵ Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", *Military Education*, pp. 42-3, Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", *Forging the Sword*, p. 34, Clemente, *For King and Kaiser!*, pp. 118, 215.

⁶ Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", *Forging the Sword*, p. 32, Stevenson, David, *Armaments and the Coming of War: Europe, 1904-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996), p. 40,

Martin Kitchen, *The German Officer Corps 1890-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 29.

⁷ Clemente, *For King and Kaiser!*, p.63.

⁸ Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", *Military Education*, p. 45.

⁹ Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", *Forging the Sword*, p. 35, Clemente, *For King and Kaiser!*, p. 64.

¹⁰ Clemente, *For King and Kaiser!*, p. 205.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 205.

¹² Razzell, P. E., "Social Origins of Officers in the Indian and British Home Army: 1758-1962", *The British Journal of Sociology* Volume 14 (1963), pp. 253-4.

- ¹³ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 72-3, 74.
- ¹⁴ **ibid.**, p. 64.
- ¹⁵ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, p. 66,
Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", **Forging the Sword**, p. 34,
Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", **Military Education**, p. 44.
- ¹⁶ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, p. 71,
Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", **Forging the Sword**, p. 34,
Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", **Military Education**, p. 44.
- ¹⁷ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 71-2.
- ¹⁸ **ibid.**, pp. 142-3.
- ¹⁹ **ibid.**, pp. 93, 143, 160.
- ²⁰ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 145-7, 149,
Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", **Military Education**, p. 44.
- ²¹ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 147-8.
- ²² Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 144-5, 154,
Showalter, "No Officer Rather Than a Bad Officer", **Military Education**, p. 44.
- ²³ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 155-157.
- ²⁴ **ibid.**, p. 158.
- ²⁵ **ibid.**, pp. 82, 144, 148-9, 207, 209.
- ²⁶ Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", **Forging the Sword**, p. 33,
Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 160-1.
- ²⁷ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 161, 163-4,
Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", **Forging the Sword**, p. 36.
- ²⁸ **The German army from within; by a British officer who has served in it.** (New York: G.H. Doran Co., 1914), pp. 62, 63.
- ²⁹ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, pp. 160-2,
Herwig, "You are Here to Learn How to Die", **Forging the Sword**, p. 35.
- ³⁰ Martin Samuels, **Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918** (London: Frank Cass 1995), p. 30.
- ³¹ Kitchen, **The German Officer Corps 1890-1914**, pp. 17-19.
- ³² Samuels, **Command or Control?**, p. 30.
- ³³ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, p. 174.
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- ³⁵ Clemente, **For King and Kaiser!**, p. 173, 185, 189.
- ³⁶ **WO 33/179 A663 System of Training of Staff Officers in Foreign Armies.** 1901., p. 33
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- ⁵⁰ Smith, *The People's Health*, pp. 362-9.
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- ⁶⁷ Peterson, *The Medical Profession in Mid-Victorian London*, pp. 196, 205.
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- ⁸⁹ Elliott, *The Sociology of the Professions*, pp. 42-43,
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CHAPTER TWO

Colonial Defence or Home Defence?

The main strategic issue for the army in the last decade of the nineteenth century was whether it should organise itself to face the colonial wars that were occurring, or the continental war that might occur. How was it to balance between garrisoning the empire and maintaining enough battalions for home defence? The various European powers could be allies or enemies in the event of war in Europe, and, by the turn of the century, those alliances and rivalries had shifted from what they had been 20 or even 10 years earlier. The issues of mobilization, and the division of defensive responsibilities, were left adrift until inter-service rivalry forced the issue. The army was left poorly placed to argue its corner because recruiting problems limited its actual strength, the linked battalion system was less flexible than expected, and therefore it could not easily support any claim to be able to hold off an invasion while maintaining its overseas commitments. The inter-service argument that occurred in the 1880s concerned the need to commit to a European standard of mobilisation, to be prepared to thwart an invasion from Europe, while also supporting the burden of overseas commitments and colonial wars. The financial means to support these goals was limited. The government used the battle between the army and the navy to choose military policy that favoured the navy and curbed army aspirations for a general staff, and thus curbed the Army's attempts to gain an institution it saw as important to its standing as a professionally body.

Civilian Control

“Linkage” was one of a number of reforms the new Liberal Secretary of State, Edward T. Cardwell, began to introduce in 1869. Over his tenure from 1868 to 1874, the Secretary of State made significant changes to the army. He began by reducing the Army Estimates, which had greatly expanded due to a fortifications building program in the 1860s.¹ Over 25,000 men were taken out of colonial service, and the size of battalions at home was decreased, excepting those that were

slated for overseas service; and the stores vote was cut. He reorganised the War Office so as to subordinate the entire administration, including the Commander in Chief, to the Secretary of State. The Commander in Chief, who was at that time the Duke of Cambridge, retained control over patronage, appointment and promotion. The Medical, Educational, Chaplain-General and Topographical departments were added to his responsibilities. Short service was introduced for the ranks, that is, six years in the regular forces and six years in the reserves. The Reserves were not available for small wars, as they could not be called up except in a national emergency.² Active service was extended to seven, then eight years after the Afghanistan war of 1878-1879, when Lord Roberts, the Commander in Chief in India, complained that the short service troops had insufficient experience.³ The purchase of officers' commissions was ended by royal warrant, and the Localisation Act linked two single battalion line regiments and two militia regiments and some volunteer units to a regional recruiting pool. Each battalion was to have two companies at the recruiting depot, which would train recruits and send them to the home based battalion. That battalion would then send drafts overseas to the battalion to which it was linked. This solved the problem that battalions overseas had had, which was to maintain recruitment.⁴

Linked battalion system and deployment

The linked battalion system was quickly found to be less flexible than desired. The policy was to maintain one battalion, of the two in a regiment, abroad in India or the colonies, and to maintain the other at home against a national emergency. Except in a national emergency, in which event the army could call out the whole strength of the militia and regular services, battalions for a colonial war had to be drawn from battalions already committed to home defence, or battalions already in garrison abroad and from soldiers drawn from other battalions to fill out the troop complement.⁵ The Adjutant-General, C. H. Ellice, complained repeatedly that the linked battalion system, as it stood, was not able to accommodate even a local war.⁶ He further stated in an 1879 memo that it also damaged the quality of the battalions sent to a colonial war:

...when a battalion is sent out to take part in a European war, it will almost invariably have to fight in division, with regiments as good as itself on both flanks and rear. But when it is sent on an Indian or Colonial campaign, it is constantly exposed to the risk of being engaged alone and unsupported in the midst of surging masses of a brave and vastly outnumbering enemy. The former case does not require nearly the same amount of individual confidence and cohesion among the men as the latter. In the latter, everything depends upon the thorough knowledge of, and trust in, on another of officers, non-commissioned officers and men; and yet at present the battalions that we send out to discharge this, the most difficult duty a soldier can be called upon to perform, are in great part an aggregate of recruits, combined with volunteers from half a dozen different corps under strange officers!⁷

It was recommended that, should both battalions be serving abroad, that the brigade depot should be expanded to a provisional battalion, and that, should a war overseas be considered sufficiently dangerous that either the reserves be given to the Secretary of State, or volunteers called from reserve, should be sent to the battalions abroad. The Adjutant-General added that if these ideas were accepted, that the system should be workable with in a few years, and if not, “that the short service system must be regarded as a failure”.⁸ An 1879 committee on short service also recommended that the requirement for national emergency be relaxed.⁹

According to the table the Adjutant-General presented (Table A), the drop in the number of battalions was a phenomenon of the past 4 years. However, information taken from the Army List and Hart’s Army List indicates that the number of battalions at home had been falling since 1872. (see Chart 9 - Deployment of all Regiments by Region) Ellice did not specify, but his numbers were probably taken from planning documents, as they do not show the movement of three battalions out of Britain to the Gold Coast for the Ashanti war of 1873. Neither does his table match his own statement that as of 25 February 1879, 88 battalions were abroad.¹⁰

Table 1. Statement of battalions of Infantry serving at home and abroad from 1872-1879.¹¹

Year.	At home.	Abroad.
1872 June	70	71
1873 "	70	71

1874	"	69	72
1875	"	70	71
1876	"	69	72
1877	"	68 and 4 Coys.	72 and 4 Coys.
1878	"	64	77
1879	February	59	81

The Adjutant General advised making reserves available whenever trained reinforcements were needed, and criticised the “inexpediency of retaining them for the infrequent emergency of a European war only.”¹²

Two colonial wars in 1878-1880, the Zulu war and the Afghanistan war, the latter linked to Russian conciliation of the Amir in Afghanistan, only underlined the problem, as the army at home was seen to be weaker due to these wars, which were conducted based on estimates made for peacetime.¹³ It was considered possible to send six further battalions to India, if necessary, “but if, as Lord Northbrook suggests, it should be necessary to have 12 (*i.e.*, 6 in addition to the above) Battalions ready for Indian service, the transfer of so many more men as volunteers from other regiments would dislocate the service, and leave us very weak at home. This, however, would be a state of things so widely differing from our normal military condition, as fully to justify the description of a national emergency.”¹⁴ Ellice suggested completely reorganising the linked battalions so that there be 34 regiments of 4 battalions, and 1 of 5.¹⁵ In each regiment, 2 battalions would be abroad, one would be being built up for foreign service and the fourth and the depot would be supporting the battalions abroad.¹⁶ This would restore flexibility because 8 battalions would always be close enough to effective strength to be sent abroad at need without damaging the regiment’s ability to support battalions abroad.¹⁷

The Duke of Cambridge, the Commander in Chief, completely condemned the linked battalion system for destroying regimental morale, and because it “has hurried battalions into the field not in a fit state to endure the trials of active service” and for being too inflexible to cope with small colonial wars. The price of sending battalions to a war was to send home battalions at the price of supporting their sister battalion abroad.¹⁸ “It is true that the Localization Committee provided for this by

proposing that, in such a crisis, the brigade depôt should be raised to the strength of a battalion, and one of its affiliated Militia battalions called out, but no Ministry, however strong, has ever ventured to put this expensive machinery into operation - not even when our military organization was reeling under the double shock of an Afghan and a Zulu war."¹⁹ His solution was to unlink the battalions. Each battalion overseas would leave two companies at home to supply recruits.²⁰ In his opinion, the army was an imperial one, dedicated to fighting colonial wars. Localised basing was suited to European war, not to imperial needs.²¹

The Airey commission supported his position. The Horse Guards asked that a commission look into army organisation. Headed by Lord Airey, the former Adjutant General (1870-76), and this 1880 commission agreed, not surprisingly, with the Commander in Chief to unlink the battalions. The men who made up this committee belonged to Cambridge's generation. Future senior military men chose to stand by the principle of linkage in their disagreements with the War Office. However, the Conservative government fell, and the new Liberal government, with Hugh Childers as the new Secretary of State for War, chose to finish the implementation of the Cardwell reforms. The linked battalions were amalgamated with two militia battalions into territorial regiments.²² (See Table 1 - Index of the Line Regiments)

The problem with all these schemes is that they all presupposed that half of the battalions abroad and half at home was the norm, from which they had to account for occasional deviations due to colonial wars, when more than half of the battalions were abroad. The truth is that deviation was the norm; even without a colonial war in progress, more than half of the battalions were abroad, and years without a war were much less common than those with. Eventually the War Office learned to move units around to the more critical colonies, while sending battalions from home to a war, or between colonies. The problem was not necessarily the linked battalion system, but the lack of men, which was directly connected to the estimates. It was this that made the linked battalion system less operable than it might have been. Yet the number of line infantry troops was steadily, if slowly, rising: from 67,000 in 1875, to 88,500 in 1897. This was part of a general rise in the non-commissioned

ranks of the army from 118,000 to 144,000. (See Chart 5 - Home and Colonies Establishment 1871-1902) In fact, 2,000 men of the establishment existed only on paper, as it was illegal to have more soldiers than was voted for by parliament, so it was policy to compensate in this fashion for fluctuations in manning.²³ However the number of line officers to lead and administer these troops was not rising; after rising slightly in the early 1870's, it dropped in 1881 and 1882 to remain stable at around 2,800 officers, until it began to rise again in 1898. (See Chart 6 - Home and Colonies Establishment: Officers)

The linked battalion system was supposed to allow for two army corps to be assembled from the 70 battalions that were to be at home, without reducing the number of line battalions at home below 20 to 23 - which latter were, with the assistance of the militia and volunteers, to garrison dockyards, arsenals, coastal defences and other strategic locations, and to garrison Ireland. The two army corps were to include, according to Wolseley's confidential memorandum, 3 battalions of guards, 39 line battalions, with 8 further line battalions to secure bases and line of communications.²⁴ "Our military establishments at Home were discussed and carefully considered when the reforms effected by Lord Cardwell were being introduced; and they were fixed at a minimum that most military men believed to be a dangerously low figure. I shared in that belief."²⁵ However, Wolseley also warned that the government should not make changes without a clear public explanation of its policy.²⁶

Topographical Branch was renamed the Intelligence Department in 1873 and placed under the Quartermaster General, himself under the Adjutant General's department as of 1870, the following year. It was returned to the direct control of the Adjutant General in 1882. It had no mandate to make policy, or even to explore policy options. Its mandate was to collect and organise topographical and statistical data for use during war, or as needed by those planning for conflict in peacetime.²⁷ Colonel Robert Home, one of the department officers, drew up a mobilisation scheme for eight army corps for the defence of Britain in 1875.²⁸ In 1879 the Commander in Chief ordered that a modified scheme for six corps to be made, but it appears that this was never done.²⁹ The year after Lord Wolseley became Adjutant

General in 1885, he appointed Major General Sir Henry Brackenbury as the head of the intelligence department.³⁰

Invasion Scares and policy planning

In the 1880s, a combination of alarmist novels, rivalries over overseas colonies, Russian advances into central Asia, and France into northern Africa, invasion scares in 1882 and again in 1888, and the growing size of the French, Italian, Russian and American navies, caused increasing public alarm and, in 1886, a request by the War Office to the Director of Military Intelligence, Henry Brackenbury, to inquire into the state of mobilization planning.³¹ The invasion scares added urgency to the need for clear, executable mobilisation plans. Hence Brackenbury was set to create new series of mobilisation schemes and to report on the available resources to implement them.³² The schemes were to include the options to mobilise either one or two army corps for war outside Britain, or mobilise all but the volunteers and send two army corps to war, with the rest under arms to support the expeditionary army and strengthen foreign garrisons with militia. Other options he was to consider were to mobilise all troops at home, to completely mobilise one or two army corps at home in addition to an expeditionary force, a partial mobilisation to face an uprising in Ireland, a total mobilisation to face an invasion, or an invasion and an expeditionary force.³³ He discovered that the plans then in place were utterly unrealistic; while there was enough cavalry and infantry to put two army corps in the field, they lacked sufficient support services to keep them there.³⁴ The Admiralty had yet to be co-ordinated with for efficient embarkation.³⁵ The line infantry set aside for the two army corps were short of officers, but, these, like all shortages of officers excepting those needed for the medical and veterinary staff, could be filled out by promotions, transfers and appointments.³⁶ The 18 battalions of line infantry in the first army corps were short 111 officers of 424, as well as 26 of 94 officers in the 4 infantry battalions dedicated to lines of communications. The second army corps was short 147 of 483 in the 21 line battalions of the second army corps, and 26 officers in the 4 battalions set aside to garrison lines of communications.³⁷ Worse, even allowing for,

the military and financial disadvantages under which our voluntary system of recruiting place us, as compared with nations recruiting by conscription, recognizing (sic) also the difficulties we have to contend with in consequence of having to garrison India and our numerous colonies, and on the other hand the enormous advantage given by our insular position, it must yet be conceded that when our national honour or our national interests compel us to go to war with a great continental power, or when an enemy lands on our shores, our honour and our interests will not be protected, our country will not be defended by saying that reliance was placed on our fleet, or by recapitulating the causes which have made our Army impotent to strike in defence of our honour and our interests, or to repel the invader from our hearths and homes.³⁸

In another memorandum, Brackenbury noted that nine battalions would be needed to bring all the colonial garrisons up to war strength, not including local forces, from the 18.5 battalions then assigned to Aden, Bermuda, Ceylon, Gibraltar, Halifax, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Malta, Mauritius, St Helena, St. Lucia & Barbados, Sierra Leone, Singapore, and South Africa. These would have to be found from the army reserve, home battalions and militia battalions.³⁹ A committee of Brackenbury and Sir Ralph Thompson developed Brackenbury's ideas. They recommended that after 42 battalions (2 army corps) and 4 battalions for lines of communications (1 army corps worth) there would be 4 guards and 15 line battalions in Britain. Three line battalions and six militia battalions would be needed to reinforce the Colonial garrisons, and 8 line as well as militia and volunteer battalions would garrison Britain. This would leave 4 guards, 4 line, and further militia and volunteer battalions free. The report concluded that there was no need to raise more infantry battalions.⁴⁰ That same year, a committee on colonial garrisons generally supported Brackenbury's assessment. The committee was composed of the Inspector General of Fortifications, Major General Andrew Clarke, General Sir Arthur Herbert, the Quartermaster General, Major General Sir Redvers Buller, Deputy Adjutant General, R. J. Hay, Deputy Adjutant General for the Royal Artillery, and Ralph Knox, the Accountant General.⁴¹ The 1876 mobilisation scheme allowed for 13 regular battalions to home garrisons, whereas the number now allowed was 8, and would also have to be expanded in wartime.⁴²

Two army corps was a trivial mobilisation compared to the number of army corps the continental powers could immediately raise, not only in absolute terms, but also in proportion to Britain's population.

Table 2. Continental Mobilisation, not including garrisons and second line troops.⁴³

	Population	Number of Army Corps	Population per Corps*
Austro-Hungary	38,000,000	13	2,923,077
Belgium	6,000,000	2	3,000,000
France	38,000,000	19	2,000,000
Germany	45,000,000	18	2,500,000
Italy	29,000,000	12	2,416,667
Russia in Europe	87,000,000	17 ½	4,971,429
Great Britain	36,000,000	Less than 2	Over 18,000,000

*My calculation.

The Colonial Defence Committee supported the Colonial Garrisons Committee report. Writing in December, 1887, the secretary wrote, "the Colonial Defence Committee desire to emphasize strongly the remark of the Garrisons Committee "that it is impossible to calculate upon being able to increase the garrisons of these stations on the outbreak of war, at a moment when all available troops are sure to be required for other purposes."⁴⁴ The Colonial Defence committee did not think that the colonial garrisons could be reinforced in the event of war; "to reinforce them in anticipation of war might precipitate hostilities, and there would be an inevitable reluctance to take the step till it might be too late. The Committee, therefore, desire to urge most strongly that the necessary decisions should be taken without delay, and that the security of the coaling stations, on which the existence of the Empire depends, should be placed beyond question."⁴⁵

Between the issue of mobilisation and the invasion scare of May 1888, army reform had become a public issue.⁴⁶ Given the criticism from both civil and military sources, the Secretary of State for War, Lord Stanhope, chose to reorganise. He planned to slightly cut the size of each battalion and to convert or reduce some army battalions and put the savings into support services so as to achieve the two army corps standard.⁴⁷ The result shows as a slight dip in the number of troops in the 1887 estimates (see Chart 5 - Home and Colonies Establishment 1871-1902). He also reorganised the War Office, moving all the major departments, apart from

finance and manufacturing, under the commander in chief. However, the government stated, both publicly and privately, that the military department, under the commander in chief, “is charged with, and is responsible for, the direction and supervision of all the executive duties of the Army. It submits estimates for all the services it directs, and is responsible for the expenditure it incurs.”⁴⁸ The civil department controlled the audit. The commander in chief was charged with the “command, discipline, and distribution” of all forces, military education and training, enlistment and discharge, collection of information, the selection of men for commissions and other appointments, stores, buildings, troop transport, preparing the estimates, and “with the duty of rendering such advice and assistance on military affairs as may be required of him by the Secretary of State.”⁴⁹ Neither Wolseley or the Duke of Cambridge were pleased. They saw the army squeezed between what the army was expected to do, and the lack of control over the money to do it. What the army was expected to do, and in what order of priority, was not made clear until Stanhope laid it out in a memorandum later that year, essentially copying Wolseley’s recommendations, excepting that the mobilisation be based on two, not three corps.⁵⁰

It appears that Brackenbury’s reports on the state of mobilisation was taken by the army reformers and developed into a case for army expansion to strengthen colonial garrisons and ensure that mobilisation to the two army corps standard was possible. In other words, they were putting forward a military policy, and one opposed to the “blue water” policy that was developed by the navy. Wolseley argued, “our foreign garrisons are dangerously weak when we remember the suddenness with which hostilities now begin. We should not now have time to increase our foreign garrisons to war strength before they could be attacked by an enterprising enemy” and “we dare not send such transports [for troops] without sufficient convoy, so we must make up our minds to the certainty that all our military stations abroad will have to shift for themselves with the garrisons in them at the time whenever war is made upon us by a nation possessing a fleet.”⁵¹ Neither did Wolseley trust that the Navy could support the army in event of war,

When war was in the air, and the relations between England and any Foreign Power were somewhat strained, popular opinion would warn us that any serious augmentation to our forces abroad might precipitate the war we

wished to avoid, and that, consequently, it must not be attempted. When war had broken out with any Naval Power, our Navy would, most probably, have its hands so full that it might not be able to carry, or even to convoy abroad the reinforcements required to complete the garrisons of our distant possessions.⁵²

Continental Defence Policy

Because of the threat of a European power with a navy, colonial security could no longer be discussed without reference to continental security. If coaling stations and fortresses were under-garrisoned, Wolseley argued, then an enterprising enemy could take them and the navy would lose its freedom of movement. The loss of an overseas station would likely be the government's first notice that they were at war with a European power.⁵³ Not only were the garrisons abroad dangerously small, so was the number of battalions at home, each of which had to be kept at a minimum strength of 4.5 to 5 times the size of the number of drafts they sent abroad, based on an estimate made by Colonel Grove in 1883, if they were to be more than depots for the overseas battalions.⁵⁴ Depot sized battalions could not realistically be expected to be part of an army corps intended for defensive or offensive operations.

This military policy was something Wolseley and the Duke of Cambridge could agree on. Wolseley wrote that the military forces "are left in ignorance of the specific objects which that organization (sic) should aim at."⁵⁵ He went on to say that the commander in chief was aware that there were certain known purposes that the military had to fulfil: support of the civil power, garrisoning India, fortresses and coaling stations, and additionally, to mobilise three army corps, six brigades of cavalry, and auxiliary troops, for the defence of Britain. An expeditionary force of two army corps, one cavalry division and troops to defend the lines of communications should be ready to ship out.⁵⁶ It was these priorities that Stanhope copied in his memorandum stating the priorities of the military. Wolseley expressed, however, some doubts regarding the limits of naval power,

Although it is not assumed that our Navy is strong enough to guarantee this country against invasion, it is assumed that even in the event of a coalition between France and Russia against us, it would be at least able to prevent the enemy's ships which brought over the invading army of 150,000 men from

returning to France, and landing here a second army of similar strength. It is hoped that we are justified in attributing this power to our present Navy.⁵⁷

India Policy

Wolseley was already concerned about the strength of the army. He felt that due to increasing military responsibilities, requests from India for 8000 more men (that is, 3 more battalions as well as 100 men extra for each battalion then in India), and the continuing occupation of Egypt, that the line army should be increased by 10 battalions.⁵⁸ Support for Indian reinforcements was denied in July 1887.⁵⁹ Despite that, there was a rise in the establishment of ranks in the Indian army in the estimates. The number of non-commissioned ranks jumped by nearly 8000 between 1885 and 1887 and India retained them through 1902. (See Chart 7 - India Establishment) The number of line infantry officers rose by a modest 84 men in 1886, but flattened out after that to around 1500 officers on establishment. (See Chart 8 - India Establishment: Officers) In these charts, the number of officers is marked in orange for the line infantry, and red to indicate the number of all officers on the Indian Establishment of the British army. The commissioned ranks are coded in light blue for the line infantry, and dark blue for all non-commissioned ranks.

Another party who disagreed with Wolseley and the Duke on defence policy was Lord Roberts, who favoured a policy of “forward defence” in India on the grounds that the real threat was a Russian invasion of India.⁶⁰ The “forward” school advocated extending British influence into central Asia. The further British influence ran, the more distant would be Russian influence to India. The “masterly inactivity” school argued that India would be more tolerant of the British ruling, good government and low taxes than by expensive garrisons or aggressive foreign policies. If the Russians chose to attack India, they could risk the long lines of communications through a probably hostile Afghanistan. The “forward” school countered that the Afghans would be happy to support an attack on India and were therefore possible Russian allies.⁶¹ Assuming the navy could secure the Indian ocean, any defence of India, according to the “forward” school, would have to be made by an army in the north-west, so any attempt to fight Russia elsewhere would only weaken the defence in India.⁶² The “Wolseley school”, according to early

biography of General Lord Rawlinson, whose father first put forward the “forward” school of thought,

... rejoined that we were first and foremost a sea power, and that to attempt to make our main effort against a great military power, such as Russia, on land, would be to resign our natural advantages. Our true policy for the defence of India, they argued, was to make it clear to Russia that any encroachment in Afghanistan would be a *casus belli*, and that if war came we should act where fleet and army could be used in combination. They proposed, therefore, that our policy should be to keep on the friendliest terms with Turkey.⁶³

Wolseley thought that fighting Russia through Afghanistan was of advantage only to Russia. He did not think at the time, 1890, that war with Russia was going to be soon, but that it would eventually occur.⁶⁴ He distrusted relying solely on the navy for home defence, and was aware of the need for the navy as a means to deploy troops to defend the colonies.⁶⁵

The Russian Problem

There were considerable problems involved in fighting in central Asia due to the long supply lines inherent in any operation in that area. The Russian force that marched from Tashkent to Khiva in 1874 was a force of a mere 5,500 men with 8,800 camels. The British estimated that during the Second Afghan war in 1878, that it took 70,000 mules to maintain an expeditionary force of 36,000 for 15 days. 5,000 mules was a line 10 miles long, so any individual force would be no more than four or five battalions large.⁶⁶ Part of that force would be dedicated to protecting the mule train. In 1878, the line of communication from Kabul to Peshawar was guarded by 15,000 men, leaving 12,000 men for field operations.⁶⁷

Unfortunately for Russia, its advances in controlling central Asia merely caused concern to British interests, and sapped Russia's military resources.⁶⁸ Britain could not abandon India or allow it to be overthrown by hostile power. On other hand they were considering the possibility of a large land war in Europe with a modern state. Thus it was possible, given threat of Russia was real, then India might not be defensible⁶⁹

Russia's real strategic concern was her Western border with Germany and Austro-Hungary.⁷⁰ Pan-Slavist movements risked war with both in the 1870's, and brought Russia into a war with Turkey in 1877. In 1879, Germany and Austro-Hungary agreed on an alliance, and Russia was assured that it was a purely defensive one. Russia reaffirmed her adherence to the Three Emperor's League of 1873.⁷¹ German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's careful diplomacy throughout the 1880's maintained the peace in eastern Europe, though Russia (and Britain) had a war scare in 1885 over Afghanistan and Russia, a second in 1887 over the control of Bulgaria.⁷² An Anglo-Russian agreement in 1887 decided the boundary between Russian and Afghan Turkistan.⁷³ Russia refused to continue adhering to the Three Emperor's League in 1887 because of the involvement of Austria, so Germany fell back on brokering a treaty that was to prevent either of them from going to war with each other if either became involved in a war with a third party.⁷⁴

Other European alliances were also shifting; the League of Three Emperors collapsed in the early 1890's, leaving France free to make an alliance with Russia. Once Bismarck was eased out, German policies changed. Germany refused to renew the reinsurance treaty in 1890, and began to look into building her own navy. Russia grew active in Far East, and its commercial and political interests came into conflict with China, Britain, and Japan.⁷⁵

Hartington commission

Stanhope took another step to deal with the debate over costs by setting up a commission under the Lord Hartington and two other former Secretaries of State for War, W. H. Smith and H. Campbell-Bannerman. It had a narrow mandate to look into the relations between the Treasury and the army and navy.⁷⁶ It did not have a mandate to consider the number of home battalions, home defence issues, or whether either the army or the navy was able to pursue their missions given their allowed expenditures.⁷⁷ It certainly did not have a mandate to decide military policy or who was to decide what that was. The principle of civilian control was implicit in the choice of commission members.⁷⁸

The commission found that there was no regular communication and no joint planning between the army and navy, though mobilisation schemes that the army had made required it to transport troops. The committee recommended that a defence committee should be established to examine defence policy and advise on the needs of the services as well as preview the estimates. The position of Commander in Chief should be abolished and replaced by a War Office council to advise the Secretary of State. This council was to include the parliamentary and permanent under secretaries, the financial secretary, and five military officers including the Adjutant General, the Quarter-Master General, the Director of Artillery, the Inspector General of Fortifications and a chief of staff. The chief of staff would lead a general staff, which was to plan imperial defence and coordinate the plans of the army and navy. This committee was to advise on military policy, and co-ordinate with the Admiralty. The War Office council was created in 1890, but as a shadow of the recommendations of the Hartington committee, as it could not even open discussion on an issue the Secretary did not raise.⁷⁹ Wolseley, Roberts, nor the Duke of Cambridge approved of the loss of the position of commander in chief, Cambridge because it would undermine the position of the crown, Wolseley and Roberts because they both hoped to succeed Cambridge.⁸⁰ Campbell-Bannerman, and the Liberals in general, did not approve of the idea of a general staff. A general staff was favoured by witnesses on the grounds that, in view of the state of mobilization, the army needed a staff dedicated to creating and preparing plans of organisation and campaigns, as the War Office was almost entirely organised to deal with administration. Campbell-Bannerman did not want the Chief of Staff to become as powerful as the Commander in Chief was, and whose powers the committee had recommended be reduced, and suspected the military would try to create military policy if they had a general staff.⁸¹ Campbell-Bannerman succeeded Stanhope in 1892, and let the civil service administer army affairs.⁸² There was the German experience to consider, where the army had slid its administration out from under the control of the War Minister to the general staff and the military cabinet.⁸³

When the Duke of Cambridge finally resigned as Commander in Chief in 1895, the opportunity was taken by Campbell-Bannerman to reduce the power of the position to one that had supervision over military departments, but no authority over

them, and the Council met more rarely. It was not until 1901, when Lord Roberts took the position of Commander in Chief, that he collected power back to himself and gained control of the Adjutant General, the Director of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, and the Military Secretary.⁸⁴

It was not until report of the Esher committee, one of several committees created in the wake of the South African war, pushed the creation of the Committee of Imperial Defence, the abolishment of the commander in chief, and eventually to create a general staff in 1906.⁸⁵ There appears to have been no clear dividing line between the creation of policy and strategic planning. As a result, the government was unwilling to allow the military to examine contingencies closely, for fear of the resulting recommendations encroaching on political policy. This is one of several examples of the British governmental culture having so entrenched a fear of permitting the military, and especially the Army, to have power, that it harmed its own military power in its attempts to ensure the Army would remain politically powerless as an institution. Certain individual officers, of course, were far from politically powerless.

Navy Policy

Concern had been raised in 1884 in the Pall Mall Gazette over Frances' naval building program, and naval supporters, such as Vice Admiral Philip Colomb, argued that if the navy was large enough to blockade enemy ports or keep a fleet in reserve, fortifications were unnecessary. The naval manoeuvres of 1888 demonstrated that the navy was not capable of blockading one enemy port and, at the same time fulfil other wartime duties. This only added to the concern and debate over national defence.⁸⁶ The Admiralty argued that a successful invasion depended on the destruction of fleet, which they "refused to contemplate".⁸⁷ The "blue water" school argued that Britain could be invaded only if the enemy controlled the seas. Therefore, the navy had to guard the home waters to defend against invasion, as well as protect shipping. The invasion scares of the 1880s hung in the background of this argument. Ships posted to bases garrisoned by the army could protect trade overseas. India was expected to protect itself.⁸⁸ The invasion scares of the 1880s hung in the background of this argument.

In 1889, the government chose to back the idea that the navy should be the first line of defence against invasion and be large enough to compete with the next two largest navies.⁸⁹ The government passed the Naval Defence Act, which gave the navy £21.5 million over five years to support a building program. The army got £600,000.⁹⁰ “Naval spending thereafter was set more by the navy’s perception of its own need, and less by financial orthodoxy.”⁹¹ The War Office was losing not only the financial debate, but the policy debate as well, as the government used the inter-service rivalry to establish military policy and limit the autonomy of the army high command. Yet the two-power standard became obsolete over the next decade as the European powers began to expand their own navies.⁹²

1890: More battalions?

Wolseley continued to press for more money in 1890, arguing unsuccessfully that the estimates submitted were insufficient to provide the third army corps that would be needed to repel invasion.⁹³ He further argued that either more battalions would have to serve abroad, or more native troops would have to be raised. Now he recommended that eleven regular battalions be raised, though only five if the occupation of Egypt turned out to be temporary, and the Duke recommended that the five battalions be raised as third and fourth battalions of existing regiments. Even so, this increase was to maintain the linked battalion system.⁹⁴

This was a new tack, as up to this point, Wolseley, and hence the War Office, had assumed the hard limit of 141 battalions, and based their arguments on the difficulty of maintaining the standard of one battalion overseas and one at home due to the increasing number of balls the army was expected to juggle. Within the framework of the linked-battalion system, the army was to maintain colonial and Indian defences at a level that was unclear without firm information from the navy as to their level of commitment in case of a major war involving the navy. At the same time, the army had to be able to augment those defences in case of a local war. On the European side of the policy equation, the battalions at home were expected to defend against invasion by a European power, to send forces for a colonial war, and to provide an expeditionary force to Europe. The policy arguments of the late

1880's resolved part of the problem with the two army corps standard, which was expected to have the double function of solving the latter two force projection issues.

Finance

The failure of the army to advance its military policy in the 1880's can be seen through its effect on the army estimates. The estimates had risen due to fortification costs in the early 1860's, and the estimates had risen to reach £25.9 million in 1865, an amount that wasn't seen again until 1885.⁹⁵ As part of the Cardwell reforms, the military budget was cut by reducing colonial garrisons, withdrawing troops from overseas service, and cutting the establishment of the battalions at home - excepting those that were approaching their turn for overseas service. The Duke of Cambridge did not approve of these moves, though they were popular at the time. Nonetheless, by 1874, Cardwell was being pressed to reduce the estimates further.

Another reform of 1870 was to place the administrative functions that had been run by the Horse Guards under the Secretary of State, including the Financial Department. The Financial Secretary collected the spending proposals from each of the departments, who had already, unofficially, consulted the Secretary of State, and reviewed them with the Auditor of the Army and the Accountant-General. The Secretary of State, in turn reviewed the estimates with the Financial Secretary and the Surveyor General before presenting them to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the cabinet. This system meant that the departments tended to pursue their own budgets without regard to any overall military policy. While Wolseley and his supporters wanted to give the military more financial control, at the same time, they did not want to bolster the position of the Duke of Cambridge.⁹⁶

The effects of the Cardwell reforms, and, later, the differences in military policy in the 1880's, on the estimates and expenditures can be seen on the charts "Estimates and Expenditures 1871-1887" and "Estimates and Expenditures 1889-1902".⁹⁷ The presentation of the estimates was changed four times, on a line-by-line basis in 1887 and 1888, and further changes were made in 1889 and 1890 by both amalgamating and separating votes. Though effort was made in the estimates to

relate votes forward and back a year each year the votes changed, they were not reconciled across all the years, so the charts are not exactly equivalent. For this reason also, the estimates and expenditures for 1888 and the estimates for 1889 are left out. Approximately equivalent votes are given the same colour code for ease of comparison. In the chart “Estimates and Expenditures 1870-1887”, Votes 1, 2, and 3 are “General Staff and Regimental Pay, Allowances and Charges”, “Divine Service” and “Administration of Martial Law” respectively. They are grouped together and colour-coded blue, as is Vote 1 (“Pay & c. of the Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve and Departments)”) in the chart “Estimates and Expenditures 1889-1902”. Vote 14, “Establishments for Military Education”, in the first chart is equivalent to vote 11 in the second, and both are coded pink. In the first chart, Votes 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 are, respectively, “Rewards for Distinguished Services &c.”, “Pay of General Officers”, Retired Full Pay, Retired Half-Pay, Pensions, and Gratuities, Payments Allowed by Army Purchase Commissioners”, “Widows Pensions & c.” and “Pensions for Wounds”. In the second chart these are all accounted for under vote 14, “Non-Effective charges for Officers, & c.” They are colour coded green. “Total estimate” and “expenditure” are coded in red.

The early 1870’s, under Cardwell, show that he was able to keep estimates and expenditures both flat, and fairly congruent. This did not last. Expenditure (red) was already starting to rise in 1876, and the estimates followed in 1878. Through 1887, the estimates rose steadily, while the actual expenditure varied considerably, though it never fell below the 1876 figure. However, pay and related charges (blue) remained flat, and fell as a percentage of the total budget. Though it is not clear from the graph, estimates for education (pink) rose from £139,300 in 1870 to £181,283 in 1887, but the expenditures rose and fell, from a high in 1879 of £165,800 to below £120,000 in 1885. The estimates for non-effective charges for officers (green) more than doubled, to £1,739,339, reflecting the increasing costs of pensions.

The estimates were being rearranged in just the years that the War Office was losing the military policy argument to the blue water school. 1887-8 was also the first budget year in which a formal accounting was made for army expenditure.⁹⁸

The steady rise in estimates became very much shallower, and the army lost about £1,000,000 between the estimates of 1887 and 1890 and about £570,000 between the expenditures of 1887 and 1889, though the difference between the expenditures of 1887 and 1890 was minor. There was a sudden concordance between estimates and expenditure, until the South African war. There is also a concordance in the charted votes as well, expenditure remaining about equal to, or lower than, their estimates. There was growth in defence spending, but it was not being spent on the army.⁹⁹ The army avoided complete financial disembowelment, but it is plain from the budget that the army lost the policy battle, and therefore the budgetary battle, with the navy.

Conclusion

The debate over mobilization plans was directly linked to the debate between the navy and the army over who had the responsibility for home defence. This was implicitly a debate over military and defence policy, a debate that the navy won by the end of 1880s as other European nations turned towards the expansion of their own navies.

The army maintained a rearguard action, advising on force requirements, but it had lost the budgetary battle, and hence the policy battle, to the navy.¹⁰⁰ As the European powers, as well as America and Japan, began to threaten British naval superiority by the end of the 1880's, naval spending rose, passing that of the army in the fiscal year of 1894-5.¹⁰¹ The navy had persuaded government that it could cover home defence, but as Germany and other European countries increased their navies, it turned to Europe and concentrated on that competition, and on the defence of Britain, rather than to assisting the defence of the empire. Then the army began to agitate for more battalions to be raised, and more battalions abroad, on the grounds that the navy couldn't guarantee transport to colonies in case of war, so colonial defences had to be up to war standard at all times. All this was totally irrelevant to a navy more concerned with European competition in home waters.¹⁰² However, the South African war showed that the navy alone could not defend the empire.¹⁰³

The effectiveness of linking battalions was damaged by the difficulties in recruitment, which were never going to be solved without more money or conscription, both political suicide. Thus the army was trapped in a logical hole because, unless the manpower problem was solved, it couldn't successfully argue that the army was capable of defending both home and colonies, and thus the navy successfully argued that it shouldered the primary burden of defence. Moreover, the army was trapped down a second logic hole, in that due to the 1888 reorganizations, the army was responsible for its quality and preparedness, but lacked the political autonomy and financial authority to ensure its own quality and preparedness. Furthermore, it lacked a coherent military policy beyond Stanhope's list of purposes, and could not create directed strategic plans with a general staff it didn't have, because strategic planning and a general staff threatened the British bias towards the absolute and unchallenged primacy of civilian government.

¹ David French, **The British Way in Warfare 1688-2000** (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 136. **Estimates.**

² Edward M. Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army: 1868-1902** (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 4, 7, 9-10.

³ W. S. Hamer, **The British Army: Civil-Military Relations 1885-1905** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 79.

⁴ Hew Strachan, **The Politics of the British Army** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 38, 200. Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 11, 19-20.

⁵ **WO 33/33 O742** Memorandum on the Working of the Double, or Linked Battalion System, pp. 1-2, 4.

⁶ **WO 33/33 O742**, p. 1.

WO 33/35 O783 Minute by the Adjutant-General, pp. 13, 16.

⁷ **WO 33/33 O742**, p. 4. He also states this in **WO 33/35 O783**, p. 16.

⁸ **WO 33/33 O742**, p. 6.

⁹ **WO 33/33 O747** Draft Report of a Committee assembled at the War Office, under instructions of the Secretary of State for War, to report on the effects of Short Service on the preparedness for War of the Army, p. v.

¹⁰ **WO 33/33 O742**, p. 1.

¹¹ **WO 33/33 O742**, p. 6.

¹² **WO 33/35 O783**, p. 1.

¹³ **WO 33/35 O793** Strictly Confidential, p. 5,

W. S. Hamer, **The British Army: Civil-Military Relations 1885-1905** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 78.

¹⁴ **WO 33/35 O793**, p. 1.

¹⁵ **WO 33/35 O806** Memorandum by the Adjutant-General. Reorganization of the Infantry of the Line, p. 1.

¹⁶ **WO 33/35 O806**, p. 2.

¹⁷ **WO 33/35 O806**, p. 3.

¹⁸ **WO 33/35 O814** Memorandum by His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief, p. 1

¹⁹ **WO 33/35 O814**, p. 2.

²⁰ **WO 33/35 O814**, p. 2.

²¹ Strachan, **Politics of the British Army**, pp. 201-02.

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- ²² Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 32.
- Hamer, **The British Army: Civil-Military Relations**, p. 83.
- ²³ WO 33/47 A80 [Confidential] Memorandum, p. 5.
- ²⁴ WO 33/44 O1012, pp. 1, 2, 3.
- ²⁵ WO 33/44 O1012, p. 2.
- ²⁶ WO 33/44 O1012, p. 2.
- ²⁷ Brian Bond, **The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854-1914** (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), p. 121.
- ²⁸ WO 33/46 A47 No 1. Confidential Memorandum, p. 2.
- Bond, **Staff College**, p. 121.
- ²⁹ WO 33/46 A47, p. 2.
- ³⁰ Bond, **Staff College**, pp. 121-2.
- ³¹ French, **The British Way in Warfare**, pp. 147-8,
- John Gooch, **The Prospect of War: Studies in British Defence Policy 1847-1942** (London: Frank Cass, 1981), pp. 5-6,
- Hamer, **The British Army: Civil-Military Relations**, p. 86,
- Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 60.
- ³² Bond, **Staff College**, p. 122,
- Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 60.
- ³³ WO 33/46 A47 No 1. Confidential Memorandum, p. 2.
- ³⁴ WO 33/46 A47, p. 1.
- ³⁵ WO 33/46 A59 No 3. Mobilization of One Army-Corps for Foreign Service, p. 4.
- ³⁶ WO 33/46 A47, p. 5.
- ³⁷ WO 33/46 A47, tables 6 and 7.
- ³⁸ WO 33/46 A47, p. 4.
- ³⁹ WO 33/46 A58, No. 2 Confidential Memorandum, p. 6.
- ⁴⁰ WO 33/46 A67 Reports of a Committee on Army Mobilization, p. 2.
- Hamer, **The British Army: Civil-Military Relations**, p. 107.
- ⁴¹ WO 33/46 A66 Report of the Committee on Colonial Garrisons, with Appendices. The other members were Guy Dawnay, John Bramston and the secretary, Colonel Frederick Maurice.
- ⁴² WO 33/46 A58, p. 8.
- ⁴³ WO 33/46 A47, pp.3-4.
- ⁴⁴ WO 32/8288 Committee report on Colonial Garrisons, 1885-86; memo Colonial Defence Committee, p. 12.
- ⁴⁵ WO 32/8288, p. 12.
- ⁴⁶ Martin Samuels, **Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918** (London: Frank Cass 1995), p. 36,
- Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 45, 60.
- ⁴⁷ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp.44, 60.
- ⁴⁸ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 45,
- WO 33/48 A136 Memorandum Showing the Organization of the War Office in July 1888, p. 1.
- ⁴⁹ WO 33/48 A136, pp. 1-2.
- ⁵⁰ WO 33/48 A126, p. 1,
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- ⁵¹ WO 33/48 A120 [untitled] UK Defence, p. 5.
- ⁵² WO 33/47 A80 [Confidential] Memorandum, p. 7.
- ⁵³ WO 33/48 A120, p. 5.
- ⁵⁴ WO 33/48 A120, p. 7.
- ⁵⁵ WO 33/48 A126 [untitled] Confidential Memorandum, p. 1.
- ⁵⁶ WO 33/48 A126, p. 1.
- ⁵⁷ WO 33/48 A126, p. 1.
- ⁵⁸ WO 33/44 O1012 Confidential Memorandum, p. 2.
- ⁵⁹ Beckett, "The Stanhope Memorandum of 1888: A Reinterpretation", **Bulletin**, p. 245.
- ⁶⁰ Gooch, **The Prospect of War**, p. 7.
- ⁶¹ T. A. Heathcote, **The Military in British India: The development of British land forces in South Asia, 1600-1947** (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 131.

- ⁶² **The Life of General Lord Rawlinson of Trent G.C.B., G.C.V.O., G.C.S.I., K.C.M.G.** (ed. Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd. 1928) Also published under the title **Soldier, Artist, Sportsman**, p. 19.
- Heathcote, **The Military in British India**, p. 130.
- ⁶³ WO33/49 A175 [untitled] Secret Memorandum.
- ⁶⁴ WO33/49 A175 [untitled] Secret Memorandum.
- ⁶⁵ Strachan, **Politics of the British Army**, p. 96.
- ⁶⁶ Hew Strachan, **European Armies and the Conduct of War** (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1983), p. 81, 82.
- ⁶⁷ Strachan, **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, pp. 81, 82.
- ⁶⁸ Bruce W. Menning, **Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914** (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 12.
- ⁶⁹ Friedberg, **The Weary Titan**, p. 218.
- ⁷⁰ Menning, **Bayonets Before Bullets**, pp. 19-20.
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- ⁷³ Aaron L. Friedberg, **The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905** (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 224.
- ⁷⁴ Menning, **Bayonets Before Bullets**, pp. 91-2.
- ⁷⁵ French, **The British Way in Warfare**, pp. 148, 158, Menning, **Bayonets Before Bullets**, p. 92, Friedberg, **The Weary Titan**, p. 215.
- ⁷⁶ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 46.
- ⁷⁷ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 46, 229.
- ⁷⁸ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 46, 229.
- ⁷⁹ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 46-8, French, **The British Way in Warfare**, pp. 152, 154, Strachan, **Politics of the British Army**, pp. 63-4.
- ⁸⁰ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 47, French, **The British Way in Warfare**, p. 153.
- ⁸¹ Bond, **Staff College**, p. 146, Gooch, **The Prospect of War**, p. 112, Samuels, **Command or Control?**, p. 37, Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 48.
- ⁸² Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 48.
- ⁸³ Bengt Abrahamsson, **Military Professionalization and Political Power** (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972), p. 42.
- ⁸⁴ Samuels, **Command or Control?**, pp. 37-8, Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 49.
- ⁸⁵ Bond, **Staff College**, 216. Strachan, **Politics of the British Army**, pp. 121-2.
- ⁸⁶ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, p. 229, French, **The British Way in Warfare**, pp. 151-2, Gooch, **The Prospect of War**, p. 5.
- ⁸⁷ French, **The British Way in Warfare**, p. 152.
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- ⁹¹ Strachan, **Politics of the British Army**, p. 235.
- ⁹² French, **The British Way in Warfare**, p. 154.
- ⁹³ WO 33/49 A179 [untitled] Confidential Memorandum, pp. 1, 2.
- ⁹⁴ WO 33/49 A179, p. 3, 4.
- ⁹⁵ French, **The British Way in Warfare**, p. 136, **Estimates**.
- ⁹⁶ Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army**, pp. 4-5, 23, 30, 37-39.
- ⁹⁷ **Estimates**, various numbers, 1871 through 1901.
- ⁹⁸ WO 33/49 A155 Report on the Account of Army Expenditure for 1887-88.

⁹⁹ Friedberg, **The Weary Titan**, p. 97.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, **WO 33/223 A725** Memorandum on the additional Infantry Force required at Home and Abroad for Coaling Stations, Fortresses, and other Colonial Stations under the proposal of the Commander-in-Chief, based on the Colonial Defence Committee's Report, No. 74 M of 1896

WO 33/94 A496 [untitled] Confidential Memorandum

WO 32/6360 Defence of the United Kingdom

¹⁰¹ Friedberg, **The Weary Titan**, pp. 97-8.

¹⁰² **WO 33/223 A725**, p. 1.

WO 33/94 A496, p. 2.

WO 32/6360 Defence of the United Kingdom, p. 1.

¹⁰³ French, **The British Way in Warfare**, p. 154.

CHAPTER THREE

The Deployment of the British Line Army 1870-1902

In 1871, Edward Cardwell, Secretary of State for the new Liberal Government under Gladstone, implemented a series of reforms for the British Army. One of these reforms was to link the single battalion regiments in pairs in each new recruiting district. The first, more prestigious, 25 battalions already had 2 battalions each. One of the key intentions of this reform was that half of the line battalions remained in Britain as a strategic reserve while the other half served overseas.

Since then, there has been much discussion as to how well these reforms worked in practice. It was well known that recruiting problems and overseas commitments strained the ability of home battalions to maintain their own establishments and to train troops to send abroad. It was also generally understood, incorrectly, that, due to colonial wars and overseas commitments, the ratio of home based to overseas-based battalions got worse.¹

This chapter does not look at troop movement or the ratios of trained troops at home and overseas, or to what degree the home battalions were undermanned in favour of the battalions overseas. Instead it looks at the deployment pattern of the battalions of the infantry of the line, as whole battalions, for this period; to what degree the reforms intended to divide the battalions evenly between home and overseas postings actually worked. Though the number of battalions stationed in Britain declined slowly overall, and the length of deployments at home and overseas varied throughout the period, there was no catastrophic decline in the numbers of home-stationed battalions. For the officers, there were numerous opportunities either to serve overseas, or to stay in Britain; the challenge for the enterprising officer was to get war experience.

The first deployment pattern to be looked at is the geographic patterns of deployment, that is, where the battalions were deployed from 1870 to 1902. The second pattern is how long the postings were, by battalion, again relying on charts.

Then the patterns of deployment surrounding the Ashanti (1873), Zulu (1879), Egyptian (1882, 1884-85), Burma (1885-87) and South African (1899-1902) wars are looked at in more detail. Finally, deployment as related to the African and Indian “rings” is discussed. Deployments show where the British army actually was engaged, as opposed to what it thought it might or ought to be doing, and this, in turn, shows where British units were getting their experience. Deployment patterns also show the ways in which the Cardwell Reforms did, and did not, work as planned.

The first issue is whether the expansion of empire led to the expansion of the number places the line battalions were deployed. The first 25 regiments were the most volatile, showing a high in 1879 of 13 different locations and 12 to 13 from 1891 to 1897. The chart (see Chart 16 - Number of Deployment Locations Each Year), following the four year moving averages, suggests a gradual rise overall. The relative low of the South African war was higher than the one in the 1880's, which in turn was higher than the low in the 1870's. The number of locations to which the rest of the regiments were deployed show a fairly steady rise until 1890 of about 1.16 regiments every 10 years, then dropped in the early to mid 1890's. The number of deployment locations rose abruptly in the late 1890's and dropped again during the South African war. The number of locations that the first 25 regiments were deployed to rose in the early to mid 1890's, just as it fell for the rest. On the whole, the number of locations to which all the regiments were deployed each year rose steadily at a rate of about one regiment every ten years until the South African war of 1899-1902, at which time other deployments were slightly restricted. This was where the strain on the regiments showed. There were 32 locations that these regiments deployed to at least once. Despite the early reductions of garrisons and leaving the defence of some colonies to the colony itself, the regiments were obliged to cover an increasing number of locations.

During the South African war Britain retained deployment coverage of its colonies by drastically cutting down the number of battalions deployed in Britain.

Only Aden, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Crete, Cyprus, Mauritius and Singapore were partially or entirely dropped during the years 1898-1902. This list masks the fact that Barbados had been only sporadically occupied over the preceding 28 years, Canada was dropped entirely as of 1900, Crete had not been a deployment until 1898, Cyprus was again added to the deployment in 1901, having been dropped as of 1895, Mauritius had only been deployed to since 1890, after an absence of 18 years, and Singapore was deployed to in 1895, after a hiatus of 16 years. These locations had already been of limited importance, in terms of whether they needed a line garrison, and were therefore a safe risk when battalions were urgently needed elsewhere.

Deployment for wars was not a matter of sending battalions out directly from Britain. It was a vast game of musical chairs, as often a mix of battalions from the region, from Britain, and from other overseas postings were sent to a war, and other battalions moved to fill their postings, though the South African war of 1899 was something of an exception to this, given the large number of battalions sent from Britain. Most of the time, these regiments were garrisoning the empire and, sometimes, were fighting wars or quelling more minor unrest. The line battalions did not fight on their own; they were assisted by artillery, by naval units and by local forces, such as the Punjab Frontier Force, the Natal Native Contingent, or the Indian Army. The line regiments were not getting a lot of war experience, but it was more than that of other European armies.

The data is charted in three ways. First, all the battalions are charted by location. Deployment can be further broken down to differentiate the first 25 regiments, all of which had two battalions, and the rest, which, until amalgamation in 1881, were one battalion regiments, with the exceptions of the King's Royal Rifle Corps (60th) and the Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade, both of which had four battalions.

There are a number of caveats regarding much of the material of this chapter due to the sampling data. First, and this is general to the chapter, the battalions are mentioned by number according to their post-1881 precedence. Hence, the 90th

Perthshire regiment will be referred to as the 26/2 the Cameronians, it having been linked as the second battalion, to the 26th, the Cameronian regiment. (See the Index of the Line Regiments for pre and post-1881 titles and precedents.) The charts are based on data from the January official Army List and Hart's Army List of 1871 to 1903, and the location of a battalion as published in, for example, January of 1881 may be considered to be where the battalion was late the previous year.² As such, the data is accurate to the nearest year, and the published information. Some battalions have battle honours for locations where they were not resident according to the army lists, but, except for the Egyptian war of 1882 and 1883-85, this was not common, so the skew induced by this is limited. The second battalion of the 79th regiment was raised as a regular battalion in 1897, and all averages are weighted for this change where necessary. The locations of deployments, and their groupings in terms of region, are in appendix "Table 2 - Regions for Deployment Charts". All material not otherwise footnoted may be assumed to be derived from the sampled data.

1. Deployment of Regiments by Region

"Chart 9- Deployment of all Regiments by Region" is a chart of all the line regiments by region, namely, Britain, India, Africa, South Asia, East Asia, the Americas and the Mediterranean, for a total of 141 battalions (142 from 1897).

The most obvious feature is the sudden jump in the number of battalions in Africa that indicates the South African War in 1899 and the equally sudden, and corresponding, drop in the number of battalions in Britain, as home battalions were shifted overseas in response to the war. This same pattern can be seen for the war in Egypt in 1884-85, as the number of battalions in the Mediterranean rises and the number in Britain falls. A similar effect can be seen in the South Asia and India, as the Burma War ran from 1885 to 1889 and 1889 to 1892.

Another thing to note is the line indicating the number of battalions resident in Britain. This stays relatively level for the period 1870 to 1898; the average number of battalions resident was 63.3, dipping noticeably only for Egypt and South

Africa. The percentage of battalions at home was 46%, or seven battalions below the standard of the Cardwell reforms. The actual drop in the average number of battalions at home from 1870 to 1879 to the period 1880 to 1898 was from an average of 65 to 62.1. More precisely, there was a slow decline that levels off in the 1890's. The relative stability of the number of battalions in Britain suggests that, while the Cardwell reforms were not working perfectly, they were working, at least in terms of garrison coverage overseas.

The number of battalions in India also stays fairly level (47) (34.2%) and dips for the Egypt and Burma wars period and for the South African war. The battalions in India were sent to the wars in India, Burma, Afghanistan and the Punjab, and two were sent to Egypt. They were being temporarily, but not permanently, siphoned out of India. The number of battalions in African and the American theatres declines in the early 1880's, probably due to the push for colonial self-defence and the end of the African wars of late 1870's. Canada mostly had two battalions until 1884, but drops to one, and then to none in 1900, and Bermuda lost all but one resident battalion 3 years earlier, and lost all in 1900 also. The Africa line is entirely South Africa, excepting 3 battalions on the Gold Coast for the Ashanti war in 1873. The quieter garrisons were slowly dropped, while garrisons were retained in places, like the Gold Coast, where unrest continued below the level of outright warfare.

“Chart 10 - Deployment of Regiments 1 to 25 by Region” is noticeably more volatile, since it only plots the 50 battalions of the first 25 regiments, and again, there is the very conspicuous change for South African War.

The war in Egypt in 1884-85 and the Burma wars of 1885-1892 show in the increase in the number of battalions in the Mediterranean and South Asia. The number of battalions in the Mediterranean line rises to 6 battalions due to these wars. Sub-Saharan wars can be picked out by the rise in African line.

The number of battalions in Britain falls from a high of 30 battalions at home, well over the Cardwell-mandated 50%, in 1871 and 1872 to a low in 1878 as the first 25 start getting treated like the other regiments due to the Afghanistan war,

but from 1879 to 1898 it was in fact relatively stable at 21.6. This was 43.2% of these battalions, slightly worse than the overall average. Another drop in 1885-92 corresponds to the Burma wars. Of the 8 battalions that go to Burma for the wars, 6 of these came directly from Bengal and the other 2 were from Madras. The drop in the British figures correlates with a slight rise in the Indian figures. For 1870 to 1898, India averages 17.9 or 35.7% of these battalions. Over the whole period, except for the South African war, it was an average 22.8 or 45.5% of battalions were stationed at home. Thus, the Cardwell reforms essentially functioned in terms of balancing the battalions at home and away, for the first 25 regiments, at least in terms of numbers of battalions.

Turning to the situation for the rest of the regiments, notice in “Chart 11 - Deployment of Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade by Region” the very marked appearance of the South African war. The dip in the number of battalions in Britain in the mid 1880’s corresponded to the war in Egypt. Of the first 25 regiments, 3 battalions were sent to this war, and 19 battalions of the rest of the regiments, making these regiments over-represented compared to the first 25. The number of battalions in Britain was as stable as the average of the first 25 regiments at 40.5 or 44.5% of these battalions, at least until the South African war. Thus, again, the Cardwell reforms worked in terms of the ratio of battalions at home and overseas. There was no precipitous decline of battalions serving at home.

The number of battalions in India averaged 29.2 or 32% of these battalions, so compared to the first 25 regiments at 35.7%, these regiments were slightly underrepresented in India. The small increase in the number of battalions in South Asia in 1890 was due to the war in Burma. 7 battalions of the first 25 regiments were sent to Burma, and 4 of these battalions. Therefore, the first 25 battalions were over-represented in the Burma wars. Small rises in Africa in 1873, and 1879-81, again correspond to wars. The higher numbered regiments were over-represented (by percentage of forces) in the Mediterranean, increasingly so after 1881, as well as in South Asia due to the wars in Burma.

In terms of the Cardwell reforms, while the line infantry never managed to keep half the battalions at home, a fairly stable percentage of 45% was in Britain. Further, the idea of using the home battalions as a reserve worked in Egypt, and dramatically so in the South African war. The first 25 regiments were somewhat more likely to be in India, and the higher numbered regiments were more likely to have a chance to get to the Mediterranean, Egypt in particular, and South Asia.

A closer look at India is needed because India was the centre of Britain's overseas empire, and the wall blocking Russia's expected expansion southward. "Chart 12 - Deployment of all Regiments: India" actually looks much as one might expect. Most battalions present in India were policing Bengal due to the 1857 rebellion. India has long been assumed to lose battalions that were deployed to regional wars and never return, resulting in a gradual decline in the number of battalions deployed to India, but this was not true. Though a particular regiment, once deployed out of India, might not return in the period considered, the total number of battalions in India remained fairly stable between 41 and 50 regiments, excepting a relative high during the Afghan war and 1902, and relative lows in the late 1880's and the South African war (see Chart 13 - Deployment of all Regiments: India (stacked chart)).

The two most obvious features of this chart are first, the sudden increase in the number of battalions due to the war in Afghanistan in 1879 which correlates with a drop in the numbers in Bengal, and, second, the rise in the number of battalions in the Punjab, also corresponding to a drop in Bengal. As the Punjab became a war zone, battalions stationed in India (mostly Bengal) were moved to the Punjab and the North West Frontier. Until the wars in the Punjab started, there were an average of 32.2 battalions in Bengal, but Punjab soaked up an average of 13.3 battalions each year. The number of battalions resident in Bombay and Madras remained quite stable through 1902 at 7.82 and 6.33 respectively.

This chart can also be divided into charts for the first 25 regiments, and for the rest of the regiments. Like the previous chart, this chart (see Chart 14 - Deployment of Regiments 1 to 25: India) also shows the wars in Afghanistan and

the Punjab as rises in the number of battalions deployed to these places, both corresponding to drops in the number of battalions deployed to Bengal. Through 1894, the number of these regiments in Bengal averaged about 12.5, about 25% of all the first 25 regiments. The Punjab then took an average of 5.75 battalions, or 11.5% of these regiments. There were early increases in deployments to Madras and Bombay through the 1870's that then remain mostly stable at those levels until the South African war.

Looking at the rest of the regiments (see Chart 15 - Deployment of Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade: India) the Afghanistan war shows here also, though not as noticeable a drop in the number of battalions in Bengal. Again there was a sudden rise in the number of battalions in the Punjab, and the number of battalions in Bengal fell from a high of 23 battalions in 1894, and an average of 19.76 between 1870 and 1894. The Punjab got an average of 8.51 of these battalions, or 9.27%. This was more than the first 25 regiments in absolute numbers, but fewer as a percentage of these regiments. It appears that the 1st 25 were selectively favoured for the early years of war, and battalions from the higher numbered regiments fill in, in Bengal. Madras and Bombay were both underrepresented as compared to the first 25 regiments.

The pattern of deployment in India shows a pattern similar to the larger 'the number of home battalions drops and the number at the war zone rises' pattern, in that battalions stationed in Bengal went to local wars. Secondly, the first 25 regiments, as a group, tended to be somewhat over-represented in India, as a percentage of their total strength as compared to the other regiments and likewise were preferentially sent to the Punjab. The first 25 regiments were somewhat over-represented in India, and in the Punjab and Burma wars, while the higher numbered regiments, were over-represented in Egypt. The more prestigious first 25 regiments also see more years of war. Most importantly, the number of battalions at home remains relatively stable and close to the 50% intended by the Cardwell reforms. An officer looking for overseas service was best advised to look for regiments serving overseas, rather than depending that any presumed prestige derived by order of precedence would offer significantly better chances of overseas or war service. This

is, in fact, what they increasingly did. The work of officers at home was not especially strenuous, being mostly the training and administration of recruits. Officers abroad policed the empire and had the opportunity to get involved in conflicts, however minor. By the 1890s it was plain that officers were opting to go overseas to get valued experience. The progress of officers careers were dependent on gaining overseas experience, whether with their battalion, or in a staff position during a war.

2. Deployment of Regiments by Length of Term in Location

The set of four charts (see Chart 17 - All Regiments: Years in Location, Chart 18 - All Regiments: Number of Years in Location, Chart 19 - Regiments 1 to 25: Average Number of Years in Location, and Chart 20 - Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade: Average Number of Years in Location) are rolling averages of how long battalions remained in a deployment location.

The first chart (see Chart 17 - All Regiments: Years in Location) shows the year-by-year rolling average. Each coloured ribbon indicates how many battalions were deployed to a particular location for a particular length of time. Looking, for example, at the blue ribbon at the front of this chart, in 1880, 6 battalions were in single year postings, and in 1891, only one was. Each succeeding ribbon is a greater length of time, measured in years. The blue ribbons measure how many battalions were in postings of 1 to 4 years in length, the green of 5 to 8 years, the yellow of 9 to 12 years, the red of 13 to 16, and the purple of 17 to 20 years. In succeeding charts, this chart is turned into four year bands, according to colour, for readability. Interestingly, the patterns of the ribbons generally fall into 4-year bands.

Looking first at all the regiments together (see Chart 18 - All Regiments: Number of Years in Location), all the longest postings are exclusive to Bengal or Britain. The mid length postings tend to be to either Britain or India generally, and all other locations are covered by shorter posting periods.

As the average number of years of deployment rises, the number of deployment locations drops. In deployments of 1-5 years, all locations show up. For

deployment lengths of 6-12 years, locations other than Bombay, Bengal, Madras, the Punjab and Britain tend to fall away. After 13 years almost all the postings are to Bengal and Britain (also Bombay, Punjab, South Africa). Postings of 17-20 years are all Bengal or Britain. Any officer who belonged to a regiment newly arrived in either Britain or India could probably expect to spend much of his career there.

The longer average years in location (13-16 and 17-20) mirror each other over the whole period, as do the middle averages (5-8 and 9-12) until about the mid-1890s, when the 5-8 year line rises as the 9-12 year line continues to drop. It was those middle years that show a decline in middle range of posting lengths in favour of longer ones and the shorter ones. So deployments were, for the most part, getting longer until the mid 1890's.

The shortest period (1-4 years) rises abruptly after 1894, as longer deployments are cut short by the South African war. This also shows in the decline of all other posting lengths during this later period. This line of short deployments also tends to reflect the incidence of short wars, and also of places that tended to get short deployments such as Aden, Malta, Gibraltar, Cyprus and the West Indies.

Following the general pattern so far (see Chart 19 - Regiments 1 to 25: Average Number of Years in Location) looks at the first 25 regiments. These regiments do not entirely follow the overall pattern of chart 18. The 1-4 year sequence shows a large jump around 1878 due to the Afghan war. Otherwise, these regiments follow the slow rise of the general pattern of chart 18. The 5-8 and 9-12 year sequences, after an initial fall through the late 1870's, remain flat until falling at the turn of the century; in other words the number of battalions with 5-12 year posting lengths for the first 25 regiments was more stable than for the rest of the force. The 13-16 year line rises and falls like the main line, though not as smoothly, as does the 17-20 line.

The pattern of the rest of the regiments (see Chart 20 - Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade: Average Number of Years in Location) generally follows the main chart.

Excepting short posting lengths due to wars, the average length of posting was increasing until the wars of the 1890s and the South African war cut them short. The average number of postings that each regiment enjoyed in 32 years was 10.2 for the first 25 regiments, and 14.7 for the rest, so the first 25 were moving somewhat less often than the rest of the regiments and deployment periods were lengthening. Statistically speaking, an officer with a 30 year career would change postings perhaps three times in his career on average, but in fact the number of postings any individual battalion had was highly variable. Some battalions moved only a few times in thirty years, while others moved every few years.

An analysis of the deployment of the line infantry shows a number of interesting things. Wars are easily picked out, not only due to the sudden increase in battalions at the location, but also due to, for larger wars not local to India, the corresponding decrease in battalions in Britain and, for wars in India, Indian based battalions, so most conflicts are approximately accommodated by shifting deployments regionally. Officers who were deployed to either Britain or India were likely to be in those locations for much of their careers. All other deployments were shorter. Thus all officers could be loosely divided into those who spent their careers in India, and those who spent their careers everywhere else. This natural separation of officers directly supported the Roberts and Wolseley cliques. Not just geography, but also the length of deployments, defined the boundaries of those cliques; because deployments were long enough to ensure officers were unlikely to move into the other regional group, once deployed. Deployment was destiny for the regimental officer, defining whether he fell into the long deployment Indianist camp or the short deployment Africanist camp. However, it is unclear if this pattern simply reinforced the Roberts and Wolseley cliques, or helped produce them. They did not create it, as it predates the height of Roberts' influence.

A more detailed examination of how some wars were accommodated is in the next section. Despite the many wars of the period, most battalions are involved, on average, in perhaps one or two wars large enough to justify the movement of battalions during the entire period.

3. Wars Considered in Detail: Ashanti, Zulu, Egypt, Burma and South Africa

Five wars are considered here in detail. For each war there is a brief précis of events, a list of all the units involved in the war, and an analysis of how line army deployments were shifted to accommodate these wars.

Excepting the Burma war, all these wars had a mix of battalions sent from Britain and ones from overseas. There are numerous discrepancies regarding the postings according to the army lists and known battle honours, but, excepting the Egyptian war, these are minor. The British line army did not fight these wars alone; in all these wars, other British army or, in some cases, navy units were also deployed, as well as Indian regiments and locally raised or standing units. Conflicts were usually accommodated by a mix of battalions sent from Britain, from points distant from the war or by transferring units already deployed in the general region, and such units as were already posted to the local area. After the war, the battalions were often posted onward to other overseas garrisons.

The charts (see Chart 21 - Moves per Year and Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as a Percentage of the Number of Battalions) will be referred to repeatedly in this section. These are charts, first, of how many battalions were transferred to new postings each year, and then the percentage of all battalions so transferred. As can be seen from chart 21 more transfers occur the year a war starts, and after it ends, than in more peaceful years, the exception being the Ashanti war, where there were more transfers in the year before and 2 years after. Wars in Afghanistan and South Africa in 1879, Egypt in 1882, and the Northwest Frontier in the later 1890s caused the most movement until the South African war of 1899. The movement of the first 25 regiments and the rest follow each other fairly closely for the most part. More interesting is "Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as a Percentage of the Number of

Battalions”, which is “Chart 21 - Moves per Year” converted into percentages. In other words, it shows what percentage of the first 25 and, separately, the rest of the regiments were moved each year.

Neither the first 25 regiments nor the rest held any monopoly on the likelihood of being moved. In the 33 years covered, there were 16 years in which the first 25 had a higher percentage of transfers, and the rest, 15 years. In 1889 and 1893, the first 25 and the rest of the regiments were at nearly equal likelihood of being moved. It is also possible to pick out, in the years when a war occurs, which group of regiments (the first 25 or the rest) are more likely to be moved. Which of these groups of regiments was favoured depends on which war is being discussed, as there was no consistent favouritism in this. 1872, 1875, and 1882 were years in which the rest of the regiments were more likely to be moved than the first 25 and the percentage movement of the other regiments did not rise as well, suggesting that the rest of the regiments may have been preferred for the Ashanti and Egyptian wars. The first 25 regiments show a corresponding pattern in 1885 and 1891. More generally, all regiments tend to have a greater likelihood of being moved, both separately considered and all together, in 1879, 1888, 1895, 1899 and 1902. In the years 1885 and 1886, 1891 and 1892 one group shadowed the rising movement probability of the other.

Ashanti War, 1873

Unresolved disputes between the Ashanti head of state, Kofi, and the colonial administration of the Gold Coast, led to the Ashanti war of 1873. The administration blocked Ashanti trade routes to the coast. The Ashanti also lost revenue due to the end of the slave trade. The Dutch abandoned their trading posts on the Gold Coasts and ceded the port of Elmina to the British, who refused to continue paying annual tribute for its use to the Ashanti. In early 1873 an Ashanti army attacked those tribes that claimed British protection. An attempt by the administration to create a Fanti federation failed, and the rest of the year was spent securing the coastal region against Ashanti attack. The British government authorised a military expedition under the leadership of Wolseley to invade the Ashanti homeland and force terms on

Kofi. After fighting, and the occupation of the capital, Kumasi, Kofi sued for peace. This war and its loss by the Ashanti resulted in continuing instability in the area and its eventual occupation and annexation by the British in 1896.³

The participants from the line army were the 23/2 Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the 42nd, the Black Watch and the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade. Other combat troops included (leaving aside support troops, both local and from Britain) detachments of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, about 100 marines, the 1st and 2nd West India Regiments, various local irregular troops (members of the Abrah, Inkoorsolcoom, Annamaboe, Gambians, Kosoo, Fanti, Hausa, Denkara tribes) West Indian regiment pensioners, the Gold Coast Corps, the Cape Coast Volunteers, local police forces, some naval landing parties, and the Hausa police.⁴

Of the line regiments, the 23/2 had been in Britain since 1866, the 42nd since 1868 and the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade since 1868. After the Ashanti war, all spent some years in the Mediterranean (23/2 and 2 Rifle Brigade until 1879 and 42nd until 1878). The 23/2 and 2 Rifle Brigade then spent until the mid-1890s back in Britain before further postings. The 42nd spent some years in Britain until it left to fight in Egypt, and then went on to Mediterranean postings and thence to India in the mid-1890s.

The actual number of battalion transfers in the years 1873 and 1874 were well below the average of the whole period of 1870-1902, and there were more battalions moved in the years before and after (1872 and 1875). Looking at the number of battalions moved as a percentage of all battalions, the first 25 regiments had a slight edge on the probability of being moved during 1873 and 1874, though the inverse was true in the years preceding and the year following. This suggests that that this war caused little, if any disruption in deployments. (see Chart 21 - Moves per Year and Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as a Percentage of the Number of Battalions) The Ashanti war also caused a minor and temporary dip in the relative number of battalions in Britain, and a corresponding rise for the African figures for the years 1873-4 (see Chart 9- Deployment of All Regiments by Region).

This was, superficially a textbook example of how the Cardwell reforms were supposed to work in practice; battalions needed for a small war are taken out of the reserve held in Britain, causing little disruption in the routine deployments to other locations overseas. However, these were not the units that would normally have been allotted, that is, the first two battalions on the foreign service roster after those to be sent to India. The government didn't want to send British troops to the west coast of Africa, on account of the rate of illness prevalent in the recently returned marine shore detachments. Wolseley and the expedition finally went due to the backing of Lord Kimberly, the Colonial minister. Cardwell made the decision to bring the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade up to war strength and put them on standby.⁵ Three days after Wolseley reported on the results of the Essaman raid, emphasising that native troops, however enthusiastic, were not a sufficient substitute for regular troops, the first battalion received orders to sail.⁶

Zulu War 1879

In 1872, the Cape was granted the right of self-governance, and two years later, the British government looked into how to create a federation that would put all of South Africa under the British flag. Zululand was one of the obstacles to these ambitions. There had been friction for years between the Zulus and the Boers, who had been encroaching northwards to avoid British rule. Subjection of the Zulus was also thought to be a means to relieve the labour shortage that existed throughout South Africa, due to the need for labourers in the gold and diamond mines and the sugar fields of Natal. It was also a strategic issue, as security of India depended on the security of the naval route around the Cape, and the existence of independent black African polities was believed to be inherently destabilising. Border incidents between Zululand and the Boers were increasing, and diplomatic efforts to subordinate Cetshwayo's sovereignty by claiming the authority to legitimate his possession of the crown were not successful. It was also important to convince the Boers to accept the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, in furtherance of bringing all of southern Africa under British control. The military defeat of the Zulus would stabilise the border and bring them under British sovereignty.⁷ The Cape High Commissioner, Sir Henry Bartle Frere, and the Administrator for Natal,

Sir Theophilus Shepstone, were of like mind in their support for war against Zululand. Superficial talks with King Cetshwayo broke down, Frere sent an ultimatum he knew would be unacceptable, and Zululand was invaded in January of 1879.⁸

Chelmsford divided his forces into three columns to march on the capital, Ulundi, in an attempt to push the Zulus into open battle. In this, he was spectacularly successful. The central column was wiped out at Islandlwana. With some difficulty, Chelmsford withdrew his forces out of Zululand. On news of this disaster, Frere and Shepstone and Chelmsford were removed from their positions. Before Sir Garnet Wolseley, sent as his successor, arrived, Chelmsford invaded Zululand with greater care a second time, and won a decisive battle against Cetshwayo's remaining forces at Ulundi.⁹

The 15 battalions involved in this war were the 3/2 (the Buffs), 4/2 (the King's Own), 13/1 (Somersetshire Light Infantry), 21/2 (Royal North British Fusiliers), both battalions of the 24th (2nd Warwickshire), the 57th (West Middlesex), the 58th (Rutlandshire), 60/3 (King's Own Royal Rifles), the 80th (Staffordshire Volunteers), the 88th (Connaught Rangers) the 90th (Perthshire Light Infantry), the 91st (Princess Louise's Argyllshire Highlanders), the 94th, and the 99th (Duke of Edinburgh's).¹⁰

Other participants included the King's Dragoon Guards, 17th Lancers, a naval brigade, elements of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, and several battalions of native levees, including the Frontier Light Horse, the Natal Mounted Police, the Natal Carbineers, the Newcastle Mounted Rifles, the Buffalo Border Guard, Raaf's Horse (also known as the Transvaal Rangers), Baker's Horse, Natal Light Horse, Natal native Horse, Natal native Contingent, the Natal Native Pioneers, and "Wood's Irregulars", and Zulus hostile to Cetshwayo and the Swazis.¹¹

This war, along with the Afghanistan war, which occurred in the same year, was very disruptive, in terms of the number of battalions transferred in the years 1879 and 1880 (see Chart 21 - Moves Per Year). Of the 44 battalions transferred in

1879, 8 were sent to the Zulu war, and 12 were sent to Afghanistan (see Chart 9-Deployment of All Regiments by Region). Of those that went to the Zulu war that year, 4 were from the first 25 battalions (8% of these battalions) and 8 from the rest (8.8%). Of those going to the war in Afghanistan, 4 were from the first 25 and 8 from the rest. Subtract these 24 moves and it would be a quiet year for transfers. There are some discrepancies with the samples that created the charts, in that one battalion (57th) that was there, was, according to the sampling, moved from Ceylon to Britain in 1879.¹² These are problems that are due to data taken once a year from the Army List and from Harts Army List, whose information may have been dated before they were published. In 1880, 10 of 37 moves were to transfer units out of Afghanistan, and 4 to move units out of South Africa. Subtracting these leaves 23 other moves for the year. Thus, the noticeable high in the number of transfers in the years 1879 and 1880 are entirely due to the wars of the day.

“Chart 10 - Deployment of Regiments 1-25 by Region” shows, for 1878, a large drop in British deployments, which starts to rise in 1879 to a local high period that ends in 1885, and a high point in both Africa and the Mediterranean, thanks to the Egyptian war. 1878 was the most interesting year, most noticeable due to a temporary drop in UK. Again, an artefact of sampling, of the 6 battalions that returned to Britain in 1879 according to the sampling (2/1, 3/1, 8/1, 13/1,14/1, 24/1), 2 were of battalions that were fighting in South Africa in 1879 (13/1 and 24/1). 3/2, which was also fighting in South Africa, was listed by the sampling as being transferred from South Africa to the Straits in 1879. Were these adjusted, the rise in UK deployments would not be until 1880, and South Africa would show a maximum in 1879.

Of the 15 battalions in this war, 10 were sent from the UK, 2 had been sent from postings in East Asia, and 3 were already posted to South Africa. After the war, 5 battalions were sent to the UK, but only one of these was returning. 5 were sent to India within 3 years, 2 went to East Asia, one went to the Mediterranean, and 3 remained in South Africa. As with Egypt, discussed in the next section, some battalions were sent from Britain, but not all, and after the war the opportunity was taken to send most of the battalions on to other overseas postings.

Egyptian War 1882, 1884-85

This war was really two related wars, the first to put down the popular revolt headed by Egyptian army officers, and the second in Egypt's southern province of Sudan against the Mahdi.

When the governor, later Khedive, Ismail took office in Egypt, he began to modernise Egypt. In particular, he had a great deal of infrastructure built, including rails, telegraph, irrigation, a modern harbour at Alexandria, schools, sugar refineries and canals. This required an influx of Europeans to build it, increased taxes, and, when tax revenue proved insufficient, international loans. Much of what grew into a nearly £ 90 million debt was due to the construction of the Suez Canal. The Khedive sold his shares to the British government in 1875, the latter having seen an opportunity to gain financial control over the strategic canal. This sale was insufficient to restore the Khedive's financial situation, and Egypt went bankrupt in 1876. The Khedive was forced into European controlled receivership, and a system of "Dual Control" by the French and British governments that lasted until 1882. The Khedive was forced to attempt reform of the government to minimise expenditure, but this resulted in a revolt in 1879, which the Khedive used to form a new government. The Ottoman emperor was pressured to dismiss the Khedive, and his more amenable son Tewfik replaced him.¹³

A protest movement started up, which resulted in a revolt and take-over of the government by the officers of the Egyptian army under Colonel Ahmed Arabi. Prime Minister Gladstone attempted diplomatic intervention, but the French were unwilling to hand Egypt back to Turkey. A joint naval show of force off Alexandria failed, but the French were unwilling to become more involved. A force under General Wolseley was sent in, and it defeated Arabi's forces at Tel El Kebir. The British then took control of Egypt through British advisors, leaving the Khedive as the nominal head of state.¹⁴

Further south, the province of Sudan was in a state of civil war due to the military and religious campaign led by the al Mahdi. In 1883, the Khedive prevailed

upon the British to send a field force to put the revolt down, but the mostly Egyptian force was wiped out. Three other Egyptian armies were also wiped out keeping the Mahdi's forces way from the Red Sea Ports. On 19 February 1884, Prime Minister Gladstone ordered the evacuation of the inland garrisons under the command of General Charles Gordon. A field force was sent in to control the port of Suakin. Gordon, for his part, felt that he should attempt to regain control of the Sudan. He had some small successful engagements in the Khartoum area, but in August the Mahdi moved his forces northwards and besieged Khartoum in October. In the meantime, General Wolseley had been planning an expeditionary force to extricate General Gordon since April. It was sent up the Nile on 31 December 1884, but failed to reach Khartoum before the Mahdists took it in late January 1885. The force advancing from Suakin also failed to destroy the Mahdi's forces. The British withdrew from the Sudan, and the Mahdi was succeeded by the Khalifah Abdullah Ibn al-Sayyid Muhammed, who continued to expand the borders of the Mahdist empire.¹⁵

This group of wars was by far the most difficult to reconcile with the stated deployment. Though the Army List agrees with the honours list about which regiments went to this group of battles, the Army List often has battalions that were involved in these wars stationed elsewhere in the Mediterranean, shifting between Egypt, Cyprus, Gibraltar and Malta, or in Mauritius or Aden. Though this was the conquest of another country, almost half of the battalions involved were transferred from Mediterranean deployments.

The following line regiments were involved in the fighting in 1882:

18/2 (Royal Irish), 32/2 (46) (Cornwall LI), 35th (Royal Sussex), 38th (South Staffordshire), 42nd (Royal Highlanders), 95th (Sherwood Foresters), 49th (Royal Berkshire), 50th (Royal West Kent), 53rd (Shropshire LI), 60/3 (King's Royal Rifles), 96th (Manchesters), 65th (York and Lancaster), 74th (Highland LI), 72nd (Seaforth Highlanders), 75th (Gordon Highlanders), 79th (Cameron Highlanders), and the 87th (Royal Irish Fusiliers).¹⁶

The other units involved were:

1st Life Guards, 2nd Life Guards, Royal Horse Guards, 4th Dragoon Guards, 7th Dragoon Guards, 19th Hussars, Grenadier Guards, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, 2nd (Gardner's Horse), 6th King Edward's Own Light Cavalry, 2nd Queen's Own Sappers and Miners, 13th (Watson's Horse), 7th Rajputs, 20th (Brownlow's Punjabis), 129th Baluchis, Royal Malta Artillery.¹⁷

However, discrepancies arise with six line battalions with respect to their postings. The 45/2 (95) was posted to Bengal from 1882 to 1887, having moved from Gibraltar, the 50th was in Cyprus in 1882 and 1883, 63/2 (96) was in Malta in 1881 and moved to Bengal in 1882, staying there until 1896. The 65th had moved from Bengal to spend 1882 and 1883 in Aden, and was then posted to Britain until 1898. The 72nd had just moved from Bengal to Britain as of 1882, where it would stay until 1896 and the 87th had moved from Britain to Bengal as of 1883. Some of the discrepancy is likely an artefact of sampling, but note that these postings are in Britain, and the unit was posted the following year to India (and could easily be involved in this war "on the way"), or to a Mediterranean posting, or to Aden, all of which are convenient for the fighting in Egypt.

During the fighting in 1884-85, the following line regiments were involved:

18/2 Royal Irish, 19/1 Yorkshire, 70th Surrey, 32/2 (46) Cornwall Light Infantry, 35th Royal Sussex, 38th South Staffordshire, 42nd Royal Highlanders, 56th Essex, 49th Royal Berkshires, 50th Royal West Kent, 53rd Shropshire Light Infantry, 60/3 King's Royal Rifles, 65th York and Lancaster Regiment, 75th Gordon Highlanders, 79th Cameron Highlanders, 89 Princess Victoria's.¹⁸

Other units that also attended:

5th Lancers, 10th Hussars, 19th Hussars, 20th Hussars' Grenadier Guards, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, 9th Hodson's Horse, 2nd Queen's Own Sappers and Miners, 15th Ludhiana Sikhs, 17th (Loyal) Regiment, 128th Pioneers, Naval Brigade, RA, RE,

Royal Marines, Heavy Cavalry Camel Corps, Light Cavalry Camel Corps, Mounted Infantry.¹⁹

According to the Army List, the following regiments were sent to the 1884-5 battles that had not been in Egypt in 1882: 18/1, 19/1, 31/2 (70), 44/2 (56) and 87/2 (89). The following units had been in the battles in 1882, but were not present in 1884-5: 18/2, 45/2 (95), 63/2 (96), 71/2 (74), and 72.

Again, there are difficulties reconciling the presence of some line battalions, in terms of the Army List, and their battle honours. Both the 18/1 and 31/2 were posted to Egypt only for 1884, having been moved from Bengal, and afterward, on to Britain. The 18/1 has honours for the Nile, 1884-5 and the 31/2 for Suakin in 1885.²⁰ The 35th had left for Britain in 1885, again with honours for the Nile in 1884-5, the 38th had moved to Gibraltar in 1883. The 60/3 was in Cyprus in 1884 and 1885, despite several honours for that period. The 65th had moved from Aden to Britain as of 1884 (it has honours for 1884, but not 1885), and the 75th had moved from Egypt to Malta as of 1885, having honours for the Nile, 1884-5. The 87/2 (89th) was diverted on its way to Britain from Bombay to fight at El Teb and Tamai, near Suakin.²¹ The discrepancies involve movement between Britain and elsewhere, or movement within the Mediterranean or to Aden.

The abrupt rise in deployments to the Mediterranean in the early 1880's was entirely due to the Egyptian war, and Egypt continued to be an element of Mediterranean deployment for the rest of the period. Deployments to Britain and Africa drop slightly to compensate (see Chart 9 - Deployment of all Regiments by Region).

Most of the movement of the battalions during this war was in 1882, when the war started, and at the end of the war, in 1885 and 1886, as battalions were re-deployed. "Chart 21 - Moves Per Year" and "Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as Percentage of the Number of Battalions" also demonstrate (as does simply looking at the list of battalions) that this was mostly a war for the higher numbered regiments, rather than the first 25. 40 battalions were moved in 1882, a high second only to the

Zulu war until 1895. Of these, 33 were from the higher numbered battalions (see Chart 21 - Moves Per Year and Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as Percentage of the Number of Battalions), or 36% of these battalions. Only 7, or 14% of the first 25 battalions, were moved that same year. Of the 17 battalions involved in this war in 1882, 15 moved that year according to the Army List. Subtracting these 15 would leave 25 other transfers that year, an average year, so, like the Zulu war, the large number of transfers in 1882 was due entirely to war.

Notably few battalions were moved in 1883, only 14; 5 of these were battalions that were involved in the Egyptian war (18/2, 38, 49, 53, 71/2 (74)).

In 1884, again, an average number of battalions moved (see Chart 21 - Moves Per Year), of which (49, 50, 60/3, 65, 87/2 (89)) had been involved in 1882 and were to be involved in the war of 1884-85. The battalions 18/1, 19/1, 31/2 (70), 44/2 (56) had not been involved in 1882 but were transferred for the war in 1884-85. 71/2 (74) was transferred for a year to Britain, and then to Bengal until 1896.

Of all the battalions that were involved in this war, 5 came from Britain, 9 from the Mediterranean, 5 from India and 1 each from South Africa and Canada. After the war, 10 were sent to Britain, 9 to the Mediterranean, of which 4 had been posted there before the war, and 2 to India. All but one of the battalions stationed in the Mediterranean was involved in the war in 1882. Plainly, it was expedient to send battalions that were nearby.

Burma War, 1885-87

The Burmese government attempted to play France off Britain by signing a trade treaty with the French in 1883, which was suspected by the British to include supplying arms to Burma. This worsened British concerns about the expanding French involvement in Indochina²² A Conservative government was briefly in power in 1885, and, contrary to civil service advice, approved of annexation, as opposed to deposing King Thibaw and replacing him with someone more amenable to British interests.²³

Burma fined the Bombay Burma Trading Corporation on the grounds that they had exported more teak than they had paid for.²⁴ This false allegation was the pretext for the British to issue an ultimatum demanding that the teak issue go to arbitration, that the king accept a British Resident, that trade be opened with China, and that Burma's external affairs be put on the same basis as those of the Emir of Afghanistan, that is, in accordance with the advice of the Indian government.²⁵

The King rejected this ultimatum, and the resulting war was very brief. Though Burma was formally annexed on 1 January 1886, less than 3 months after the ultimatum was delivered, actual control of Burma required several years of war, as the Burmese army conducted guerrilla operations against the occupying British forces.²⁶

The line battalions that were involved in the Burma war were the 2/2 (Royal West Surrey), 8/2 (Kings Liverpool), 13/2 (Prince Albert's), 21/2 (Royal Scots Fusiliers), 22/2 (Cheshire), 23/1 (Royal Welsh Fusiliers), 24/2 (South Wales Borderers), 67th (Hampshire), the 51st (Yorkshire Light Infantry), 104th (Royal Munster Fusiliers), and the 1st battalion of the Rifle Brigade.²⁷

The 10/2 (Lincolnshire) and 9/2 (Norfolk) were involved in 1888 and 1889 respectively, and the 4th battalion of the 60th was involved in the operations of 1890-92 that subdued the last of the opposition.²⁸

The following regiments were also involved in the war of 1885-87:

7th Hurriana Lancers, 26th P. W. O. Light cavalry, 27th Light Cavalry, 31st lancers, 2nd Q. O. Rajput LI, 1st PWO Sappers and Miners, 2nd QO Sappers and Miners, 3rd Sappers and Miners, 4th Rajputs, 1st Brahmins, 5th LI, 10th Jats, 11th Jats, 12th Pioneers, 16th Rajputs, 18th Infantry, 26th Punjabis, 27th Punjabis, 33rd Punjabis, 61st Pioneers, 63rd LI, 72nd Punjabis, 73rd Carnatic Infantry, 74th Punjabis, 75th Carnatic Infantry, 76th Punjabis, 81st pioneers, 83rd LI, 86th Carnatic Infantry, 87th Punjabis, 90th Punjabis, 95th Russell's Infantry, 96th Berar Infantry, 101st Grenadiers, 105th Mahratta LI, 107th Pioneers, 123rd Outram Rifles, 125th Napier's Rifles, 127th Baluch LI, 3rd Gurkhas, 8th Gurkhas.²⁹ There was also a naval brigade of 600 with 26 guns,

divisional troops that included a battalion of native pioneers and 6 batteries of artillery.³⁰ Half of this artillery was from the Royal Artillery; half was mountain batteries from India.³¹ Thirty men of the 21st, along with 50 policemen and 14 Rangoon Volunteers, together with officers from these units, were made into a mounted infantry corps at the request of Major General Prendergast.³² The Upper Burma Military Police was created after upper Burma was annexed in January of 1886, but it was later taken into the Madras army. Various volunteer units were also involved, including the Rangoon Volunteer Rifles (formed in 1860), the Moulmein Volunteer Rifles (1877), the Rangoon Volunteer Artillery and the Rangoon and Irrawaddy Volunteer Rifles (1879), and the Upper Burma Volunteer Rifles (1886).³³

There is, as noted elsewhere, a preponderance of battalions from the first 25. Despite all these battalions, this caused relatively little disruption, in terms of the number of battalions moved each year. Though both this and the Egyptian war were concurrent in 1885, and the number of battalions moved that year and in 1886 and 1888 were high compared to other years, fewer battalions were moved in each of those years than were moved for the Afghanistan war in 1879 or the start of the Egyptian war in 1882 (see Chart 21 - Moves Per Year).

Thus, India was being used as a reserve for this war. This is also confirmed by the drop in the number of battalions in India from 1885-1890. Though the number of battalions in India had slipped just below average in 1882, the real lows occurred from 1885 to 1890 (see Chart 9- Deployment of all Regiments by Region and Chart 13 - Deployment of all Regiments: India (stacked chart)). The battalions involved in this war came from India, and most returned there. All of the battalions had been transferred from Bengal, with the following exceptions: 13/2, 21/2, 24/2, 67 (37/2), and 104 (101/2), came from Madras and 1 Rifle Brigade came from Bombay. These battalions also returned to Bengal, with the following exceptions: 9/2, 22/2, 60/4, 67 (37/2), and 51 were sent to Britain, 13/2 returned to Madras, and 21/2, and 104 (101/2) were sent to Madras.

South African War, 1899-1902

Having failed, in 1881, to force a federation on the Transvaal, Britain watched with growing concern the increasing nationalism and national wealth from gold deposits in the Witwatersrand. During the 1890's Cecil Rhodes, hoping to discover more mining opportunities, used his company to carve out what turned out to be a mostly agrarian colony that was officially recognised as Rhodesia in 1897. This conveniently stopped any northward expansion of the Transvaal. In 1895, Rhodes backed a coup against the Transvaal government. The miners who supported this backed out, but the invading force that was supposed to support the miner-raised rebellion did not, and the Jameson raid was an abysmal failure. The Boers, for their part, viewed this as a British-backed coup attempt. The Kaiser took the opportunity to congratulate the president of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger. This alarmed the British government, earlier disturbed by the German acquisition of the coast of southwest Africa in 1884. Various elements in the British government, concerned with British supremacy in the area, or upset by earlier defeats that resulted in partial independence for the Transvaal, attempted to destabilise the Transvaal in an attempt to force it to unite with the rest of South Africa under the crown, or to find a reason to declare war. The crucial issue turned out to be the political rights of immigrants involved in mining the Transvaal. The failure of negotiations, gone into with less than entirely good faith by Milner, precipitated the war.³⁴

The Boers' invasion of the Cape ground to a halt with sieges at Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. Relief attempts by the forces of Sir Redvers Buller, the commander in chief, met with failure, and Lord Roberts replaced him. The capitals of both Orange Free State and the Transvaal surrendered due to a flank attack from Kimberley. The Boers responded with two years of guerrilla warfare. The British resorted to a war of attrition, and finally did enough economic and military damage to force the Boers to come to terms.³⁵

This was the largest war that Britain was involved in during the years 1870 to 1902; so large that it dwarfs any other war of the period. It was nearly as large, in terms of battalion-years, as all other wars put together. Every regiment of the line

army sent at least one battalion to this war. In all, 80 battalions were sent to this war, of which 27 were from the first 25 regiments. Even so, 23 battalions, of which 7 were from the first 25 regiments, never saw this or any other colonial war in the years 1870 to 1902.

In addition to the line regiments, there were numerous other British units involved. These included 26 regiments of cavalry, the Grenadier, Coldstream and Scots Guards, horse, mountain and field artillery, naval artillery and several naval brigades, 44 yeomanry regiments, and 51 militia regiments.³⁶

Less regular units involved were:

The Cape Mounted Rifles, Cape Field Artillery, various local volunteer corps in South Africa, native levees, and contingents from Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, and Tasmania.³⁷

As is obvious from “Chart 9 - Deployment of all Regiments by Region”, most of the battalions were moved from Britain, and most also returned there after the war, though the number of battalions stationed in India, the Mediterranean, South Asia and the Americas also drops during this war. This war was so large that taking battalions from Britain was not sufficient. More precisely, 37 battalions were transferred from Britain to South Africa in 1899, of which 12 were from the first 25 regiments, 13 in 1900, of which 7 were from the first 25 regiments, and none in 1901. In 1899, 16 battalions were transferred to this war from other locations, that is Bengal, Bombay, Ceylon, Crete, Egypt, Gibraltar, Malta, Mauritius, and the Punjab. Of these, five battalions from the first 25 regiments came from Crete, Gibraltar, Malta and the Punjab. In 1900 six arrived from Bermuda, Canada, Egypt, Gibraltar and Malta, and in 1901 none arrived. In 1902 four battalions were rotated in, from Britain, Hong Kong, Barbados and the Punjab, and one battalion was sent from Ceylon in 1903, and one from Bengal in 1904, as regular garrisoning resumed.

In 1901, battalions began to leave. 6/2 was sent to Bermuda from South Africa. 19 battalions were transferred to Britain from South Africa in 1902, 18 in 1903, and 10 in 1904, of which six, nine and five were from the first 25 regiments,

respectively. In 1902, 25 left South Africa for Aden, Bengal, Bombay, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt, Hong Kong, Madras, Malta, Mauritius and the Punjab, and four left for Bengal, Ceylon, Egypt and Singapore 1903, of which two had been posted there briefly after the war.

Five battalions, 8/1, 17/1, 18/1, 60/2 and 102/2, were already present in South Africa in 1898, and 49/2 was transferred there that year. As intended, battalions in Britain were used as the reserve deployed for a major war, but other regions also saw their garrisons reduced.

The consistency between the honours and where the battalions were deployed was generally good, unlike Egypt. Access to this war was about even for the first 25 and the rest of the battalions, as 54% of the former and 57% of the latter are involved. Some effort also seems to have been made to send battalions back to the posting region they were in before the war, though many were sent on to new postings.

Like all the wars discussed here, most battalions moved in the first year of the war (1899) and at the end (1902). Fewer than usual were re-deployed during the war (see Chart 21 - Moves Per Year, Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as Percentage of the Number of Battalions). The first 25 regiments moved out of South Africa in both 1902 and 1903, whereas the rest of the regiments were mostly re-deployed in 1902, suggesting that the rest of the battalions were given priority for redeployment elsewhere. This was confirmed above; in that 6 battalions from the first 25 regiments were sent to overseas postings after the war (1902-06) (12%), and 24 from the rest (26%), and most of the overseas deployments for all battalions was in 1902.

Redeployment in the face of wars conformed partially to the intent of the Cardwell reforms, in that battalions in Britain were sent, but it was as, or more, convenient to transfer battalions that were closer, or diverted from normal redeployment. For the Burma war, in particular, it was faster to send battalions posted to India than to wait on battalions from Britain, or ones being re-deployed from the Egyptian war. If a battalion was sent from Britain, it was, in the cases of

the Ashanti or Zulu wars, likely to stay overseas for some years afterward. In the case of the Burma war, battalions were taken from India and sent back there, while a minority were sent to Britain after the war. The deployment for these wars, for the most part, conforms to the geography of the cliques. Egypt, however, sitting on the geographic boundary, breaks this pattern, having battalions from Britain, the local region and from India. Field experience for a regimental officer was dependent on overseas deployment. An officer that gained field experience demonstrated that he had the professional competence that would in turn help to advance his career. Unlike German officers posted to the frontiers, British officers posted to the frontiers were advancing their careers by gaining and demonstrating professional knowledge and competence.

The South African war was on a scale so large that these patterns failed. The original intent to use the battalions posted in Britain as a war reserve re-emerged, although the war proved so large that these alone were insufficient. There was no consistent pattern of favouritism toward the first 25 in terms of whether they were preferred for wartime deployment, though some individual wars show a preference for one of the other. The Cardwell reforms largely succeeded in their primary aim of keeping half the battalions at home as a war reserve, but the South African War demanded more regular battalions than Britain actually had. However, the Cardwell reforms arguably failed, in that British battalions in Britain were under-manned training units, a problem outside the scope of this paper.

4. Deployment and the Indian and African “Rings”

Another deployment issue is whether the Africanist and the Indianist “rings” had any influence on deployment. One of the consequences of the lack of a general staff was that a field commander had to do his own planning, pick his own staff and work out his own logistics and transport. As a result, both Lord Roberts and Lord Wolseley developed their own “rings” of officers whom they could depend on as staff and subordinate commanders in wartime, and, in Lord Roberts’ case, to acquire staff for the Indian army. These rings offered patronage to more junior officers, in terms of access to staff positions, field appointments during wars, and advocates for

their grievances and claims and help with their career advancement, and assist their sons.³⁸ Wolseley was careful to mention the meritorious service of his officers in dispatches. There are 10 pages of these mentions for the officers involved in the campaign in Egypt in 1882.³⁹ Lord Roberts supported Sir Henry Rawlinson as a junior officer because his father was a supporter of the “forward defence” policy that Lord Roberts advocated.⁴⁰

The rings were never closed systems, since particular officers could die or be unavailable, or an officer from the other ring would have the needed skills.⁴¹ General Sir Ian Hamilton, in 1884 a major, and who had recently acted as Assistant Military Secretary to Lord Roberts (that he wasn't confirmed in this position by the War Office he blamed on Sir Redvers Buller, an Africanist), sailed to Cairo in an attempt to join the Gordon Relief expedition. Finding that numerous other officers had had the same idea, he contacted the Gordon Highlanders, the regiment in which he had been a subaltern and was offered a position. The base commandant, Colonel Ardagh, refused to forward the appointment to the chief of staff, Redvers Buller. The colonel eventually relented, and Buller gave Hamilton the position: a demonstration of both the use of connections in gaining positions, and the fact that the rings were not closed. General Sir Evelyn Wood got him out of the rearguard company he had been assigned to by leaning on Hamilton's colonel.⁴² This episode also demonstrates the degree of competition among British officers to get combat experience – in the absence of British maneuvers, the only field command experience they could get. The staff college instructor and historian, Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, was a “find” of Wolseley, who, on discovering he was the author of The Campaign of Fredericksburg, had him added to the teaching staff at Sandhurst in 1890. This did not stop Lord Roberts from taking Henderson along to the South African war as his director of intelligence.⁴³

Patronage was probably a wider practice than just within the rings. Evidence taken by the commission on the South African war suggests the practice was widespread, not only to support the meritorious, but also the merely well connected. Major General Kelly-Kenny, because he had the best of connections, spent much of his career serving in combat support staff positions, never commanding in the field

until he was given 6th division in the South African war.⁴⁴ Then General, later Field Marshall, Sir Evelyn Wood stated that it was easy to get rid of subalterns, but when officers had the ranks of captain and major it was hard to reject them for promotion on grounds of incompetence because family and general officers would intervene.⁴⁵ Lieutenant General Sir Ian. Hamilton, then Military Secretary and a key member of the Roberts “ring” who had found Roberts’ backing a considerable accelerator for his career, spoke from the other side of the issue;

q. At any rate, the present position with regard to the supply of officers and their education leaves you in almost a dangerous position? Yes, that has also struck me in connection with the question of outside influence which I rather bear the brunt of as Military Secretary. I think there is nothing that shows the fierce light which beats on the War Office more than the way that the ordinary human actions and feelings are twisted into something special against that department. Of course, influential people, political or social, ask for advancement for their friends frequently; but they do so knowing perfectly well that the Military Secretary will refuse it if it is improper; and they are thus able to satisfy their constituent, or whoever it is, and to put the odium on to somebody else’s shoulders. What I mean is that people are perfectly satisfied if they ask a thing, and they are shown that it cannot be done under the Regulations, and, as a rule, there is no more trouble. As regards female outside influence, I think it is the most natural thing that mothers should wish to help their sons, and they come to see me or write to me, and very often I am able to meet their views without doing harm to anyone else, and if I cannot do it without harming someone I do not do it.⁴⁶

Hamilton, in his turn, had become a patron.

The rings, and patronage in general, helped and also hindered professionalization. On the one hand, it was a means to advance by merit, assuming that was what the patron was looking for. However, patronage did not make for a consistent means to advance the careers of competent officers because personal ties or political connections were also reasons to support an officer. Patronage operated in the absence of a more systematic means of defining and promoting meritorious officers. It could be a very costly system, as when feuding between the rings hampered the prosecution of the South African war.⁴⁷

The only point at which the officer cliques can be seen in terms of the movement of battalions was in the relatively few numbers of battalions that, having been posted to India at some time in the years 1870 to 1898, were posted to Africa in that period. If either group could claim to have any grip on the postings, it might have been the Indianists, given that most of the regiments deployed to India never went to Africa, though, as discussed below, there are other reasons for the predominance of postings to India. Moreover, Indian postings were semi-permanent even before Roberts rose to prominence.

Officers could not have easily have remained in the same regiment for their entire careers and hope to avoid India. Avoiding Africa was also not possible without moving between battalions at some time in their career. This would suggest that a particularly Africanist officer would have to be less loyal to his regiment, and more likely to move to the battalion linked to his own (after 1881), or to another regiment altogether, or to the staff, in order to avoid service in India.

Looking first at the battalions that were posted to India, and seeing how many of these battalions also went to which other postings, it is clear that the garrisoning of India overwhelmed all other deployments. Of the 141 battalions of the regular army (ignoring in this section, for the purposes of comparison, the 2/79, which was raised in 1897 and was posted to Britain for the years 1897-98), 126 spent at least one deployment in India in the years 1870 through 1898 (table 1). Of these, only 30 were ever deployed to Africa in this period (table 2). Of those that were not deployed to Africa in this period, 43 did go to Africa for the South African war of 1899-1902. The South African war drew more battalions that had deployed to India than did all the deployments to Africa in the 28 years before it.

Table 1: Number of Regiments Posted to Each Region: 1870-98.

	India	SE Asia*	E Asia	Africa	Americas	Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	45	25 (4) (1)	4	12	7	29
Regiments 26-Rifle Brigade	81	36 (9) (5)	8	25	19	61
All Regiments	126	61 (13) (6)	12	37	26	90

*The first bracketed number refers to the number of those battalions that went to SE Asia, whose only posting in that region was to Aden. The second bracketed number is the number of battalions sent

only to Mauritius in SE Asia. These are in addition to the main number, which is the number of battalions that went to any SE Asia posting.

Table 2: Number of Regiments Posted to India, Plus Other Regions: 1870-98.

India and...	SE Asia*	E Asia	Africa	Americas	Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	22 (4) (1)	2	10	5	23
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	31 (9) (5)	6	20	15	50
All Regiments	53 (13) (6)	8	30	20	74

*The first bracketed number refers to the number of those battalions that went to SE Asia, whose only posting in that region was to Aden. The second bracketed number is the number of battalions sent only to Mauritius in SE Asia. These are in addition to the main number, which is the number of battalions that went to any SE Asia posting.

All 69 regiments had at least one battalion go to India at some time in the period 1870-1898. Of these, 30 regiments sent a battalion to Africa. Of these, 10 were from the first 25 regiments, and 20 from the rest. Of the 39 regiments whose battalions were never posted to Africa, 15 were from the first 25 regiments and 24 from the rest. Thus, regimental experience was not very well spread between India and Africa, since less than half of all the regiments ever sent a battalion to Africa, but, as an officer could transfer between the battalions of his regiment, his chances of varying his overseas experience were not as poor as they would have been if he could not do so.

Separating out the first 25 regiments, 45 of 50 battalions had been deployed to India (table 1). Of these, 10 were deployed to Africa (table 2). Of these battalions, 15 were only deployed to Africa for the South African war. Thus, of these 45 battalions, 24, or 53.3%, were not deployed to Africa before the South African war.

Of the rest of the battalions, 81 were deployed to India from 1870 to 1898 (table 1). Of these, 20 were deployed to Africa (table 2), and 28 were only deployed to Africa for the 1899-1902 war.

In other words, less than a quarter of the battalions that had been posted to India ever went to Africa before the South African war (table 3). Further, the first 25 regiments were slightly more likely than the rest of the battalions, if they had had a posting to India, to be posted to Africa.

Table 3: Table 2, as Percentages.

India and...	SE Asia	E Asia	Africa	Americas	Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	48.9	4.0	22.2	11.1	53.3
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	38.3	7.4	24.7	18.5	61.7
All Regiments	42.1	6.5	23.8	15.9	58.7

Only 37 battalions of 141 went to both India and Africa because India, to which 126 battalions were sent, so predominated where battalions were posted. There are a number of causes for this. First, deployments to India, as noted elsewhere, were among the longest (matched only by the length of deployments to Britain), and therefore there was less opportunity for a regiment deployed to India (or Britain) to go to Africa. The second issue is partly a matter of the relative number of postings to which battalions could be deployed. In Sub-Saharan Africa, battalions were deployed only to the Gold Coast and to South Africa. Egypt has been accounted as a Mediterranean posting. Postings to India included Madras, Bombay, Bengal, Nepal, Afghanistan, and, later in the century, the Punjab. It was also considered important, for many years in the wake of the Indian rebellion of 1857, to maintain a large military presence in India. Finally, there were simply more wars in India and surrounding regions, which meant more battalions were required to maintain the peace and to pursue these wars.

Table 4: Number of Regiments Posted to Africa, Plus Other Regions 1870-1898.

Africa and...	SE Asia*	E Asia	India	Americas	Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	3 (2) (0)	1	10	4	6
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	9 (2) (4)	4	20	6	17
All Regiments	12 (4) (6)	5	30	10	23

*The first bracketed number refers to the number of those battalions that went to SE Asia, whose only posting in that region was to Aden. The second bracketed number is the number of battalions sent

only to Mauritius in SE Asia. These are in addition to the main number, which is the number of battalions that went to any SE Asia posting.

Table 5: Table 4, as Percentages.

Africa and...	SE Asia	E Asia	India	Americas	Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	25.0	8.33	83.3	33.3	50.0
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	36.0	16.0	80.0	24.0	68.0
All Regiments	32.4	13.5	81.1	27.0	62.2

To look at the issue from the perspective of Africa, 37 battalions had been deployed to Africa between the years 1870 and 1898 (table 1). Of these, 30 were at some time deployed to India (table 4). Of the 37 battalions, 19 were also sent to the South African war, having been posted to Africa in earlier years. These 37 battalions are spread among 32 regiments, all of which has sent at least one battalion to India, suggesting a wider spread of experience in the 'African' regiments, as compared to the 'Indian' ones.

Of the first 25 regiments, 12 battalions had, at some time between 1870 and 1898, been posted to Africa. Of these, 10 were deployed to India (table 4). 8 of these 12 battalions were also posted to Africa for the South African war.

Of the rest of the battalions, 25 had been posted to Africa (table 1), of which 20 were also deployed to India (table 4). 11 of 25 battalions were also sent to the South African war.

Generally, battalions that were posted to Africa were very likely to be also posted to India at some time. It is also clear that those battalions of the first 25 regiments that had been posted at some time to Africa were slightly more likely than those of the rest of the battalions to be deployed to India at some time in the years 1870-98. About half of all battalions that were previously posted to Africa went to the South African war, but those battalions from the first 25 regiments were more likely to be sent to the war than the rest of the battalions.

Only 5 battalions (the 46th (32/2), 35th, 71st, the 101st and the 102nd) were sent to the South African war, yet were never posted to either India or Africa in the years 1870-1898. Three other battalions, 4/1, 20/1, and 79/2, were also anomalies, in that they were never posted to either India or Africa, even for the South African war. The 79/2 only came into being in 1897. It spent two years in Britain, and then was shipped out to the Mediterranean, spending three years in Gibraltar, one in Crete and one in Malta, after which it was sent to South Africa in 1904. The 4/1 and the 20/1 had similar experiences, in that much of their time in Britain overlapped, and their tours in any one location tended to be short. The 4/1 was posted to Britain from 1868 to 1873. It was then posted to Gibraltar for five years, and the West Indies for two. It returned to Britain in 1881, where it remained until 1894. It then travelled to a series of one and two year postings to Malta, Hong Kong, and Singapore, and returned again to Britain in 1900. It was sent back out to Malta in 1902. The 20/1 was in Britain from 1867 to 1872. It was sent to two and three year postings in Bermuda, Nova Scotia, and Cyprus, returning to Britain in 1880. Its next deployments were to Crete in 1899, Malta in 1901, and Gibraltar in 1902.

What of deployments east of India, or west of Africa? Looking again at tables 2 through 5, these deployments do not correlate with whether a battalion was ever posted to either India or Africa between 1870 and 1898. Aden and Mauritius are noted separately in the tables below; because of the relatively high percentage of battalions whose only posting to SE Asia was one of these locations.

Of all the 126 battalions that were posted to India, 61 (48.4%) were also posted to points further east, not including those that went only to Aden or Mauritius. The first 25 regiments sent 45 to India, and 24 of those also went to SE and E Asia. Of the rest of the regiments, 81 battalions were posted to India, and 61 of these also went to Asia. Finally, of the 126 battalions that went to India, 94 were sent to postings west of the Suez. Of these, 29 were from the first 25 regiments. Not surprisingly, a battalion that was posted to India had a 42% chance of going to SE Asia; better if the battalion was among the first 25 regiments. Such a battalion had an even better chance of being posted to the Mediterranean than to SE Asia, belying any west of the Suez/east of the Suez division of regiments (table 6).

As with battalions that had been posted to India, battalions that had been posted to Africa were not precluded from serving east of the Suez, though the likelihood of such battalions of going to the Mediterranean was much better.

A battalion that was posted to India had a somewhat greater likelihood of also going to SE Asia than did a battalion posted to Africa, but this was reversed for E Asia; a battalion that was posted to Africa was slightly more likely to be posted to E Asia than a battalion that had at some time been posted to India (tables 3, 5). A battalion posted to Africa had a better chance of going to both the Americas and the Mediterranean than a battalion that had been posted to India (tables 3, 5).

Simplifying tables 3 and 5 further (tables 6 and 7, respectively), it was true that a battalion posted to India was more likely to be posted to Asia than a battalion posted to Africa, but the difference was only a few per cent. It was also true that a battalion posted to Africa was somewhat more likely to be posted to the Americas or the Mediterranean, than was a battalion posted to India, but the likelihood in both cases was quite high. If postings to Aden and Mauritius are included, they significantly increase the percentage of battalions that went to Africa that also went to SE Asia postings by 27%, and battalions that went to India by 15% overall.

Table 6: Derived from Table 3, as Percentages.

India and...	Asia	Americas and Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	57.7 (66.7)*	64.4
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	45.7 (63.0)*	80.2
All Regiments	48.4 (63.5)*	74.6

Table 7: Derived from Table 5, as Percentages.

Africa and...	Asia	Americas and Mediterranean
Regiments 1-25	33.3 (50)*	83.3
Regiments 26- Rifle Brigade	52.0 (76)*	92
All Regiments	45.9 (73)*	89.2

*including Aden and Mauritius.

In other words, except in the case of cross posting from India to Africa, there was no significant barrier for a battalion that was once posted to India to be posted to points west, or a battalion once posted to Africa to be posted to points east.

Any ‘African’ battalion may have been cross-posted east of the Suez, or an “Indian” battalion west, but did it get any experience in any wars eastwards? Of these 37 battalions the breakdown for the period 1870-98 was as follows:

Table 8: “African” Battalions at War.

	Never went to war	War only west of the Suez	War only east of the Suez	Both
Regiments 1-25	4	4	0	4
Regiments 26-Rifle Brigade	11	11	1	2
All	15	15	1	6

Table 9: “Indian” Battalions at War.

	Never went to war	War only west of the Suez	War only east of the Suez	Both
Regiments 1-25	11	6	20	8
Regiments 26-Rifle Brigade	36	17	21	7
All	47	23	41	15

For an officer trying to improve his career prospects by being involved in a war, these are disappointing charts. It was relatively uncommon for any regiment, as opposed to a battalion, not to have seen at least one war in the years 1870 to 1898. Of all battalions, 52 of 142, of which 14 were from the first 25 regiments, (keeping in mind that 79/2 was raised in 1897) saw no war before the South African war of 1899. In other words, more than one third of all the line battalions have no experience of war for nearly thirty years. However, in terms of regiments, only 10 out of 69 saw no wars in this period. On average, a regiment saw 1.9 ± 1.4 wars from 1870 to 1902, not including the South African war. The odds, if one were in the first 25 regiments, were slightly better than if one were in the rest of the regiments ($2 \pm$

1.0 versus 1.8 ± 1.6). There are few wars to attend in a 30-year career, if an officer remained with his regiment.

The above officer's options can also be seen in terms of battalion-years; that is, like man-hours, how many total years of postings there were. From 1870 through 1898, there were 4091 battalion-years of postings. In that time there were (to the nearest year) 251 battalion-years of war. In other words, of all the years all the battalions were posted, only 6% were war years. Compare this to the years the army was at war in South Africa from late 1899 through the spring of 1902. In these four calendar years there were 568 battalion-years of postings. If the honours are taken at face value (i.e., a battalion has honours for 1899-1902), and considering that was 3 years of war, there were 232 battalion-years of war in these 4 years. A more conservative estimate, taking the number of years a battalion was posted to Africa, according to the army lists, results in 189 battalion-years of war. There was also one battalion-year each of war in Egypt (1899) and China (1900). Thus, from 1870-1902, between 43% and 48% of all battalion years at war were in the South African war alone. Little wonder that officers pulled every string they could to get to this war and this uncommon opportunity to fight.

Lord Roberts, in evidence before the commission on the South African war, felt that it was important for the officers to spend part of their careers overseas, a on the grounds that taught them to be effective in war.

...it is not in England, however, that our officers are trained, but in India, in Egypt, and in Eastern and Western Africa. It is there that they become familiar with war, accustomed to command and to organise, and to adapt their means to their end... Our campaigns for the last 20 years show the value of this training. In Burma, Uganda, Ashantee, and on the North-west Frontier of India, and in Egypt, our unbroken success has been due in great part to the energy and ability of the younger officers.⁴⁸

General Sir Grove agreed with the importance of overseas experience and combat.

The performance of the ordinary regimental duties in peace does not give a man a chance of showing whether he is very much better than other people. It is not until you come to active service that you can find that out, and one of the greatest difficulties of promotion and of selection is the fact that we are not always on active service. If we were the thing would be simplicity itself.

There is not difficulty whatever in selecting a man, as far as I know, on active service. In war a good man gets pushed on very quickly, because you have the chance of really judging his qualifications; but in peace you have not the same opportunities for testing and judging a man.⁴⁹

The army was always on active service, but not every officer was. The current solution of regular, realistic training for all ranks did not yet exist. Scheduling small wars for the convenience of her Majesty's officers' careers in lieu of training had its limitations. Small wars do not have the uniformity or universality of realistic training – wherein everybody attends the same scripted battles, and the same scripted wars. On the other hand, militaries suffer from the unique position among professions, of mostly training in their profession rather than actually doing it. Fighting a war is doing, not practicing; it's the difference between a heart surgeon who has done bypasses for ten years and a heart surgeon just out of residency, or who has done no bypasses for a decade. A war fought by a professional corps is (or should be) able to put the theory, the class and field education, and the exercises, into practice. It is a demonstration of expertise, an application of their professional education. It is also a test: is the expertise that was taught correct? Relevant? For 30 years the British ad-hoc system of on the job training was good enough.

Because of localisation, and budgetary parsimony, it was too expensive to move troops down to Aldershot for higher levels of training, and recruiting was such that recruits were mostly sent overseas. Given that last issue, it is questionable whether sufficient bodies could have been collected from battalions other than those being built up for overseas deployment to proceed with large-scale manoeuvres. Small scale training at home could not have been especially productive, since a quarter of regimental officers might be away from regimental duties, and the ranks tasked to fatigues, there were few officers to train the men, and too few men with which to teach the junior officers.⁵⁰

Following the Prussian lead in introducing large-scale manoeuvres, Cardwell ordered manoeuvres for 1871, but manoeuvres on a large scale ended with the manoeuvres of 1873 because they were considered to be too costly and possibly also due to the difficulties of dealing with landowners. Despite further bills for manoeuvres in 1875 and 1882, it was not until 1898, when Salisbury plain was bought for the purpose of large formation training, that large-scale manoeuvres were

possible. Prior to this, manoeuvres had to be conducted at Aldershot, and it was not suitable for setting large units against each other.⁵¹ Manoeuvres at a smaller scale had resumed in 1890.⁵² Training at a large scale, however, was possible at some of the larger garrisons in India.⁵³ The largest formation training at Aldershot was the brigade manoeuvres that started at the end of June. The other training conducted there was route marches, to the scale of brigades, field duty training, and target shooting by half battalions.⁵⁴ Aldershot also suffered from its proximity to London, as some officers were keener to catch the train to London than to properly finish the training day.⁵⁵ This was still a problem in 1898, when that year's manoeuvres ended daily in time for the London theatre and local socialising.⁵⁶ Because of this the exercise was criticised for being a series of field days, rather than one long exercise. Although the manoeuvres of 1898 were the largest since 1873, setting two corps and 2 cavalry brigades against each other, the event was criticised for the use of antiquated tactics, lazy reconnaissance due to over-familiarity with the ground, and lack of corps level command, as generals tried to command each battalion directly. Due to budgetary constraints, the exercise the following year was held at both the Curragh, where Roberts oversaw individual training and close attacks, and at Aldershot, where the larger scale manoeuvres were conducted, and where much the same criticisms were made as the previous year. Also at Aldershot, General Buller, who had not held a field command in twelve years, abruptly ended the manoeuvres with an unsuccessful assault.

Colonel Henderson's comments, that these manoeuvres indicated that officers needed to be trained in independent command and that formal formations were being over-used, suggest that these newly resumed manoeuvres, being very unlike the wars that the army experienced, had significant limitations as a substitute for experience in the colonial wars in which the army had hitherto fought.⁵⁷ That being so, it could hardly be used as a way to estimate an officers merit when it came to promotion the way competence in battle could, or have the direct comparability of a score on an exam. Neither were the two years of large-scale manoeuvres sufficient training for the South African war. Large-scale manoeuvres did not teach officers how to fight a guerrilla war, or to manoeuvre troops in mapless territory for months against enemies who they had never before encountered. Exercises are of little use if

they are not realistic. And the realism of even the exercises of European armies was not ideal. Reports on foreign manoeuvres noted the trust in the offensive force of the line and a low estimation of probable casualties.⁵⁸ A war is useful as a means by which the umpires can gauge the effectiveness of a particular tactic, or how great the need for its crisp implementation, the effect of coordination between units and branches, or the lack thereof, or to estimate realistic casualties. One of the results of the South African war was an abrupt shift in the British perception of the quality of continental manoeuvres, because it showed British officers how much war had drifted from the assumptions of European exercises. The greater the drift, the more exercises not only do not teach lessons in fighting wars, but teach false lessons. Some samples of British commentary on European manoeuvres after the South African War:

The tactics employed by the French infantry during these manoeuvres could only be regarded with amazement after the lessons of the Boer war. To put the matter shortly, the formations adopted and the methods of attack were almost precisely those used by the Germans at the commencement of the war of 1870. Various reasons have been assigned for the retention at manoeuvres of a method of warfare which fills British officers with astonishment. The principal reason given is that the manoeuvres in France are only meant as an exercise for the higher commanders in the concentration and moving of large bodies of troops, as a test of organisation, &c., and that no attempt is made during manoeuvres, when once the troops come in contact, to practice troops in the methods of fighting they should adopt in war...⁵⁹

It should be stated that, as the [French] assailants approached the objective, the defenders, who had usually been kneeling until then, rose up and advanced to meet them. The absurd spectacle was then witnessed of the attackers and defenders standing opposite one another at about 150 yards (both usually in two ranks) and firing as fast as the magazine would allow. Comment on such tactics is needless.⁶⁰

In the report on the Imperial Manoeuvres of 1900...it was stated that there was no sign of any change in the German tactics due to any experience gained by the war in South Africa. It is true that the formations of infantry in the firing line in 1901 were a trifle less dense than in 1900, but the most which can be said of this is, that this year the formations were more according to regulation... none of these armies [German, French, Russian] have fought under modern conditions. It remains to be proved how far the best disciplined continental troops will stand if suddenly exposed to heavy

fire, coming, perhaps, from points difficult at first to locate owing to the use of smokeless powder...”⁶¹

The South African war changed how Britain ran exercises, at least for a few years. Nonetheless, by 1904 Lord Roberts expressed fear that the British army was losing its collective memory of the lessons of the South African War.⁶²

War service could be of significant advantage to an officer's career. It could get him noticed by one of the rings and remembered for the next conflict, and result in brevet promotions and medals. Speaking again of General Sir Ian Hamilton, service in Egypt garnered him not only campaign experience but also a mention in dispatches, medals and the rank of brevet major.⁶³ Notice from Lord Roberts in the 1879 Afghanistan war for his bravery and competence resulted in a mention in dispatches and a commission for Colour-Sergeant, later Major General Sir, Hector MacDonald.⁶⁴ For his services in the Ashanti war, then Lieutenant Colonel Evelyn Wood received the order of Companion of the Bath and a brevet rank of colonel.⁶⁵ War service could also be quite lucrative. Roberts picked up a formal thanks, a GCB, 2 swords of honour, an honorary degree, a baronetcy, and 12,500 for his successful campaign during the Second Afghan war in 1879.⁶⁶ On the whole, senior officers like Buller, Brackenbury and Wolseley thought advancing in rank was more valuable than medals, but regardless, the higher the knightly order or peerage, the better.⁶⁷

War service alone was not a guarantee of continued advancement, though. The officers who commanded at Rorkes Drift, during the Zulu war, Lieutenant John Rouse Merriot Chard, RE and Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead, commanding B company of the 24th Foot, both collected Victoria Crosses and promotions to brevet major, but they did not collect the approving eye of Wolseley, who felt that, given the options, they had little choice but to fight.⁶⁸ Even more advantageous than combat experience was combat experience plus the notice of one of the rings.

War service also had its disadvantages. In testimony before the commission on South Africa, Major General Sir Bruce Hamilton stated,

Until the South African war the choice of Generals was limited to those who had been lucky enough as youngsters to go to some small war - because the only promotion that could be obtained at all was by getting a brevet for active service, and it could not be got for anything else but active service. The present system of reward by brevet produces false situations, and is very irregular in its effect, giving some men eight years advantage and others none at all. Many good officers now leave the Army because they have no prospects, who would remain if they saw a chance of advancing themselves by proved efficiency.⁶⁹

There was another, more serious, and sometimes terminal, disadvantage. Perceived lack of competence or bravery could destroy a career, or lives. The reputations of senior and respected officers, such as General Sir Redvers Buller and Lieutenant General Lord Methuen, were destroyed by the South African war. Captain, later Major General Sir, Charles Townshend, who very successfully commanded the forces besieged at Chitral fort in 1894, gaining a CB and a brevet majority from the experience, later also commanded, having just been promoted major general, the far less successful siege at Kut-al-Amara in World War I.⁷⁰ During the Zulu war of 1879, a supply column in laager under the command of Captain David Moriarty was attacked at Myer's Drift. Lieutenant Henry Howard, camped on the other side of the drift, had formed a defence with Colour-Sergeant Henry Booth. The lieutenant then rode to Luneburg, five miles away, to inform Major Tucker, commanding the garrison there that (according to the later testimony of the major) the laager had been destroyed. Major Tucker and a mounted detachment found the sergeant and forty other troops still holding out. The sergeant was later awarded a Victoria Cross, and the lieutenant was court-martialled. Other officers in that war who were perceived to have acted in a cowardly manner were sent home for medical reasons, court-martialled, or transferred out of combat command.⁷¹ One of these officers was the unfortunate Lieutenant Jaheel Carey. He chose to join the French prince imperial, Louis Napoleon, who had been tasked to sketch the ground that Lord Chelmsford columns were to march over the following day. The prince imperial's daring and enthusiasm had already thoroughly alarmed the senior officers who were responsible for his continued good health. Lord Chelmsford, commanding the expedition, therefore tasked him with sketching terrain presumed to be safe. These officers, and the prince's guard, encountered 40 Zulu's, who killed the prince and 3 of the 7 guards. Lieutenant Carey, having lived to report, was court-martialled for

misbehaviour in the face of the enemy. The charge was eventually dropped due to pressure from the empress Eugénie, but his career was finished.⁷² During the rebellion in Manipur in 1891, the political agent, the chief commissioner and the commander of the Indian forces were murdered while attempting to parlay. The two junior officers remaining failed to show the requisite leadership, so the wife of the political agent, Ethel Grimmond, led the forces out. She was rewarded with the Royal Red Cross and a lifetime pension. The officers were cashiered.⁷³

It was also possible to gain combat experience outside the limits of the wars that the line armies were involved in, though there is no evidence in these examples to support the possibility that these sorts of opportunities furthered a line officer's career. An officer could join the Indian Army. Sir Percy Cox, later the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, first gained attention with the Bombay Staff Corps when he successfully commanded a force of Somalis in an expedition against a rebelling tribe in 1895.⁷⁴ There were numerous expeditions to be had with the Punjabi frontier force.⁷⁵ The Royal Niger constabulary fought the Niger-Sudan campaign of 1897 against the Fulani Emirates with seconded regimental officers.⁷⁶ The War Office allowed line officers to serve on the Bechuanaland Border Police when it helped occupy Mashonaland in 1890-91 as part of plans by the British South Africa Company to control Bechuanaland.⁷⁷ Until his failure at Kut-al-Amara, Townshend saw active service with the Gordon relief expedition and the Hunza-Naga expedition, served in several regiments, both infantry and cavalry, in the Indian army, commanded a Sudanese battalion under Kitchener in Egypt, took a staff appointment in India, and was the military attaché to Paris - yet it was not until World War 1 that he gained field rank.⁷⁸

The scale of postings to Britain and India loom large in the years 1870-1902, as does the South African war of 1899-1902. Though postings to Britain as a percentage of all postings were slowly losing ground, about 45% of all battalions are posted there at any one time. Excepting short posting lengths that were the result of wars, the average length of postings was increasing overall until the South African wars and other wars in the 1890's. Though the stated policy, according to a memorandum of 1880, was that the infantry were being sent abroad for 12 years, the

number of battalions with longer postings was already rising.⁷⁹ Critical postings were always covered, but less critical ones were not. The first 25 regiments were somewhat more likely to go to India than the rest of the regiments, but these latter regiments were somewhat favoured for the Mediterranean and South Asia. Battalions that were posted to India generally did not get posted to Africa, and vice versa, though there was no bar to either of these groups of battalions from serving in other regions. An officer could generally stay overseas, if that were his choice, without leaving his regiment, but if he intended to travel somewhere in particular, some regiments were more suitable than others.

In terms of war experience, the South African war overshadows all other wars combined. The amount of war experience in this war alone nearly matches, to the nearest year, the total number of war years in the 29 years previous. For all that there were many small colonial wars in this period the wars were small. Almost every battalion saw at least one war in these 29 years, but two wars in 29 years for a regiment still means little experience of war for the members of the regiment. The first 25 regiments were somewhat favoured in terms of having more years of war, but they were not favoured to go to every war over the rest of the regiments. The battalions sent to any war tended to be a mix of home, overseas and battalions near the war zone. An officer desirous of war experience for the sake of his advancement would not reliably be able to do so within his regiment, and would have to be seconded or transferred to a battalion that was going to a war, or to the wartime staff. Thus the “rings”, and the patronage they offered, became important and persisted because they solved this problem for enough ambitious officers. While not an optimal solution by modern standards, the rings provided a means by which demonstrated professional merit could be rewarded. In addition, the desperation of officers to obtain combat command demonstrates the importance of combat experience in the British officer’s conception of the nature of professionalism. Officers without combat command experience needed to support their careers through patronage connections or staff experience, while officers with all three supports were usually on a fast track to high rank.

That combat experience was central to British officer's concept of their profession is in no way surprising. What is noteworthy was that, with field manoeuvres rare to absent, it was the primary means for officers not already blessed with connections to patrons to gain those connections. The other means open was staff positions, which were increasingly closed to officers who had not passed Staff College.

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¹⁰ Norman, *Battle Honours*, pp. 355-6, 359,

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¹² Haythornthwaite, *Sourcebook*, p. 156.

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¹⁴ Wesseling, *Divide and Rule*, pp. 48-9, 51-53,

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⁷⁷ T. S. Griggs, "Fashoda South: The British Occupation of Mashonaland and Manica 1890-91", **Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research** Volume 51 (1973), p. 30, Haythornthwaite, **Sourcebook**, p. 211.

⁷⁸ Farwell, **Queen Victoria's Little Wars**, p. 303.

⁷⁹ **WO 33/34 O771** Army Organization. Infantry Only.--Normal., p. 18.

CHAPTER FOUR

Education and Promotion

Abolition of purchase did not create a new form of professional advancement to replace purchase. A system of “seniority tempered by selection” was advocated, but this general policy did not have legislation or organisation to implement it. There was no clear system of career progression that supported both seniority within regiments, and also selection by merit, as criteria for professional advancement. Initially classroom education was not linked to promotion, being seen as something to be obtained at the beginning of one’s career, just as in the civilian professions. From the end of purchase, the Royal Military College served this purpose for the line infantry, while higher education was supported by the Staff College. Under the initiative of the government in the 1870s, promotion examinations were instituted for regimental officers. Thus education was directly linked to promotion up through the rank of major, but not above. Staff positions, however, were increasingly closely linked to passing Staff College – and staff positions were a faster promotion track than waiting for an opening within the regiment’s seniority track. In this roundabout manner, education became increasingly, though not inextricably, linked with promotion between 1870 and 1902.

In all three elements of the education system, coursework tended to be narrowly focused on directly military knowledge, rather than liberal arts, and increasingly focused on classroom studies, rather than practical outdoor lessons. When the South African War ended, however, education came under criticism, as with many other elements of the army, and the Akers-Douglas Committee was created to examine the education system.

Most of the information for this chapter does not distinguish between cavalry and infantry because the source material does not do so, and this should be kept in mind when looking at the numbers, though cavalry officers were a relatively small proportion of the officers. The documents mostly used here are the five-yearly

reports by the Director-General for Education, which end, for no clear reason, in 1892; and, for the RMC, the yearly Board of Visitors inspection reports. There is relatively little by way of internal unpublished memoranda or reports. This chapter covers the three elements of the educational system in the order an officer usually encountered them.

1. The Royal Military College

Significant changes were made in the operation and function of Sandhurst in the decade following the Royal Commission on Military Education of 1868, also known as the Dufferin Commission. After some early false starts, either an education at Sandhurst or entry from the militia system (after passing an exam) became the prerequisite for a commission. The course requirements were under irregular modification throughout the 1880's and 1890's. Various changes were made to the entrance exams and to the course content, and minimum required final grades were lowered and later raised. Concern was expressed in the 1880's as to whether the milieu at the RMC was appropriate to the social and professional education of the cadets. It also appears that the quality of education declined, particularly in the 1890's.

As a result of the abolition of purchase, as of 15th December 1870, Royal Military College, Sandhurst ceased to be a place where commissions could be obtained, as all commissions were obtained by direct examination, resulting in a sub-lieutenancy. Therefore either RMC Sandhurst had to be closed, or a new role found for it in the post-purchase army. Initially, it was envisioned that the RMC would exist for the military education of sub-lieutenants who had already briefly served with their regiments.¹ This was found to be unworkable within a few years, and in the mid through late 1870's, the RMC's structure and purpose, as with the other educational elements, was modified. The key change was that commissions would only be granted upon successful completion of the course at the RMC. Thus the RMC would serve as the first exposure to the military, and to the knowledge an officer was expected to have, for candidates seeking commissions, while the militia served as an alternate route. For the army, these training programs and the exams

were means to screen prospective officers. As such, it was somewhat difficult to pass the entrance exam and gain admission to RMC, but it was also very rare to fail the RMC course, a pattern that prevailed at the Staff College as well.

Students attending Sandhurst increasingly came from the public schools, from 12% in 1883 to 55.4% in the years 1896 to 1900, and to 62% during the South African war.² The public school system was increasingly closely tied to officer education over the later nineteenth century. But it was also closely, and increasingly, tied to the education of the professional classes in general. The public schools catered to the professional classes and the government service. The gentry existed as a minority, and the vast majority of them sent their sons to Eton.³ Thus, the ideals of the public schools were not the ideals of the aristocracy, but of the professional middle classes. The emphasis on character in the public schools of the time was itself a reform from earlier practice:

The whole system came to be aimed not a socializing a leisured class for a life of cultured idleness and aristocratic field sports (the individual sports of hunting, shooting, and fishing), but at forming an active, responsible, physically fit, self-disciplined elite of professional men and administrators for public service in church and state, the empire and the liberal professions.⁴

The concept of a gentleman was redefined to suit the professional ethos: a gentleman was “honest, upright, considerate and dedicated to the service of his fellows and his country”; he had “manners, a classical education, manliness, courage, self-sacrifice, loyalty, duty”.⁵ Latin was reconceived as a means to teach “the history, literature, philosophy and politics of the model ruling elites of the ancient world.”⁶ The emphasis on character was not distinct from a desire to instil a sense of vocation, as Harries-Jenkins would have it, but aligned with it.⁷ As the army drew from the public schools, and made them, in the 1870’s, a prerequisite, not a substitute, for further specialised training at Sandhurst, before commissions were granted, it aligned itself with the behaviour of the other professions. In this, the education of officer candidates was very distant from the one criticised in the Dufferin Commission, from which Harries Jenkins draws most of his material on this topic. In fact, Harries-Jenkins appears to be completely unaware that there was any change in the British officer education system between the Dufferin report and the Akers-Douglas Commission.

Harries Jenkins decries the significant influence that the public school system had on the content of these entrance exams, and their emphasis on character training and a liberal education, as opposed to the Prussian Realschule education, whose

more varied curriculum was designed to meet the needs of future professionals in the Civil Service, industry and commerce.... Success in these fields was dependent on entrants having undergone a preliminary education and training process which prepared them for this sense of vocation.⁸

However, as mentioned earlier, the situation in Prussia was not ideal; about a third of officer candidates had a substandard education from the cadet schools that themselves emphasised the development of character, while the Realschule requirement could be waived, and an increasing number of candidates were applying with the higher standard of the Abitur.⁹ It was the British Civil Service Commissioners, who administered the entrance exams, who advocated an entrance examination based on “those branches of a liberal education which are most directly useful in the military profession” and “those which are most commonly taught in ordinary places of English education, and especially in the great public schools”.¹⁰ Certainly the Headmasters Conference had increasing input from 1881 and advocated the importance of modern languages over the sciences.¹¹ But the increasing influence of the public school system on the entrance exams was the product of a specific recommendation of the Dufferin Commission that the army should recruit directly from the public schools.¹²

Upon gaining commissions as sub-lieutenants, and being sent to their regiments, the new officers were expected to learn regimental orderly duties for commanding guards, basic field exercises, rifle drill, the principles of musketry, the Queen’s Regulations and Orders as it applied to subalterns and to being a member of a court-martial, and regulations regarding pay, messing and supply of the troops and the prescribed method of carrying kit. These were much the same exam subjects, less field exercises, that were required of lieutenants transferring from the militia some years later. On acquiring a certificate, stating they knew these subjects from their commanding officer, they were expected to go to the RMC for their education.¹³

However, the new system of sending sub-lieutenants to the RMC did not begin until 15th January 1873.¹⁴ In the meantime, to bridge the two-year gap in implementation, 200 men who had passed the direct examination for commission in 1871 and 1872, and were waiting to be sent to regiments, joined the RMC in two classes for a year's instruction each in fortification, military drawing, military history, tactics, drill and riding. Of these, 162 passed the final exam.¹⁵ Because they already had their commissions, many officers saw no reason to put a great deal of effort into their studies.¹⁶ General Sir Ian Hamilton was one of these. He wrote in his memoirs that, "During the year 1872, it was easier to shirk work and to get away with it than at any other period during the history of the Royal Military College."¹⁷

Due to the reduction of subalterns in April 1870, and the need to absorb a large number of supernumerary officers, the exams held from 1870 to 1872 were for Queen's Cadets, Indian Cadets and Household Troops only. It was from these that the 200 men were drawn, out of 808 candidates, of which 572 qualified.¹⁸ It was found, however, that vacancies occurred sooner than expected, and the open competitive exams for commissions began in May 1873.¹⁹ Around 72% of the 2662 candidates from 1873 to 1875 passed these exams, of which 42, 46 and 29 per cent, respectively, gained commissions in the line, guards and cavalry (these groups not being separated in the statistics). Additionally, 394 militia lieutenants attempted the exam, of which 184 "passed for commissions" and 130 candidates from the universities applied for the 72 vacancies that were allotted them.²⁰

Three separate classes of 10.5 months (including holidays) ran each year, starting 15 January, 1 May and 1 September. The initial course of instruction covered "purely military subjects", that is, Queen's Regulations, military law, tactics, fortification, military drawing, and riding.²¹ In 1876 this already very practical course syllabus was changed to include Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army, including regimental interior economy and accounts and correspondence, military law, elements of tactics, field fortification and the elements of permanent fortification, military topography and reconnaissance, and infantry and field artillery drill, riding, and gymnastics.²²

A synopsis of the course of instruction suggests an education eminently suited to small units with no maps. Field fortification included lectures on artillery pieces and their projectiles, types of basic field works and obstacles and the drawing of plans, profiles, and time needed to build them, lines of entrenchment and the building of bridges. The students were expected to construct some basic field works, including a shelter trench, a palisade, and a revetment, trace and profile works on hills, and make several kinds of bridges. They were also expected to draw various plans and profiles of Vauban fortress works, plan an entrenchment for a bridge and the defence of a post.²³

In military topography, the sub-lieutenants were expected to draw sections and contours, use scale drawing tools, use compass and triangulation, make field records, and field map sketches with and without instruments. Attention was to be paid in these efforts to the quality of the roads for the purposes of supply and transport, and a detailed appraisal of the terrain, including reference to the soil, rivers, woods, marshes, defiles and “specialities” on a scale of 12 inches to the mile. The same was to be done for a river, including notes of breadth, depth, current channels, banks, bridges, fords, ferries, navigation, and surrounding country. The students were expected to make maps of a maximum of a three quarter square mile piece of ground, and of the Blackwater River near the RMC.²⁴

Tactics included a discussion of information and security, including issues of mobility, concentration of forces and supply. The cadets were also lectured on the duties, size, and placement of outposts, sentries, piquets and patrols, the composition and strength of the reserve and how far the covering outposts should be from the force, how to reconnoitre, organise a march, a convoy, and the duties and structure and placement of advanced and rear guards. They were also instructed on the nature of the ground and its relation to concealment, movement, and how it affected the concealment, movement and action of the three arms. Finally, they were also taught the defence and attack of rivers, defiles, villages, and woods. All of this was based on three texts: Field Exercises, The Soldier’s Pocketbook by Wolseley and Minor Tactics by Clery.²⁵

Under the heading of military law, the cadets were taught the mutiny act, the articles of war, and the basics of courts-martial, and courts of inquiry and boards. In terms of the elements of military administration, the cadets were taught the Queen's Regulations and Orders as they referred to the duties of a company officer and on the interior economy of a company and a battalion, the basic rules of enlistment, the periods of service and discharges of soldiers, the organisation of the British army, including reserves and auxiliaries, and the same for the armies of Prussia, France, Austria and Russia.²⁶ Much of the practical work was as applicable to colonial warfare as European, though on the theoretical side, all of Clery's examples were of European warfare.²⁷

Successful completion of the final exam led to promotion to the rank of lieutenant. As an incentive, it was initially decided that the officers' commissions as lieutenants were to be antedated by a maximum of two years for first class passes and that these officers would be exempt from further examination in the above subjects for their later promotions. The final exam had to be passed within 3 years, shortened to two by 1876, of the date of commission, or the officer would be removed from the service.²⁸

By 1875 it was plain that sending commissioned officers to a years' course was not workable. Junior officers were taken away from regimental duties to attend Sandhurst or garrison classes, and the practice of antedating commissions on the basis of how high a junior officer passed out of Sandhurst added yet more complexity to determining regimental seniority, a system that already had to accommodate militia officers entering as lieutenants, purchase lieutenants making exchanges and non-commissioned officers promoted to lieutenant.²⁹

A number of changes occurred, mostly in the period of the late 1870s through to the early 1880s. In 1876 the War Office took control of education at the RMC from the civilian board of commissioners that had been supervising it and handed it over to its own Sandhurst committee. This ended the brief period of civilian control that had been started on the recommendation of the Dufferin commission on education in 1869.³⁰ This brought education back under exclusive purview of the

military, which allowed the War Office greater opportunity to manipulate the officers' education at Sandhurst for the needs of the army. New regulations for the RMC were drawn up in 1875 that would continue to allow sub-lieutenants to obtain a military education there until 1877, but thereafter the RMC would educate only successful candidates in the competitive examination for admission. Commissions would be granted only upon successful completion of the course and the final exam, as had been the case before the Dufferin commission. Significant modifications were made to the entrance exams, and some changes were made in the course content. The number of classes running each year was shortened to two, with terms running from 10 February to 30 July and from 10 September to 15 December, and a new class was admitted at the beginning of each term. Minimum final exam grades were lowered, but were later raised. Also, the cadet establishment dropped to 200 by 1883, but then rose throughout the 1880's to an eventual establishment of 360 in 1889, and for the most part remained that high throughout the 1890's.³¹

The question of whether the atmosphere at the RMC was appropriate to the education, professional and social, of these cadets, came up repeatedly in the education reports.

The students must be young men, whose commissions shall be entirely dependent on their conduct while at the Royal Military College. Having successfully competed before the Civil Service Commissioners in the subjects a fair knowledge of which is held in the public schools of the country to constitute the education of a gentleman, they must also prove by their professional acquirements and habits of discipline while at a Government Institution, such as that at Sandhurst, that they are in all respects fitted to hold commissions in Her Majesty's Service, before they can be gazetted to them.³²

This issue of the cadet's conduct came under discussion in the 1878 Board of Visitors inspection report, when General J. W. Fitzmayer expressed concern that the discipline of the cadets was insufficient and their personal luxuries too great.³³ General Napier, then Governor of the RMC, replied to these accusations (as did Major-General John Adye, the Governor of RMA),

Sir James Fitzmayer's reminiscences carry him back half a century to the days in which he was a cadet, and he fails to see that a system which was

very good for boys of 13 or 14 years of age is quite unsuited to young men of from 17 to 24. We *must* move with the times, and whatever may be the private feelings of a man at the head of a college he cannot indulge them. For myself I would willingly prohibit smoking and billiards in the College, but I know what the consequence would be. The public-houses and public billiard tables would either be crowded with cadets or we should have to resort to the former plan of setting sergeants to watch and report them.

It must always be remembered that Sandhurst is no longer a school for boys in which they are to be trained and coerced and watched like children, but an institution to which young men about to enter the army, whose general education is finished and whose habits and character are already formed, resort for *one short year*, to be instructed in certain military subjects before joining their regiments. The object is to teach them these subjects, not to worry and torment them with “spartan” rules of discipline, so long as their conduct is correct and gentlemanlike.³⁴

It appears that the views of Napier and Adye prevailed. The 1880 board of visitors were of the opinion that,

In consequence of the more advanced age of the Cadets on entering the College [18, versus that of RMA cadets who had entered 2 years earlier], the Authorities deemed it expedient to place them on a somewhat different footing to that of the Woolwich Cadets. At Sandhurst the Cadets dine late, and are allowed a moderate amount of wine for dinner, for which they pay. The punishments are similar to those in use among the undergraduates of the Universities; and in short it is recognised that the Cadets have passed into the stage of life when they can no longer be dealt with as boys, but must be treated as young men who are undergoing a short professional training previously to their being commissioned as officers of Her Majesty’s Service.³⁵

The issue of the atmosphere at the college was brought up by the Report of the Committee on Military Educational Establishments of 1888, also known as the Harris committee, which felt that the mess arrangements, while suitable for officers, were “unnecessarily elaborate” for cadets and this directly interfered with the Sandhurst’s purpose to “train future Officers to habits of work, discipline, and self-control”.³⁶ This general issue was again raised in the early 1890’s by the Board of Visitors, particularly with respect to the high out of pocket costs of extra messing as well as the messing system in general as being “unduly extravagant”, and the increasing popularity of the expensive sport of polo.³⁷ There had been repeated

prodding by the boards of the middle 1880's to repair recreational facilities such as the racquet court, to add lighting for the riding school, and to add a lavatory and dressing room for the gymnasium, but it is not clear from the visitors' reports whether these changes were ever made.³⁸ According to General C. G. Arbuthnot, "Sandhurst, in my opinion, still suffers from the system introduced when it was converted into a school for young officers. Permission to keep horses and to run up bills to the extent of 2s. a day for extra messing, are, no doubt, relics of that system."³⁹

The Board of the early 1890's also increasingly commented on how the cadets were spending their free time. They objected to involvement in what were apparently regular dramatic performances, and felt that not enough time was being devoted to study.⁴⁰ The condition of the internal economy of the RMC was such that the cadets were playing whist and billiards instead of studying because the government-supplied gaslight to their rooms was too poor to read and write by.⁴¹ Polo was becoming popular (and expensive), and was disapproved of by the boards of 1891 and 1892, though not by the next board, probably due to a turnover in members.⁴² The member of the 1891-92 board to be retained in the 1893 board (General C. G. Arbuthnot) continued to disapprove, adding, "Life at the College as well as the actual instruction must, no doubt, as stated in para. 7, be regarded as a preparation for the Cadet's future career in the Army, but an institution, at which, according to the same paragraph, unnecessary entertainments have to be provided to find occupation for the spare time, can scarcely be considered a good preparation for a career in which nowadays real advancement can only be counted on by those who devote themselves to the study of their profession."⁴³ It appears there was deterioration in the standards of studiousness, though not to the social life, at Sandhurst though the 1890s.

The question of the atmosphere at the college is an important one. For those candidates not joining the army through service in the militia instead, this was their first experience of the military and military culture, and in particular, of the culture of the officer corps to which he was attempting to join; "the Cadets receive an insight into, and a training for regimental life".⁴⁴ Here was where he first learned

what his profession expected of him, both in terms of his education, and in terms of his social behaviour. For this reason the Harris committee opposed suggestions that early officer education could be done commercially, thereby saving the government money that could be then spent on other parts of the army. “We do not think it is sufficient to look solely at an Officer’s theoretical acquirements on being commissioned. We believe that the habits of discipline, of obedience to regulations and to orders are more surely acquired at establishments which are conducted on military principles than at those of a private character, and that the result is beneficial to the Officers themselves and to the service they join.”⁴⁵

Yet many officers’ memoirs barely mention their time in Sandhurst, before diving into a lengthy narrative of their early years in their regiment, its campaigns and its social life. It was the regiment that decided standards of behaviour such as how expensive the lifestyle was, and whether Staff College was a proper ambition for any of its officers. Harries-Jenkins’ assertion that the officers who joined from the militia system did not go through any military socialisation, unlike the Sandhurst-derived officers because “their group experience was exclusively derived from their membership of a particular regiment”, is an accusation that could as correctly be levelled at the entire officer corps.⁴⁶ Part of an officer’s professional socialisation happened at Sandhurst, or in the militia regiments, but not all of it.

The instructors at Sandhurst were officers who chose to take a position teaching as openings occurred. The positions were neither well paid nor prestigious. The officer instructors were important, not only as instructors, but also as divisional officers, in charge of cadet supervision. “It is very necessary, too, ...that there should be persons to carry on from year to year the traditions of the place.”⁴⁷ But it was felt by the Harris committee of 1888 that the then arrangement of extra pay of £100 was sufficient to attract suitable officers for this duty.⁴⁸ In 1885 an earlier committee had reported on why it was difficult to get and retain officer instructors: it was seen as a detriment to their career. The committee understood that the officers felt that first, accepting these appointments would prevent them from rejoining their regiments in case of war; second, that it damaged any claim they had to gain appointments on the staff and that being an instructor was itself a detriment to

gaining a staff appointment; and finally, that they lost social prestige in choosing to teach. The committee suggested corrections. An officer's time as an instructor should not be subtracted from any future five-years appointment on the staff, as was currently the case. Service as an instructor should be understood to be an additional qualification. After three years as an instructor, the officer would be considered eligible for the post of professor, and, finally, the selection of officers as instructors would be preferentially from those who had passed the Staff College.⁴⁹

Despite the opinion of the Harris committee, this problem had not been solved by the turn of the century when the Akers-Douglas Committee on the education of officers noted that it was still seen as a professional step down to take on the job of instructor, and a means to dodge routine regimental duty and the costs of regular regimental moves "which constitute such a serious tax upon the pocket of the married officer."⁵⁰ However, Major-General Sir C. Grove said, in evidence before the commission on the war in South Africa, that it was difficult to find officers who were also good teachers. "You get decision, you get great quickness of action, you get self-reliance, you also get the habit of expecting what you direct to be done being done at once without argument, and that kind of thing, but you do not get the quiet patience required to develop another man's nature, and to train another man's mind."⁵¹

This was a long-term problem, while though addressed, was never fully resolved before the South African war.

The divisional officers were supervising an establishment of cadets at the RMC that increased in 1878 to 300 per year. But, according to the third report on officer education in 1883, the supply of second lieutenants was not equal to the increased demand, due to the "exigencies of the Service" that is, the Afghanistan and Zulu wars and the threat of war with Russia. Cadets admitted from September 1877 through May 1878 went through shortened courses, the May 1878 batch being acquired from unsuccessful candidates from the exams of the previous December. The February 1878 course was passed out at Easter of that year, without examination.⁵² The establishment of cadets dropped temporarily in 1881 and 1882,

due to the need to absorb a large number of supernumerary officers.⁵³ However, there was again a large number of vacancies for junior line officers in 1883, so the establishment of cadets was raised again in September of 1883 from 200 to 250, from 250 to 300 in February of 1884 and on several occasions previously qualified, but not admitted, applicants were allowed entry.⁵⁴ The establishment was raised again from 300 to 360 in February 1889, on the recommendation of the Harris committee of 1888. This committee actually recommended raising it to 450, but it was aware that this was not financially feasible, because it required spending money on buildings. The Secretary of State objected to the related recommendation to add a third term if the number of cadets accepted annually were not increased (resulting in fewer graduates per year) because there was presently a high demand for officers for India. Looking at Chart 8 - Indian Establishment: Officers, the number of both line officers in India, and the number of officers in the British army in India generally, had been falling since 1873. In 1873 there were 1646 line officers in regiments in India and in 1882, 1400. In 1886 this number finally rose to 1484, but hovered around 1500 officers thereafter. As can be seen from Chart 6 - Home and Colonies Establishment: Officers, the number of line officers in Britain and the colonies had also fallen in 1882, to 2823 from a high in 1879 of 3378, and also failed to recover until the end of the century.

The compromise recommendation of the 1880s was to raise the number of cadets accepted to 360, and to extend the course to 9 months, to match that of the RMA.⁵⁵ These recommendations were applied within a year.⁵⁶ It was suggested in the fourth report of 1889 that the high demand for officers was beginning to end, and suggested that the best way to diminish the number of new officers would be to lengthen the course of instruction by six months, for a total of 14 months. In particular, it was thought this would add needed instruction time for fortification.⁵⁷ Considering that the number of officers in the line regiments had been quite flat in this period, the high demand for officers was due to high turnover. This may have been related to the expense of being a junior officer; under questioning by the commission on the South African war, General Sir Evelyn Wood placed the blame for the officer shortage on the need for a private income.⁵⁸ In 1891, notice was given that the course would be lengthened to 3 terms, and the number of candidates to be

admitted would lower to 120 per half year, resulting in 240 cadets passing out each year.⁵⁹

At the same time, the age limit for candidates was dropped from 20 to 19, rather than let the graduating age rise. These changes had the advantage, from the point of view of the military educational authorities, of deterring candidates from spending the months that otherwise would exist between graduating from public school and applying for a commission with private tutors, that is, crammers.⁶⁰ However, from the visitors' reports, the actual establishment of students at the RMC during this decade tended to be reliably around 350, and never dropped below the 315 who were attending in 1893.⁶¹ Throughout the 1880's, about 70% of the students had used crammers and this average only began to decline in the mid-1890s, sliding down to 52% in 1900.⁶² The use of crammers does strongly suggest, however, that the RMC entrance examinations were not a formality.

The quota for university students remained stable at 24 each year for 2 classes. The likelihood of open competition candidates passing was significantly lower, often less than 1/3 for around 700 to 1100 applicants each year up to 1891.⁶³ The evidence in the visitors' reports suggests cramming was common among candidates from the public schools.⁶⁴ Major-General Dunsterville recalls this being the case. "At the time I am speaking of [1883], competition for Sandhurst was very severe, and the normal procedure was for a boy to finish his time at public school and then go for six months, or a year, to a crammer, and then take the exam."⁶⁵ However, the lengthening of the RMC course was also seen as an opportunity to limit further the entrance of university students. After 1891 they could no longer take the entrance exam direct from college, but had to join a militia or volunteer corps to learn drill, attend a school of instruction to get a certificate of proficiency and, finally, to qualify in the military subjects at the exams held for the militia.⁶⁶ As well, the number of places offered university students would be dropped proportionally to 16.⁶⁷ This was reflected in the number of university students at the college. While their numbers were generally above the quota from 1878 through 1891, there were no university students as of 1895.⁶⁸ This attitude was in noticeable contrast to the evidence later taken by the Akers-Douglas committee. The approval

of university candidates was “practically unanimous” by the military authorities, and the universities consulted were keen to comply with whatever educational requirements the War Office laid down. The committee therefore recommended that 100 direct commissions be offered annually, of which 10 were for the Royal Artillery and the rest for the guards, cavalry, line infantry, and the Indian staff corps.⁶⁹ The government was treating Sandhurst as a means to align the supply of officers to the demand of the regiments, treating the required quality of the candidates and the length of the education as the means to adjust the flow.

In 1883 the Civil Service Commissioners, who administered the entrance exam, recommended changes they thought should be made in them. These recommendations were then passed on to the Conference of Head Masters of Public Schools, who made a separate set of recommendations.⁷⁰ By 1880, this conference had established itself as a significant lobby and a channel of communication between the military authorities and the public schools.⁷¹ Their recommendations, in fact, differed very little from that of the Civil Service Commissioners. The initial version of the entrance exam, as mentioned earlier, required that candidates took up between two and five of the following (excluding drawing): mathematics, English composition, English literature and history, Latin; Greek; French; German; experimental science; geography and geology; drawing.⁷² The Civil Service Commissioners recommended that the subjects be divided into three classes. Mathematics, Latin and French were to be made compulsory as class I subjects. Class II subjects were Greek, German, English History, higher mathematics, experimental science, and geography, of which candidates could choose one. Finally, class III subjects were English composition, geometrical drawing and freehand drawing, of which the first two were compulsory and the last optional. The Headmasters’ Conference recommendations were similar in most particulars. Greek and German were taken out of class II and put in class I, of which candidates took up three subjects, of which one had to be a modern language, and all subjects in class three were to be optional.⁷³ The latter would allow a candidate to take fewer subjects and, in particular, would allow him to avoid mathematics altogether. Latin and French were not, in either case, avoidable. The military chose something between the two in terms of subject class, but mostly favoured the Civil Service as to the

requirements, though mathematics remained safely avoidable. Class I was mathematics, Latin, French and German (catering to the choices of both groups) of which three were required, class II was Greek, higher mathematics, English history, experimental sciences, and physical geography and geology of which one was required. No more than four subjects could be taken in these two classes. Class III was as both agreed, and could be taken optionally in addition to the four required subjects.⁷⁴ In 1890, however, the Civil Service Commissioners recommended that the grade value of colloquial French and German be halved from 400 to 200, though leaving the total weighting of these languages at 2000 each. In their opinion, an ability to converse for the 10 minutes of the oral exam weighed too much against the three-hour written exam and because it encouraged the candidates “to attain a superficial readiness in conversation to the neglect of what is of more fundamental importance in the accurate study of these languages.”⁷⁵ If the oral examiner were stringent in his examination, 10 minutes would be sufficient to determine if the student was comfortable in the language. A written exam emphasises the ability to read the second language over speaking it. The use of both oral and written exams would have supported a more accurate judgement of the candidate’s skill in a second language. The emphasis in the exams for oral skill also tended to militate against the desire of the military to get students directly from the public schools, in that the candidates tended to leave public school for schools on the continent to improve their language skills. The goal of all of these changes was to “discourage mere superficialism” and to ensure that they obtained well-educated cadets.⁷⁶ The requirements for French and German seems reasonable given that much military literature was in these languages, and France, despite its loss to Germany, was still considered to be a military threat into the 1890’s, but the requirement for Greek and Latin seems to have functioned as a filter favouring public school students and the classical education they offered. The problem with these exams, as pointed out by the 1902 Akers-Douglas Committee on the education of officers, was their quality, in that they failed to measure what they were intended to. The exams as written favoured regurgitation over retention, while aggregate grading favoured taking up as many subjects as possible, rather than taking the minimum number of subjects and obtaining good grades.⁷⁷ It appears that, for all the discussion over the subjects of the exams, no effort was made to confirm the quality of the exam questions.

Whatever the quality of the exams may have been initially, as of the 1890s (being the period for which criticisms of junior officers would be relevant), they were not, in the opinion of the Akers-Douglas Committee and its witnesses, passing candidates with the requisite general knowledge base. The focus on education provides an informative contrast to 1855, when junior officers could enter Sandhurst with only the most basic education.⁷⁸ By the later nineteenth century, education had become a requirement of a professional, even if the content of that education was disputed.

A year after the War Office's resumed the supervision of Sandhurst the course content was changed. The study of permanent fortification was dropped, and marks were assigned to drill, gymnastics, and riding. The professors of military administration and law were allowed, as professors of tactics, fortification, and topography already were, to assign marks that would contribute to their final overall grade, though not to the grade for that particular subject, which depended on the candidates' exam grades. With the end of the rank of sub-lieutenant, the antedating of commissions was ended, as was any exemption from future examination.⁷⁹ It "had been found to be attended with great inconvenience and to be a premium on future idleness".⁸⁰ In an attempt to encourage some effort, a probationary exam taken at the end of first term was added, but it only required a grade of 33% to pass.⁸¹

Several suggestions were made at this time to change the course content. One such suggestion was to add a physical fitness component to the final exam, but, though it was agreed in principle that it was a good idea, it was concluded that it would be too difficult to implement.⁸² There was also a suggestion by the Board of Visitors in their report of 1878, to omit instruction on the keeping of company records and army regulations, as these could be learned when the officers joined their regiments.⁸³ General Napier disagreed. Much as he would have liked to devote more time to more interesting subjects, "I have the honour to observe that it is very true that such matters *ought* to be learned with one's regiment, but I fear it is equally true that they are *not* so learned" [his italics].⁸⁴ He likewise argued against dropping military law from the curriculum on essentially the same grounds.⁸⁵ As it turned out, no change in the course was made.⁸⁶ Finally, the Board of Visitors repeatedly

stated that more time needed to be given for modern languages, an issue that was finally taken up with the Secretary of State in 1883.⁸⁷ This continued to be an issue as late as 1895, when the Board of Visitors complained that both French and German were still not obligatory options.⁸⁸ These finally became part of the curriculum in 1897.⁸⁹ This was not the only recommendation for course changes made by the Board of Visitors. With the extension of the course to three terms, in 1893 the board suggested, not only that French, German and freehand drawing be added as optional subjects, but also that a course in military history and geography be included, while tactics be cut back.⁹⁰ French, German and a course in military history and geography were added, with the cut in tactics instruction, and this was reflected in the weighting of the final grades. The Boards of Visitors' recommendations for reform did not always end up agreeing with the criticisms of the Akers-Douglas committee. The latter roundly condemned the addition of languages, the more so because they were being given exam weighting identical to that given by tactics (tactics had an additional 1/3 marks given for in-class work). The teaching time devoted to tactics by these changes was 60 hours each year, down from [my estimate of] 162 hours.⁹¹ This was apparently exacerbated by a policy of dividing the subjects into three groups, with the available teaching time divided evenly among them. Group one contained all of military administration, military law, tactics and military history and geography, while military engineering (fortification) and military topography were each in a group by themselves.⁹²

The boards of the 1880's also recommended that musketry should be taught as a subject, though they noted that the cadets had themselves started up a private revolver and rifle club in the absence of formal instruction. The Harris committee also suggested that at least the principles of musketry be taught, the practical side being covered by the cadets' voluntary efforts.⁹³ Musketry was, as of 1888, part of the military exercises, but the instructors of fortification and topography complained that this addition cut into their instruction time.⁹⁴ This failure to provide adequate instruction on musketry, especially when the RMA was doing so with fewer resources, was to offend the Akers-Douglas committee some years later.⁹⁵

The boards throughout the 1890's were concerned that the cadets had very poor riding skills, and were spending too much time on drill, the latter to the detriment of their studies, though earlier boards from 1883 forward had reliably commented approvingly of the cadets' physique. There was, at the same time, also a new concern with the high out-of-pocket expenses that cadets were subject to.⁹⁶ There was considerable concern evident in the reports of the boards of the early 1890's about the quality of education the cadets were getting. Particularly with reference to studies out of doors, a few days of wet weather was said to disrupt the whole schedule, and the reduction of the working party of engineers and infantry, also mentioned in the 1890 report, made such instruction more difficult.⁹⁷ However, by 1895 the members of the board had entirely turned over and for the next several years it mostly tended to concern itself with matters of internal economy, perhaps reflecting the interests of Lord Harris, the Under Secretary of State for War, who was on the committee during those years, and perhaps due to influenza, which was a repeated visitor.⁹⁸ It appears, in the light of the condemning remarks of the post-South African war Akers-Douglas education committee, that these and other concerns raised by the visitors boards of the 1890's were never addressed. The education committee, too, stated that too much time was spent on drill, for no better reason than to demonstrate it at the annual inspection.⁹⁹ Too much time was being spent indoors, with too little time being spent outdoors on practical application. In particular, too much time was being spent drawing out artistic sketches for topography and neat plan drawings on fortifications, rather than on building them, a ratio of 60% to 40% of the candidates' time, according to the committee. Class work was crowding out fieldwork; fortifications were drawn, but not made. Tactics was crowded out by military law, and tactics was a purely classroom subject, not connected to fieldwork in topography or military engineering.¹⁰⁰ The balance between how much of war fighting could be taught in a classroom, and how much had to be learned by doing, had not been found. The balance still had not been found by the 1920's. In the years following the Boer war, and continuing after the First World War, the education of junior officers was considered to be too restricted; they knew little more than how to command a platoon. One of the reforms made in the post-World War I years was to make two fifths of a cadet's education be topics other than military ones.¹⁰¹

The final exam was not intended to be difficult; “it must be borne in mind that the examination in question is not competitive, but merely of a qualifying character, such as any youth of ordinary ability and application should be able to pass without difficulty”.¹⁰² This was certainly true; once a candidate passed the entrance exam, with its high probability of rejection, it was very unlikely that he would fail to gain his commission. The final exam standard required a final grade of 50%, though the grade of an individual subject could be as low as 25%, but first pick of the regiments went to those with the higher grades.¹⁰³ Of 1708 admitted to college from 1877 to 1882, only 29 did not get commissions due to exam failure, removal, or withdrawal.¹⁰⁴ The Harris committee noted that a recent change in grading, such that there was no qualifying minimum in any subject, and that if a cadet got a grade lower than 25%, it did not count towards his final average, was an ill-advised move. This, with good marks from drill, riding and gymnastics, plus grades in course work, could alone mount to nearly the minimum final grade of 50%.¹⁰⁵ “It has been stated to us in evidence that many of the Cadets fail to acquire more than a superficial knowledge in some of the subjects taught, and the above described system of marking does not in our opinion supply sufficient inducement to study. The recent change, by which an obligatory minimum in each subject is no longer required, appears to us to lead to inattention respecting any particular subject for which a Cadet may have a distaste.”¹⁰⁶ It was admitted in the fourth report of 1889 that failures were rare, simply because the standard of passing was so low.¹⁰⁷ From 1883 to 1888, 1707 candidates took the final exam, and 26 failed to obtain commissions due to failure on exams, removal, withdrawal, and one death.¹⁰⁸ It was not until 1890 that the decision was made to lengthen the course by a term as of the following year, and to use that as an opportunity to take up the recommendations of the Harris committee and raise the standard for the exams. Each of the now two term-end exams and the final exam had to be passed with a grade of 50%, with a minimum per subject of 33%. From 1889 to 1891, 1034 cadets took the final exam, of which 12 failed to obtain commissions through withdrawal, removal or resignation¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, no report includes an example of the final exams, which would greatly clarify what was required of the students.

The military educational authorities went to a great deal of effort, first to redefine the purpose of the RMC in the wake of the end of purchase, and then to define it again as an institution to educate potential officers in their careers. In the wake of this latter, critical change in role and function, significant changes were made to the entrance exams, course content, course length, and final grade requirements, especially in the years following the change in role. Yet it is plain that in the opinion of the Akers-Douglas committee that the quality of the course at Sandhurst had declined precipitously from the original vision, and it appears that much of it may have occurred in the 1890's, and possibly also throughout the late 1880's, given the concerns expressed by the visitors reports of the early 1890's. However, because length of service, on average, for a newly commissioned captain was just under nine years (see chapter 5, table 11) the comments by the Akers-Douglas committee on the education of junior officers cannot, with certainty, speak to the education of junior officers earlier than the 1890's. If the entrance exams were the critical screening tool, rather than the RMC, it would explain why the entrance exams were so difficult, and the quality of the course less important. This pattern of reform and apparent decline, though, also occurs in the system of exams for promotion.

2. Exams for Promotion and Garrison Study

During the early to mid 1870's, young men qualified for their commission by passing a direct entrance examination, after which they were expected to spend a year at their regiment as sub-lieutenants. However, militia lieutenants were conditionally commissioned as lieutenants, pending attendance of RMC. The direct examination included both a preliminary and further exam, both conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners. It was one of the new features of the system that commissions could be obtained by open examination, without requiring nomination. The Director-General, Major (later Lieutenant) General W. C. E. Napier, was probably replying to some uneasiness when he wrote,

It is as yet too early to judge the effect of thus throwing open the Army to the public on the principle of competitive examination. The Director-General therefore refrains from offering any opinion upon this great change in the

method of officering the Army, until time and experience shall have afforded some data from which reliable conclusions may be drawn.¹¹⁰

The open competition was not, in fact, all that open. Anyone could attend the preliminary exam “without reference to age or moral character”. However, access to the further exam required that the candidates present, as had been true since the beginning of the direct commission system, certificates of age and good moral character.¹¹¹ Further, the subjects of the direct examination and their grading were designed to allow candidates to pass, without the need of a tutor, directly after graduating from, specifically, the public school system.¹¹² As mentioned earlier, the group from which the army expected to draw was, in fact, relatively narrow.

Initially, the vision for officer education was a very limited one. All of their education was to occur at the beginning of their career; first spending some time learning at their regiment, followed a one-year course at the RMC.¹¹³ Those applying to take the direct entry examination to gain a commission as a sub-lieutenant could apply from one of several routes, these being by “open” competition, through the universities, as a Queen’s or India Cadet or page of honour, and through the militia. This last would be directly commissioned as lieutenants on passing this exam.

In 1875 a new regulation inverted this order of commission then education. Direct entrance exams remained, but, as of 1877, successful candidates went directly to RMC as cadets without commissions, which were granted only upon successful completion of the RMC course.¹¹⁴ All infantry and cavalry subalterns who had either not passed the old exam for the rank for captain before 1 July 1871, and all officers who joined the army after 1 May 1870, were expected to gain an equivalent education by passing a “special army examination”. Garrison classes were instituted to instruct those officers who so desired it to assist in study for this exam.¹¹⁵ In other words, the education system initially had effectively only one level. All other regimental officers were encouraged to take these garrison courses as well. In 1875 this was made a requirement, but it was not enforced until 1880, at which time qualifying exams were instituted for all levels of promotion to the rank of major. These exams did not guarantee promotion; they qualified an officer to be considered

for promotion within the regiment and by seniority. This established a tiered system directly connected to promotion. The nature of officer's ranks was thus redefined. Their status ceased to be defined in terms of private income and seniority within the regiment; instead their professional status was defined by an exam-mediated structure. The fault line lay in whether an officer's educational status in any way corresponded to his merits as an officer. To put it another way, if the education the officers received was not relevant, then the rank they possessed based on that education was meaningless as an indication of their standing as professionals.

As with the RMC and the Staff College, significant reforms were made to the system in the late 1870's and early 1880's, as failures in the initially conceived system became apparent. Initial hopes for enthusiasm from the officers were soon shown to be misplaced regarding the more senior regimental ranks as well as the junior ranks, and efforts were made to change the regulations so as to eliminate exemptions to taking the exams or courses and laxity in the local administration of exams. The required grades were adjusted downwards. These modifications were viewed to solve the most egregious difficulties, but by the early 1890's concerns were again raised about the support that the educational system was getting at the regimental level. Some years later, from the evidence of the Akers-Douglas report, it appears that the system had declined considerably from its intent.

As of the end of 1872, 306 officers passed the special army examination and an estimated 300 per year were expected to take the course until all officers for whom the course was obligatory would complete it, after which it was expected to be attended by lieutenants joining from the Militia and others who had not gone through Sandhurst.¹¹⁶ Though, as Harries-Jenkins points out, not all went to the RMC Sandhurst and gained the advantage of the "professional socialization (sic) and assimilation" to be had there, all were expected to pass equivalent coursework and exams, and so it was not the case, as he claimed, that these officers "lacked even a modicum of professional training".¹¹⁷

In order to prepare officers for this special examination, a supervisor and sixteen Garrison Instructors were appointed to provide instruction on Military Law,

Field Fortification and Military Sketching and Reconnaissance.¹¹⁸ The instructors were initially stationed at Aldershot, Colchester, Curragh, Devonport, Dover, Dublin, Edinburgh, Fermoy, Gibraltar, Halifax (Nova Scotia), London, Manchester, Portsmouth and Shorncliffe.¹¹⁹ Because of the novelty of the idea, “it was considered prudent in the beginning to leave much to the free will of the officers”.¹²⁰ The instructors established two courses, running from 1 February to 31 May and from 1 August to 30 November as of 1872, with an examination at the end of each course.¹²¹

This system expanded temporarily, when students at the RMC changed from being commissioned sub-lieutenants to cadets studying towards their commissions. The garrison instructors for Sandhurst equivalency examinations now tutored those sub-lieutenants who were then serving in their regiments in expectation of going to Sandhurst for eight months.¹²² As of December 1875, 162 sub-lieutenants had been instructed in this manner, 12 of them twice, having failed their first examination.¹²³ A further 111 officers of other ranks voluntarily attended the Garrison Instructors classes, of which 104 got first class, and 6 second class.¹²⁴ This pressure on the resources of garrison instruction system ended, however, by June 1876, when all the sub-lieutenants were expected to have completed the coursework and examination.¹²⁵

There was, at least initially, considerable official enthusiasm, as well as considerable official apprehension regarding the new educational system. “Such a system of instruction was a great innovation in the British Service, and required considerable tact and judgement on the part of the officers entrusted with its introduction”¹²⁶ The officers appeared to demonstrate a “general good spirit” and the first report on the education of officers of 1873 was pleased to state that “it has been clearly proved by the results of this Garrison instruction that the British officer is glad to avail himself of means of instruction when offered for his acceptance”.¹²⁷ “This instruction, therefore, combined with that given at the Royal Military College to all future sub-lieutenants will render it a matter of certainty that future officers of the English army will be professionally educated, while it is very probable that many of the senior officers, actuated by the feeling that they should not be less instructed than their juniors, will also apply themselves to the acquisition of such

knowledge.”¹²⁸ “It can hardly be a matter of doubt that the eventual result of the various means described in this Report, for the education of officers, will be to create among them an interest in their profession of a higher order than that which has hitherto existed, and a corresponding desire to qualify themselves for the higher commands”¹²⁹ The only apparent early difficulty of these garrison courses, as of 1876, was to maintain attendance despite leaves of absence and parades, though the junior officers on the whole were reported to be enthusiastic about the opportunity to learn.¹³⁰ But it soon became apparent that there was resistance to the whole system from the higher ranks. Later reports also suggest that the enthusiasm among regimental officers, at least for the exams, was lower than originally expected, though it is unclear if this was true from the beginning, if enthusiasm declined over time, if attitudes changed, or if opposition from higher ranks influenced the officers’ reactions. Had these early subjects of the new system simply seen which way the wind was blowing and grudgingly got the lessons behind them so they could advance? This is a critical but unanswerable question, given the information in these reports, because these young officers were the senior officers expected to enforce the system twenty years later and be in command positions in the South African war.

Another element was added to the garrison education system when an exam system was set up for captains as a requirement for their promotion to major, and put into effect by the General Order of 1 November 1875. These captains, having a minimum of five years of service, were expected to demonstrate knowledge of map reading, and of commanding a small combined force of infantry, artillery and cavalry. They were expected to study by using the *Kriegsspiel* to illustrate past battles with the assistance of the garrison instructors, and to acquaint themselves with the standard works on tactics, specifically attack and defence, guards and outposts. Most of the exam was to be oral, given by “Boards appointed at the various stations”. In addition, there was a written exam on tactics, supervised separately by examiners appointed by the Director-General, intended to demonstrate the officers’ ability to place troops on a map and questions intended to “to induce officers to think for themselves instead of merely exercising their memories”.¹³¹ Yet it was not enforced until 1880.¹³² The use of *Kriegsspiel* died out fairly quickly. By 1876 it was reported that it had “to some extent declined” among officers, and,

excepting at large military stations where associations have been formed for playing it, “there is reason to doubt whether it will find much favour in the Army, the extreme minuteness of the German rules being perhaps one of the main objections to its more general adoption”.¹³³ It was said to be popular with the volunteers, though not with the regulars, in 1891.¹³⁴ In 1900, another magazine claimed that the Kriegsspiel was being played at the War Office by the headquarters staff, Aldershot and the United Service Institute. Play was described as being arbitrated by the judgement of the umpire and a coin, which would certainly cover objections to the rules’ complexity. The article understandably recommended “a capable and experienced officer to act as umpire, as the value of the exercise much depends on the scheme set, the manner in which the game is umpired, and the criticisms passed when the play is over”.¹³⁵ Static tactical models proved to be more popular among the regular officers than the German Kriegsspiel games, which proved not at all popular by 1883.¹³⁶ “In some, however, their [Kriegsspiel games] value is either not appreciated, or sufficient inducements are not held out to render attendance at war games as frequent as might be desired”. Eventually, tactical models were, at most stations, mostly used to assist in the instruction of tactics and topography.¹³⁷

It was hoped that the Captain’s promotional exam would lead to “a more careful and intelligent study on the part of Captains of this most practical and essential part of their duties than has hitherto prevailed in their rank of the Service”.¹³⁸ It was further hoped by the Director-General that if the examining boards “apply themselves to a rigid and conscientious discharge of a most important duty in conducting the vivâ voce examination”, which was most of the exam, then “the Director-General cannot but think that in course of time an increased degree of intelligence will be apparent in the conduct of officers commanding small detached bodies of troops in the field”.¹³⁹ It was suggestively mentioned that the Prussian army had long enforced such exams “with the best results, and there can be no reason why regimental officers of the British service should not acquire a similar facility in handling troops, if the necessity for applying their minds to the subject be once fairly brought home to them”.¹⁴⁰ While Prussian officers did receive further training in their regiments, as mentioned in chapter 1, they don’t appear to have had promotional exams. Director-General obviously felt that the examining boards (that

is, presumably, the officers appointed to the examining board) were lax in the discharge of their duty. The tactics exam, Director-General, wrote, “will be conducted by Examiners acting under the Director-General, and the questions will be so framed as to induce officers to think for themselves instead of merely exercising their memories”.¹⁴¹

By the late 1870’s a number of problems had shown up in the further education system. The transition to the new educational system had resulted in varying examination requirements for promotion, depending on when any junior officer had entered the system, and, with that, various exemptions. It also appears that there was either indifference or resistance among the more senior regimental officers. In the late 1870’s and early 1880’s, various exemptions were ended and adjustments to the program were made. Garrison instruction retained its value by teaching preparatory courses for officers studying for their promotion exams. In 1878, it was made a requirement of promotion that officers take a promotional exam for all ranks to the level of major. When it was enforced by general order in 1880, the number of senior ranking students at garrison classes jumped for a few years, but eventually declined.

As of 1877, when Sandhurst made the transition to teaching cadets who passed the army entrance exam, rather than sub-lieutenants who had been promoted upon passing the army entrance exam, the sub-lieutenants who had had only one term at Sandhurst were transferred to the garrison instructional system to complete their coursework. These, and lieutenants who had transferred from the militia, made up a significant number of the students for several years.¹⁴² (See Tables 1, 2 and 3: Officers attending garrison classes) The standard of knowledge of the latter was found to be so low that they often found the classes difficult, suggesting, in the Director-General’s opinion, first, that the standard for the direct entrance exams was too low and second, that wider knowledge be demanded of them in the Competitive Examination in Military Subjects. Therefore it was ordered (in GO 130 of 1880) that officers were expected to do preparatory work before attending the garrison course.¹⁴³ In 1879, the officers transferring from the militia were required to take a competitive examination in military subjects, including rifle drill and the theory of

musketry, officers duties, parts of the Queen's Regulations and Orders, the Mutiny Act, and regulations regarding pay, messing and the provisioning of troops and the mode of carrying kit. This was in addition to passing the direct examination. In January 1881, presumably in response to the low level of knowledge demonstrated by the militia officers, this competitive examination was expanded and changed to include the elements of field fortification, military topography, elements of tactics, and military law.¹⁴⁴ This is a list of topics very similar to that taught at the RMC. Additionally, it should be noted that, from 1879, the quota for regular commissions from the militia was 120 (60 at each half-yearly exam), but under the circular printed in June of 1881 it was announced that the following exam in September, the quota would be dropped to 40 at that exam, and 30 each exam thereafter, which raised the bar considerably for militia officers.¹⁴⁵

Table 1. Officers attending garrison classes.¹⁴⁶

Year	Term	Numbers who attended classes			Total
		Sub-lieutenants	Lieutenants and Provisional Captains	Captains and Provisional Majors	
1876	1 st	96	21	3	120
1876	2 nd	9	88	6	103
1877	1 st	118	55	4	177
1877	2 nd	52	85	16	153
1878	1 st	13	63	14	90
1878	2 nd	6	37	21	64
1879	1 st	7	35	11	53
1879	2 nd	--	37	10	47
1880	1 st	--	33	3	36
1880	2 nd	--	72	7	79
1881	1 st	--	16	33	49
1881	2 nd	--	25	73	98
1882	1 st	--	40	87	127
1882	2 nd	--	43	96	139
Total	--	301	650	384	1335

Table 2. Officers attending garrison classes.¹⁴⁷ [can see transition to 2 month courses]

Year	Term	Numbers who attended Classes				Total	
		Captains	Lieutenants				
		Two Months	Four Months	Two Months	Four Months	Two Months	Four Months
1883	1 st	--	125	--	83	--	208
1883	2 nd	45	94	37	74	82	168
1884	1 st	22	93	30	93	52	186
1884	2 nd	28	40	26	44	54	84
1885	1 st	1	13	5	26	6	39
1885	2 nd	50	16	62	33	112	49
1886	1 st	41	17	66	38	107	55
1886	2 nd	31	6	43	16	74	22
1887	1 st	43	7	60	13	103	20
1887	2 nd	38	3	46	5	84	8
1888	1 st	48	1	55	7	103	8
1888	2 nd	26	--	33	--	59	--
Total		373	415	463	432	836	847

Table 3. Officers attending garrison classes.¹⁴⁸

Year	Term	Numbers who attended Classes		Total
		Captains	Lieutenants	
1889	March and April	21	32	53
1889	September and October	18	36	54
1890	March and April	35	58	93
1890	September and October	34	55	89
1891	March and April	44	55	99
1891	September and October	45	58	103
Total		197	294	491

More senior students also volunteered to attend the courses, of which the Superintending officer said in 1878, "The growing interest in the profession of arms which is now prevalent in the Service and an increasing recognition of the practical value of garrison instruction have brought forward numerous officers of considerable service, Captains, and even Field Officers, who have voluntarily placed themselves under instruction, especially in Tactics. Such officers have, as a rule, paid the greatest attention to the teaching of the Garrison Instructors, who were sometimes junior to themselves".¹⁴⁹

The GO 130 of 1880 also enforced the requirement, laid down in the Royal Warrant of 1 May, 1878, and amended by Royal Warrant 30 March, 1880, that all officers must pass a promotional exam as a prerequisite for promotion to each rank through to major.¹⁵⁰ It was hoped that few officers would then need a second course to refresh their learning so as to pass their promotion exam, “which is intended merely as a test that proper attention has continued to be given to professional subjects.”¹⁵¹ In response to the general order, the number of Lieutenants and provisional captains taking garrison classes rose abruptly in 1882 and the number of captains and provisional majors rose by a factor of 10 in 1881, (see Table 4, Promotion exams) to nearly the class capacity. As a percentage of captains and provisional majors taking the exam, the maximum was in 1882, when 174 such officers were taking the courses to 163 taking the exam. This declined to 69% the following year and from then to 1892 stabilised at around one third.¹⁵² The numbers of more junior officers in classes rose and fell, with their highest numbers from 1883 to 1887, but these numbers were less stable throughout this period than the 350-450 who took the exams each year through to 1891. (see Table 4. Promotion exams) Major-General Dunsterville did not find them to be particularly challenging, “there were a few simple examinations which officers up to the rank of Captain were expected to pass, and they generally succeeded in doing so with a great deal of kindly help from selected instructors. So long as you didn’t get into trouble, your promotion came along in its turn and was almost entirely dependent on the length of your service”.¹⁵³

The number of more senior officers taking garrison courses began to decline as of the 2nd term of 1885, as most of these officers were understood to have taken some form of professional course. This decline was anticipated in 1884, when a General Order limited the permission to join the four-month long courses to those officers who had joined without any previous training.¹⁵⁴ Two-month courses were also set up as an alternative so as to minimise officers’ absences from their regiments.¹⁵⁵ By 1888 there were so few applicants for the four-month course that it was ended in favour of two two-month courses, whose term times were set to take advantage of better weather for instruction in surveying and reconnaissance.¹⁵⁶ Through the early 1890’s, the number of senior officers taking the two-month

courses remained fairly stable, but significantly fewer relative to the number of officers taking the promotion exam because almost all serving company officers had, at some point, been instructed in the course subjects.¹⁵⁷ It is also likely they, like Dunsterville, found the promotion exams to be less than challenging; staff officers in charge of military education at home were quoted in the fifth report of 1892 that those officers who took the courses generally failed to do any preparation work before classes.¹⁵⁸ (see Table 4. Promotion exams)

Table 4. Promotion exams.¹⁵⁹

Year	Garrison Classes for Provisional Captains and under	Examined for Promotion to Captain	% column 2 to 3	Garrison Classes for Provisional Majors and under	Examined for Promotion to Major	% column 6 to 7
1876	109	96	114	9	--	
1877	140	136	103	20	--	
1878	100	110	91	35	78	45
1879	72	97	75	21	73	29
1880	105	132	80	10	150	7
1881	41	84	49	106	327	32
1882	103	90	114	174	163	107
1883	194	218	89	264	383	69
1884	193	436	44	183	517	35
1885	126	368	34	80	239	33
1886	163	446	36	95	243	39
1887	287	357	80	91	173	53
1888	95	362	26	75	199	38
1889	68	406	17	39	236	17
1890	113	315	36	69	210	33
1891	113	349	32	89	271	33

There was no less of a shakedown in the promotion exams than there were in the courses to prepare for them. In the third report, three problems were noted to have cropped up. The first was that various exemptions from all or part of the examination for promotion to the rank of lieutenant had been permitted to those who had previously taken up some or all of the subjects of the exam. Those who had passed with first or second class certificates from Sandhurst as sub-lieutenants were also exempt from exam before promotion to captain. “The effect of this was to give a premium on idleness, and to cause a tendency to grow rusty in the knowledge

obtained at Sandhurst. The main object of most appeared to be, not to show their knowledge, but to prove their right to exemption from so doing.”¹⁶⁰

The second problem circulated around, not the captains, who remained under no obligation to attend garrison classes, though many did so voluntarily, and took the course exams, but around their examiners. (see Table 4, Promotion exams) The oral and written promotion exam was, as previously noted, started in 1875, “but the conduct of this duty by the boards to whom it was intrusted (sic) had not answered the expectations formed by the late Director-General regarding it”.¹⁶¹ This was a disappointment, because it seemed obvious to the current Director General, Lt Gen C.P Beauchamp Walker that captains should be instructed in tactics and administration and should prove that they had retained the knowledge they had gained as lieutenants on their promotion to higher rank.¹⁶² It was surely also a disappointment that the officers making up these examination boards continued to fail to take these exams seriously.

The third problem was an issue of semantics. Apparently the use of the term “educational” to refer to the higher subjects, and “professional” to subjects such as Drill and Duties gave the impression that not all the subjects were equally “professional”.¹⁶³ Or, presumably, relevant.

In October 1880, General Order 130 was published, that regularised the system and eliminated the above exemptions, problems with the examining board, and semantic issues. This created enforceable regulations based on the Royal Warrant of 1 May 1878.¹⁶⁴ The term educational versus professional was abolished. All officers, of all arms, were now required to pass promotion exams before being promoted to all ranks up to major. The required professional subjects were outlined in a syllabus, and the scope of knowledge required was widened with each increasing rank. The exam periods were made fixed and simultaneous for both home and abroad. Each exam was divided into two parts. Drill and regimental duties had to be taken first, under the supervision of the General Officer commanding, who had to follow regulations intended to produce uniformity in the exam’s administration. The most qualified officers, including some from each arm of the service, were to be

selected by the officer commanding to form the standing Boards of Examination to conduct this practical exam. However, as of this general order, this board was no longer responsible for the honest conduct of the candidate taking the exams. It was the candidate himself who was expected to endorse the certificate to that effect.¹⁶⁵

The military law and duties in the field (the latter including field fortification, military topography and tactics) exam was conducted under the supervision of the Director-General.¹⁶⁶ The exam in drill and regimental duties was taken by all ranks (second lieutenants, lieutenants, captains) prior to promotion, and military law and duties in the field by lieutenants and captains only.¹⁶⁷ In 1884, the exam in military law was made a wholly open book, rather than setting one open book exam of issues that an officer ought to be able to solve off the top of his head, and one closed book exam of questions that would normally require recourse to the relevant references. It was decided in 1889 to revert back to the older system, because the index of the Manual of Military Law was sufficiently good that all questions could be answered by looking them up.¹⁶⁸

As it stood in 1883, the syllabus and structure of the exams was as follows. Much of it is, unsurprisingly, very similar to the topics of instruction at the RMC. Regimental Duties was taken both written and by *vivâ voce*, with all questions set by the examining board. The officers were expected to understand their duties in garrison, and field, and in movement by land or sea, at the level to which they were being promoted, courts-martial, and the interior economy of companies and battalions. Drill was in two parts also, written and in the field. The field portion specifically required the candidate to demonstrate the ability to give commands on parade, and to explain the execution of manoeuvres to the troops under his command, at squad, company, battalion, and battalion in a brigade levels, and eventually to know the whole of musketry instruction. For these two exams there had to be at least 40 written questions for second lieutenants, 50 for lieutenants and 60 for captains, and the officers had to get a grade of at least 50% in each exam.¹⁶⁹

The military law exam expected the candidate to know the history of the military code, discipline, articles of war, enlistment law, and the law on billeting and

the impressment of carriages, supplemental provisions as to courts martial, proceedings of courts martial, and the whole of the Army Discipline and Regulation Act. The field fortification exam was also both written and in the field. The written section included the use of instruments, drawing field fortifications to scale and freehand, a general understanding of artillery, mostly in terms of their effect on field works, the object and general principles of field works as well as technical terms, kinds of field works, their disadvantages, their use in various combinations for mutual support, the defence and attack of houses, and the hasty demolition of bridges, barricades, railways, and telegraphs. The practical examination involved the laying of angles on the ground with tape and pickets to demonstrate a knowledge of field geometry, hasty entrenchments, improvised field defences, obstacles, revetments, the trace and profile of field works, the distribution of working parties and calculating the required dimensions of earthworks, as well as the construction of a single lock or frame bridge. Under the heading of military topography, the candidate had to demonstrate skills needed for field map-making, and to reconnoitre a road, a river and part of a defensive position, including the submission of a report and a corrected trace map. Captains were expected to do a reconnaissance of an entire small position, with a full report on its defensive capabilities, and to be able to place troops on it. In tactics, the officers were expected to know the functions of infantry, cavalry and artillery, in terms of their characteristics and weapons, the tactical unit, and time and space occupied by marches and formations separately and jointly, how to obtain security and information, advanced and rear guards and outposts for all arms, reconnaissance by patrolling, screening and reconnoitring duties of cavalry, and the tactical employment of all arms separately and in combination.¹⁷⁰ The entire board was to be present for the practical examinations, and at least one member of the board had to be present to supervise the written exams, all of which were supposed to occur over a period of five days, two days of which were the outdoors exams for fortification and military topography and reconnaissance.¹⁷¹ On the face of it, this is a strenuous and stringent exam, oriented toward a practical demonstration of the officer's knowledge. Yet over the ensuing two decades, either these requirements were never seriously implemented in the regiments or the quality of these exams slid.

The Akers-Douglas report in 1902 condemned the practical exam for being made too easy by the local board of examiners. As to the second exam, on military law and duties in the field, to which had recently been added an exam on organisation and equipment, the report concluded that the written part, as currently set by examiners from the War Office, rewarded memorisation. In the last few years, the supervision of the sketching of an unknown piece of terrain was no longer under that of the board and the result graded, but under that of a fellow officer, and apparently not graded. The report admitted the tactical exam had improved, but remained too theoretical. Of the field fortification exam, the candidate was expected to know detail that would be better looked up, such as the number of stones required for a certain work. The topography, law and organisation and equipment exams had the same problem of requiring detail in lieu of a more general understanding of the subject.¹⁷² The intended “object of compelling officers to maintain and develop their professional knowledge” had plainly not been realised.¹⁷³ Candidates crammed for the exams, but otherwise failed to keep up on their knowledge. The military witnesses unanimously recommended that these exams be made less written and theoretical and more practical.¹⁷⁴ Thus the particular failures of the exams were different in their local and centralised incarnations. Local boards refused to set difficult exams for their colleagues (and the senior officers failed to enforce standards), and the centralised exams had devolved into (easier to mark and interpret) rote memorisation, over a more general demonstration of competence, that is, a more “practical” exam. In general though, the problem was that standards of examination were not being maintained. Surely the witnesses to the Akers-Douglas committee had gone through this educational system itself? What happened when they were senior regimental officers? Did they not enforce these exams? How did it get to this state if they were so opposed to it? All these questions warrant further research.

The minimum passing grades were modified several times, as the results of previous modifications were demonstrated in the grades the officers achieved. Poor results led to a lowering of the grade required, because the original emphasis was not on passing exams, but to use the threat of exams as a means to enforce continued study and review of professional skills. When the threat seemed too threatening, as

demonstrated in the failure rate, the standard was lowered. “The preamble of this General Order impressed upon officers that the object of examination is not so much as to ensure a simple passing of the tests, which are fixed at a low standard, as to encourage, and to a certain extent to compel officers to improve themselves by reading and practice in general professional knowledge and attainments during their service.”¹⁷⁶ It is also possible, in introducing these exams, that these exams were set so low as not to risk overt protest against the new educational system, and to create a source of objection by which the entire system might be successfully opposed. A third possibility is that the varying, but generally rising, requirements for officers meant that the pass rates had to be set low enough to ensure enough passes to ensure that establishment requirements were satisfied. The drops in standards in 1880 and 1885 correlate reasonably closely with rises in the need for officers due to war and retirement. The minimum grades originally set in 1876 were 0.5 for each subject, and failure in any subject exam meant that all the exams had to be retaken.¹⁷⁷ Special certificates were to be granted to those who passed high.¹⁷⁸ The passing grade for tactics, fortification, military topography and military law, already not noticeably high at 0.5 for each subject, was, in 1880, lowered to 0.4 for each of these subjects, though the overall required average in these subjects was raised to 0.55. Failure in any exam meant that only that subject had to be repeated, if the officer had got the required average in the other three exams. In 1882, an officer was allowed to count the grades in the subject he failed to make up the average in the other three.¹⁷⁹ In 1884 the aggregate number of marks required for passing was dropped back from 0.55 to 0.5.¹⁸⁰ But lowering, and maintaining low, standards was found to be ineffective. Lowering the standards lowered the standard of knowledge; “worse results were being obtained from officers who had studied those subjects before getting their commission, than had been obtained 15 years previously [c. 1878-79] from officers whose knowledge of Military subjects had been acquired after their entrance into the army.”¹⁸¹ After each lowering of the standard, the percentage of failure dropped, but then rose again. This effect was worse with the exams done by the captains, but somewhat less consistent for the exams by the lieutenants.¹⁸² (see Table 5, Percentage of Failures at the Examinations, Table 6, Examinations for the rank of Captain and Table 7, Examinations for the Rank of Major) As of 1 July 1892, the required grades in fortification, tactics, military topography, and military

law were put back up to 0.5, where they had originally been, and the required grade for a special certificate was raised from 0.65 to 0.75.¹⁸³ As the fifth report acerbically noted, “It [cannot] be considered that it is exacting too much to require that an officer should, in each subject, give a correct answer at least as often as an incorrect one”.¹⁸⁴ The attempt to avoid having the exams be seen as a threat to one’s career by making them easy to pass enforced exactly the opposite of the original intention, which was to convince the officers to learn, and regularly brush-up on, the material.

Table 5. Percentage of Failures at the Examinations in [exams] (c.) [military law] and (d.) [duties in the field].¹⁸⁵

Year	Captains.	Lieutenants.
Standard lowered in 1880.		
1881	2.75	9.52
1882	11.65	11.11
1883	22.97	17.67
1884	24.37	15.83
Standard lowered.		
1885	12.55	8.60
1886	9.87	12.17
1887	13.87	12.50
1888	14.51	10.35
1889	13.13	9.45
1890	24.28	21.18
1891	21.40	15.22

Table 6. Examinations for the rank of Captain.¹⁸⁶

Year	Number examined	Passed	Failed	Percentage failure
1876	96	87	9	9.37
1877	136	112	24	17.64
1878	110	77	33	27.27
1879	97	84	13	13.51
1880	132	106	26	19.69
1881	84	76	8	9.52
1882	90	80	10	11.11
1883	218	179	39	17.88
1884	436	367	69	15.82
1885	368	329	39	10.59
1886	446	390	56	12.55
1887	357	326	31	8.68
1888	362	325	37	10.22
1889	406	367	39	9.6
1890	315	252	63	20.00
1891	349	294	55	15.75

Table 7. Examinations for the rank of Major.¹⁸⁷

Year	Number examined	Passed	Failed	Percentage failure
1878	78	62	16	20.51
1879	73	65	8	10.95
1880	150	147	3	2.00
1881	327	318	9	2.75
1882	163	144	19	11.65
1883	383	295	88	22.97
1884	517	391	126	24.37
1885	239	209	30	12.55
1886	243	219	24	9.87
1887	173	147	24	13.87
1888	199	171	28	14.51
1889	236	205	31	13.13
1890	210	159	51	24.28
1891	271	213	58	21.40

The requirement that an exam had to be passed before promotion to each rank was not only to minimise the amount of “rust” in the officers’ knowledge over time, but also to make the exams seem less of an obstruction. Originally, the one exam had to be passed within 6 years of first commission; else the officer would be

removed from the service. Because the junior officers were increasingly RMC graduates, this requirement fell on those who either passed poorly out of the RMC, or those transferring from the Militia, who then had to fit in preparation and the exam around their duties at home or overseas. The result, according to the third report, was that “examination [came] to be looked upon as a bugbear to be passed as early as possible, with a view to abolish all necessity for reading and attention to Military subjects henceforth”.¹⁸⁸ This was obviously not a desirable attitude to promote. The intent, in requiring an exam at each promotion, was to “cause examination to be looked upon as a test...that an officer continues to give due attention to all necessary Military subjects” for which it was therefore preferred that it not be taken as soon as possible to get it out of the way. The solution was seen to be to institute a minimum period of service before the exams could be taken - second lieutenants not until dismissed from drills, lieutenants after 2 years service, at least one of which was as a lieutenant, and captains after 6 years of service, at least two of which in that rank.¹⁸⁹ This also resulted in further change to the rules of provisional promotion. Instead of denying it to officers at home, regardless of how little opportunity they had to take the exam, and allowing it to officers overseas for the grace period of one year, regardless of how many opportunities they had avoided, the period of provisional promotion was allowed through to occurrence of the first opportunity to take the exam.¹⁹⁰ The Secretary of State approved this change, on the conditions that the exams would be “real, that supersession should be the consequence of failure, and that repeated supersession should involve removal”.¹⁹¹ In a bout of what would prove to be unwarranted enthusiasm, the Director-General concluded, “The effect of these new rules has been eminently satisfactory. An earnest study of their profession may now be said to characterise the officers of the Army generally. They have met the new system in a good spirit, as the following tables will show, and are now in a position to take that lead in instructing their men during peace, which will be as much incumbent on them in future as that remarkable power of leading the men in the field, which has always been a characteristic of British officers.”¹⁹²

There was no commentary on the reaction of officers to the promotional exams in the fourth educational report, but by 1891 it was clear that these exams

remained unpopular, and that at least some of the more senior officers made no effort to enforce the system. The then Director-General recommended that these officers be held more directly responsible for the military qualifications of their subordinate officers. "It ought to be considered to reflect on the military character of a commanding officer, if his officers, after a reasonable time in each rank, are neither qualified for promotion, nor have made any attempt to qualify themselves."¹⁹³ Worse, not only did the more junior officers attempt to avoid the exams, but also at least some higher officers supported them, deliberately undermining the system as it was intended to function. "Many officers, unfortunately, look upon these examinations as merely so many irksome bars to promotion; and it is not uncommon for an officer, on being informed that he is about to be passed over for promotion on account of his not having passed the requisite examination, to offer as an excuse that he did not expect his turn for promotion to arrive so soon; and this excuse is even endorsed by some commanding officers, who thus apparently consider the examination solely as a technical qualification for promotion, and not as an indication that the officer is possessed of such military knowledge as is essential for the proper performance of his public duties."¹⁹⁴ A decade later, the Akers-Douglas report on the education of officers reported some of the specifics of this obstruction. "The futility of the examination in A. [drill] and B. [regimental duties] is notorious".¹⁹⁵ The locally manned boards would make the questions as easy to answer as possible, and there was no evidence that there was any supervision by general officers. The report recommended that the commanding officer report, and thereby be personally responsible, at such time as they thought a junior officer was ready for promotion.¹⁹⁶ The Akers-Douglas committee also complained that the exams encouraged the cramming of facts to the detriment of deeper understanding of the subjects or originality of thought, with the result that the junior officer is "inclined to lose interest in his studies, and to regard them as a nuisance which need trouble him no more once he has obtained his commission".¹⁹⁷ In fact,

The witnesses are unanimous in stating that the junior officers are lamentably wanting in Military knowledge, and what is perhaps even worse, in the desire to acquire knowledge and in zeal for the Military art. The Committee have been informed on very high authority that the majority of young officers will not work unless compelled; that "keenness is out of fashion"; that "it is not the correct form; the spirit and fashion is" rather not to show keenness"; and

that “the idea is, to put it in a few words, to do as little as they possibly can.”¹⁹⁸

Yet an internal report on the reform of the promotion of officers the following year stated, “If we have learned anything from the late [South African] war with regard to our officers it had certainly been proved beyond question, that officers in the junior ranks, and especially the company commanders, have come through a trying ordeal most creditably,” suggesting that there was not, internally, necessarily agreement with the conclusions of the Akers-Douglas report.¹⁹⁹

In the opinion of the committee, the key problem was that promotion was not dependent on the effort the officer made to acquire professional skill. “Under the existing system the promotion of indolent officers is as rapid as - and may be more rapid than - that of their more industrious comrades.”²⁰⁰ As secondary problems, it was agreed by witnesses, first, that it was extremely difficult to do any field training in Britain, specifically because of the system of using home regiments to feed troops to those overseas. Troops available in Britain were mostly employed in non-regimental duties, or in fatigues, and battalion training was inevitably interrupted and discontinuous. Secondly, once the junior officer reached his battalion, he was either given no real responsibility, or given too much, and left to rely upon the senior non-commissioned officers, and thus did not gain the habit of responsibility and command.²⁰¹

I would add three further, related reasons why keenness was out of fashion. First, by the end of the century, the junior officers were, as their professional development, expected to memorise the minutiae of their profession to pass exams, rather than the more general issues upon which the minutiae are based, such as the ability to build a field fortification. The gulf between what they needed to know as officers, and what they were expected to know to be promoted was surely obvious to them. Second, when they took these exams, it was equally plain that their superior officers were willing to give them a great deal of slack in these exams, and were choosing exam questions that took no competence on their part to grade. The commanding officers that should have been enforcing exam standards were not

doing so. All this appears to add up to a professional culture that failed to take its own education seriously. It is also possible, however, that the senior officers themselves were also frustrated by the intermittent changes in standards and requirements that had been recurring since they themselves were junior officers. The more general and overarching problem was that, though these exams were directly connected to promotion, so was seniority. Since an officer would rise through the ranks by seniority, the exams were not there to present a challenge of expertise, in which doing well was of any career advantage, but as a barrier that had to be overcome.

Thus, although the promotion exams were linked directly to whether a junior officer was promoted, promotion was also equally directly linked to seniority. This made the study for and taking of these exams to be an obstacle in the way of rising through the ranks that, because of seniority, required no other especial effort on the part of the officer. This dynamic may have encouraged officers to view formal education as a nuisance, instead of a necessity. If so, this is a direct contrast to the Prussian system, in which high rank was attainable almost exclusively through the War Academy. Thus the Prussian system subtly encouraged academic study as a means to promotion despite its lack of promotion exams, while the British system favoured practical experience despite the use of promotion exams.

There is plainly, however unclearly, a dynamic between the education authorities and the officers of both junior and senior rank. The educational authorities were initially very concerned as to the level of acceptance they would receive; understandably, since it was unclear how the new education system was going to affect officers' careers. As the authorities understood it, there was generally an initial positive reaction from the junior officers at both the advent of the system and the changes made in the late 1870's, which, in both cases, later faded. From more senior officers, there is evidence of neglect and lack of interest. There appears to be a growing culture in the 1880's and 1890's of declining standards and regimental obstruction and indifference at commanding officer levels, levels that had presumably been through the system themselves by this time. There was also,

increasingly, failure on the part of junior officers to see career advantage in education and study, as compared to earlier decades.

The reforms of the late 1870's and early 1880's, that were meant to solve problems that showed up in early application and make the education more generally prevalent, resulted in connecting education more directly to career progression by linking it to promotion. Gradually, however, the low expectations that were intended to be unthreatening, and possibly to mollify those senior officers who didn't want it in the first place, caused problems of their own, and the exams became gradually disassociated from the knowledge they were trying to test. Neither did garrison education ever teach the officers the skills they needed beyond the level of regimental ranks.

3. Staff College

The Royal Commission for the Education of Officers of 1868 precipitated changes in the Staff College, as well. On its recommendation, the number of students was increased from 30 to 40, with 20 vacancies opening annually, "five of which may be filled by officers of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, provided they are among the 20 candidates highest on the list", suggesting the author of the report thought the infantry and cavalry would do much better than they, in fact, did.²⁰² These slots were assigned on a quota system, of which 6 were reserved for the RA, 4 for the RE, and one supernumerary from the Royal Marines, with the rest being cavalry and infantry.²⁰³ The latter were restricted to one officer from any one battalion or regiment, respectively.²⁰⁴

In an effort to screen out officers who were not likely make to suitable staff officers, a number of requirements were brought in. Half of these depended on the judgement of a candidate's superior officers and had to be satisfied before the entrance exam was even attempted. The candidate had to have served for at least five years, have passed the examination for a troop of company and the special Army examination (discussed in the last section, being the initial promotion exam before the system of promotion was restructured in 1877), if he was not yet a captain, and a

medical certificate. He further required a certificate from his commanding officer that he is “in very respect a thoroughly good regimental officer”, a confidential report covering his character, habits, and disposition, as well as his general qualifications for employment on the staff, written by a board of his commanding officer and the next two senior officers within the regiment. Finally, he had to, where possible, be attached for a month to the staff of a general officer commanding a brigade or division, who was also to report on the candidate’s suitability. Only then could the officer take the entrance exam.²⁰⁵ This turned out to be a successful system; in the opinion of the next Director-General, it “has worked well in guarding the service against the appointment to staff of officers who are deficient in the peculiar attributes of a good staff officer”, despite otherwise “possessing more than the average power of application to books”.²⁰⁶ These peculiar attributes were not defined, presumably being so obvious as to preclude the need for definition. In 1894, Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, the chair of military art and history at the Staff College since 1892, made a presentation called, “Lessons from the Past for the Present”: “At the conclusion of Henderson’s plea for a vigorous program of professional reading, the chairman (Sir Evelyn Wood) cautioned the audience to “look at Blucher, look at Lord Clyde: these two men were certainly not clever, they were certainly not well read, but they had force of character.” Wood concluded that, “...force of character was a much more valuable possession for the leader of an army or fleet than any amount of technical or naval or military knowledge.”²⁰⁷ This view was even institutionalised in the expectation that a candidate for the entry exams could provide proof of character, and in the moral standards assumed to be inculcated by the public schools from which the officers were drawn.

As then set, the required elements of the entrance exam were mathematics (arithmetic, Euclid, simple algebra), one of French, German or Hindustani, and elementary field fortification. Military history and geography (notice was given ahead of time on what specific campaigns were to be studied for military history), military drawing, geology, chemistry, with heat, electricity and magnetism, and higher mathematics, were all optional.²⁰⁸ Officers who had been in India were at some advantage, as some Indians made money tutoring officers to pass the exams offered for qualification as a translator.²⁰⁹

A number of course changes were also made in the early 1870's, based on the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1868. A practical mathematics course was made obligatory, with an exam at the end of the first year, but did not contribute to the final grade.²¹⁰ Photography, military telegraphy and signalling were also added. Thus the obligatory courses were: fortification and engineering; artillery; topographical drawing, military surveying and sketching, road making and photography; reconnaissance; military art, history and geography; military administration and law; French, German or Hindustani; military telegraphy and signalling; and riding. The voluntary subjects were the other two languages not chosen to be the obligatory one, geology, and experimental sciences. The grades achieved in these latter subjects, along with modern languages, and landscape drawing, did not contribute to the final official grade, but were reported to the commander in chief if they achieved a 60% grade.²¹¹ With the resumption of money with which to do it, the system of extended reconnaissances was resumed, with the unsurprising result that they were deemed, in the next report, to have been successful.²¹²

The students were involved in the 1871 autumn manoeuvres to apparently good effect, but not in 1872. This problem continued over the next few years, as the manoeuvres continued to be on a smaller scale than they were in 1871, leaving fewer opportunities for the students to get field experience.²¹³ As mentioned earlier, these exercises ended in 1873, not to be resumed until 1898, leaving students as well as all other officers, without the opportunity to practice large scale manoeuvres in Britain.

Under Sir Edward Hamley, the commandant from 1870 to 1877, military art and history was given increased emphasis, "and if the enforced study of this subject merely tended to encourage a taste for such reading in after life, it must be admitted that the time devoted to it at the College would not be thrown away. But it may be hoped that far more than this is effected, in some instances at least, and that lessons of vital importance are thus learnt which will be applied practically when these officers find themselves placed in positions of responsibility in the Field".²¹⁴ Some further changes were made in course and exam requirements in 1876. Telegraphy and photography became optional, the probationary exam at the end of the first term

was given a fixed standard of a 0.55 average, and 0.4 for any subject, and the importance of mathematics was further degraded to merely one of the obligatory courses, with the same requirements.²¹⁵

The post course cross-attachment, during the summer drill season, to either another branch or to the staff of a general officer at camp commanding a combined army was regularised.²¹⁶ By the second report, they were also, after graduation, attached for 3 to 4 months to the Intelligence Department “where their individual fitness for various duties is fully tested, and where, it may be hoped, they acquire a knowledge of details which will be useful to them in their after career as Staff Officers”.²¹⁷

Other changes were made to the organisation of the course. Final exam returns were now only listed by student name and in order of corps seniority, and no indication of grades to be posted except for those who had achieved honours. This, as well as the curtailment of mathematics, and the renewed emphasis on reconnaissances and military art and history, was due to the influence and effort of Sir Edward Hamley.²¹⁸ A few years later, in the late 1870's, the final exam weighting for reconnaissance was emphasised at the expense of military drawing and surveying.²¹⁹ The final exams covered the entire course, and earlier final exams for courses taken and marks for work done during the course were discontinued so as to make it possible to throw open the final exam to all officers, including those who had not taken the course. In 1872 two took this up, of which one passed.²²⁰ In the next period, 1873-5, 7 officers successfully challenged the exam, of which one passed on his second try.²²¹ However, the education department began to move away from challenge exams and the rules were changed such that any officer who failed the probationary exam (at the end of the first term) or the final exam would not be permitted to either take the entrance exam for the Staff College or challenge the final exam.²²²

Despite these early modifications based on the 1868 commission, as well as later changes to the entrance exams, the subjects of the course and the standards for the exams, there is a reliable pattern for 30 years of relatively difficult entrance

exams, based on the failure and non-admission rates, and very easy final exams, given that failures were extremely rare. This pattern duplicates that of the RMC. As with the other elements of officers' education, most changes occurred in the late 1870's and early 1880's, though not as much as other elements of officer training.

Further changes were made in response to a committee appointed to look into the Staff College, which reported in 1880. Most of its recommendations were approved, and revised regulations were in force as of February 1881.²²³ The intent of these changes was to make the course more practical. The other problem, as the committee saw it, was that the Staff College was attracting most, but not all, of the sort of officers it wanted, and that some officers who were not suitable were being admitted. More specifically:

1. The regimental certificates were unreliable.²²⁴
2. The competition was "detering".²²⁵
3. Too much of the coursework was devoted to theoretical [in the sense of "too much bookwork"²²⁶], rather than practical work.
4. The existing system failed to emphasise the importance of the course as a necessary training for the Staff and the need for a period of strict probation.
5. The final examination tended to be seen as the sole test of suitability, "rather than to regard it as a necessary evil required to ensure application to the regulated studies and practical exercises".²²⁷

Despite the statement of the committee that it was "indisputable that the Staff College has attracted many of the best officers, both as regards character and educational attainments, who are to be found in the British Army", they feared that some officers who gained entry lacked these critical attributes, particularly a suitable quality of character.²²⁸ "The Committee fear that entry to the Staff College has been sought by some officers who were more desirous of escaping regimental duty and disagreeable foreign stations than of qualifying for Staff service."²²⁹ As almost all officers, by definition, were home or abroad at foreign stations, agreeable or otherwise, almost all applicants were open to this particular charge. In all the years following, most candidates (of those who passed the exams; there being no record in the reports of the stations of candidates who failed) were from home units, rather than disagreeable foreign stations, with a scattering of applicants from India, Malta,

Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Egypt, Burma, Ceylon, Halifax, Bermuda and the Cape.²³⁰ These officers only escaped regimental duty for 2 years, as being a staff college graduate was no guarantor of moving to a staff job. Aside from concerns that officers were dodging none too onerous duties for 2 years of schooling, there was a concern that little effort was being put in at the regimental level to find and send suitable candidates. This suggests a number of possibilities; that the senior and field officers producing these certificates were not making an effort to produce quality assessments, that they were not taking this education system, and the Staff College in particular, seriously, that they didn't want to send their good officers away from their regiment for 2 years, or that they saw the Staff College as a means of unloading poor quality or socially incompatible officers.

The solution of the committee regarding lax recommendations was to lay more of the burden of the recommendation on the home regiment of the candidate. Instead of self-nomination, subject to rejection, the commanding officer was to maintain a list of subalterns and captains of over 3 years service that he "certifies to be in every respect thoroughly good regimental officers, and whom he recommends for admission to the Staff College, should they desire it, because he believes that their services on the Staff will be valuable and creditable to the regiment to which they belong".²³¹ The three senior officers who are to report on the candidate were to do so independently, rather than jointly, and more thoroughly than hitherto had been the case. To make the point, the form on which the officers were to make their assessments was to include "a memorandum, impressing on the officers who are called on to make replies the importance of the duty, and the fact that the success or failure of an officer on the Staff is inseparably connected with the credit of his regiment."²³²

The committee was ambivalent about competition, and suggested a number of alternatives for the admission of some candidates, such as those who showed ability on staff or in the field so long as they passed the entrance exam, or allowing these as supernumeraries outright. They also suggested that the Commander in Chief continue to be permitted to authorise a second officer from the same regiment, so long as the second officer was in the top half of the successful candidates.

However, the committee felt pressured not to relax the competitive aspect; “they [the Committee] do not, in view of the general feeling and practice of the present day, feel called upon to propose any relaxation of this principle [of competition]”.²³³ The Commander in Chief’s recommendation didn’t pass committee. In 1885 two officers of the 1st Battalion, Royal Munster Fusiliers were 4th and 8th in the ratings, and the second was not permitted entry.²³⁴ This also occurred in the 7th Hussars and the 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment.²³⁵ This restriction was later modified, so this was avoided for 2 infantry officers of the 1st Battalion West Suffolk in 1891.²³⁶

It is also possible that the committee was resisting pressure to lower standards. They recommended that the standard of qualification for entrance be raised “so as to insure a sufficient elementary knowledge of the subjects of the course to enable the students in the college...to derive full advantage of the course.”²³⁷ One wonders just how inadequate the elementary knowledge of the candidates was perceived to be. This is also much the same argument regarding the need for preparation work for garrison studies classes. By the tables in each of the five reports on officer education, about one fifth of applicants failed the entrance exam in the early 1870’s, 16% in later 1870’s, 24% through the late 70s and early 80s, 31% through the mid 80’s and 30% through the early 90s.²³⁸

The committee also added requirements to the entrance exam. They recommended that Military Topography be added as obligatory, that the standard for Field Fortifications be raised, and that the minimum grade for German and Hindustani be 50% as French was. The committee also expressed the hope that “the day is not distant when the amount of mathematical attainment which is required by an officer of the General Staff may fairly be demanded on entrance”.²³⁹ This meant they wanted arithmetic, the first 4 books of Euclid (geometry, not trigonometry), and algebra as far as simple equations. In fact, in 1884 the required standard for the entrance exam was raised, and higher mathematics as an optional exam subject was also dropped. A decision was also made to drop mathematics as a course as of 1886.²⁴⁰ Finally, the committee recommended that tactics and military law were added to the entrance exam as alternatives to the optional exam topics of geology and experimental science.²⁴¹

Changes were recommended in the course, as well. As of 1880, the course included military art, history and geography, fortification and artillery, staff duties and administration, military topography, reconnaissance, military law, geology, experimental sciences, modern languages, mathematics, and riding.²⁴² More practical work and exercises, and especially reconnaissance, were to be emphasised relative to classroom work, and recommended more money should be budgeted for it. Money should be set aside for students who wished to visit foreign battlefields. As well, the professors should (as used to be the case) be allowed to allot a limited number of marks for practical work, which grades would count towards the final exam. Cross attachments might be shifted to minimise time away from regiment. Tactics should be expanded and Russian encouraged by a small grant in aid (according to the report) by a non-resident professor, if enough students were interested (according to the committee).²⁴³ This may have been due to the war scare in 1878. By 1889, a professor of Russian had been appointed to encourage study of Russian, and the passing grade was lowered from 0.6 to 0.5.²⁴⁴ A reward of 100 had been offered since 1886 for proficiency in Arabic, Russian and Turkish, suggesting that the languages of potential adversaries were of interest.²⁴⁵

Geology and experimental sciences should be restricted to their practical application to the military and, to that extent, be obligatory and telegraphy and photography dropped altogether.²⁴⁶ By 1889, instruction in geology and experimental sciences had declined to a series of lectures and were not subject to grading.²⁴⁷ Riding skills were to be inspected on entering, and students were to attend riding school until deemed competent. Removal of students was to be strictly enforced. The second summer exam could be dropped. It was pointed out that it would greatly assist the students if lecture notes were printed and circulated before class.²⁴⁸

Finally, the committee suggested a tentative minimum average passing grade of 1500 (of which a minimum of 850 and a maximum of 1700 could be gained from the obligatory subjects).²⁴⁹ In practice, a minimum grade of around 1200-1400 was needed to gain admittance in the early 1870's, dropping to around 1000 in the latter half of that decade, and rising abruptly to over 1500 in 1880. From 1884 to 1892 the

lowest successful grades moved into the range of 1600-1800, and the number of applicants rose from the mid 30's in the 1870's to the 50's in the 1880's. From 1880, there were more applicants, the quality of those applicants was improving, and the competition was getting tougher. The lowest grades admitted were, in the 1870's, 960, in 1879 and, in the 1880's and 1890's, 1515, in 1885. These years were also ones of relatively few applicants compared to other years.²⁵⁰ Both these dates correspond to wars, suggesting that the officers thought involvement in a war was a better advantage to career enhancement than to pass out of the Staff College. Yet over the same time, the Staff College was becoming an increasingly popular career enhancer and a contrast with the downward academic trend at the RMC.

Changes were introduced to make the final exam reflect the greater practical ability and quality of graduates. These included adding a practical exam in all practical work, having the language element of the course completed at the end of first year, and, presumably in light of pressure regarding competition, the minimum in each subject to be raised to 0.5 from 0.4 and the average to 0.6 from 0.55. The Staff College certificate was not to be given to those with unsatisfactory confidential reports from the commandant, in consultation with the military professors. Prior practice had seen the certificate given prior to and without reference to the commandant's report. Finally, the course could no longer be challenged (that is, the exam taken, and, if passed, the course is deemed to have been passed), as much of the benefit was derived in attendance.²⁵¹

The committee also suggested that the commander in chief consider granting a number of perks to the graduates of the Staff College who'd later performed well: allow them to be retired as unattached majors rather than be compulsorily retired as regimental captains, and that the staff officers' first year be made probationary.²⁵²

In 1884, 1886 and again in 1888, the number of student admissions was expanded. This resulted in a final quota of 18 cavalry and infantry, six from the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery, three from the Indian Army, one from the Royal Marines and four nominated by the Commander in Chief. The four nominated officers were ones who had performed well in the field, or had been Adjutant for

four years. These officers were required to qualify in the obligatory subjects only, with a passing grade of three out of eight, rather than one half.²⁵³ In practice, this meant that these officers jumped the queue past mostly (and many) infantry officers who had passed normally, but whose grades were not high enough to make the quota.²⁵⁴

Further revisions were made in the Staff college regulations in 1886, under the advice of a committee under Major-General Clive, the Commandant of the Staff College. It was recommended yet again that the certificate of fitness of candidates needed to be more stringent and concise. The entrance exams were made to be equivalent in scope to what was required for the qualifying exam for major; natural sciences were dropped, and German was made, again, an alternative to French as an obligatory language. The required standard for mathematics was reduced, but tactics was upgraded to a 50% pass. Poor handwriting had to be improved. Marks for the final exam were distributed over both years, with 1/3 to the first year. Modern languages that could be taken in the final exam were restricted to those that were taught at the college, that is, French, German, Russian and Hindustani. Honours were abolished, and 'distinguished' was used in place of special mention for those who got over 0.9 in any one subject.²⁵⁵ These recommendations came into effect with the officers entering in February 1887.²⁵⁶

With the various changes made, the examined subjects as of 1889 were: military history and geography, fortification and artillery, staff duties and administration, military law, military topography, reconnaissances, and French, German or Hindustani.²⁵⁷ The course was being made more and more narrowly practical, in the sense that subjects not directly relevant to military function were dropped. There is, as Bond points out, little indication that the students at the Staff College looked at issues beyond the tactical and administrative and that broader issues of national or colonial defence were not touched.

Marks were increasingly based on work done during the course; over 40% of the total marks were awarded in the first year (presumably by the professors), and in the second, nearly 30% were given by the professors.²⁵⁸ "The effect of these

changes has not rendered the course more difficult than it formerly was, and failures to pass the examinations continued to be of rare occurrence. It may be doubted whether this does not indicate that the standard is not sufficiently high.’²⁵⁹

As with the other elements of officer education, the powers-that-be felt they had the bugs ironed out and there were few changes in the 1892 report. Russian was made one of the permitted languages to take on for the entrance exam, principles of trigonometric surveying and use of theodolites was made optional, and staff duties were separated from military law into separate final exam subjects.

It does not appear that the Staff College suffered, like the other two elements, from declining standards or student quality, as evidenced by the increasing minimum grade required to be accepted to the college. However, as there are no officer education reports after 1892, and the material on South Africa pays relatively little attention to staff college issues, this cannot be stated for certain. Once an officer was screened by his superior officers, however laxly, and passed the entrance exam, there was little doubt that he would pass through Staff College. The significance of, and the problem behind, all the numerous but often minor changes in curriculum and exam grades was that, in absence of regular, large scale manoeuvres that closely mimicked war, and because wars did not result in equal opportunities for all officers to either demonstrate their merit or to be seen to be doing so, exams and coursework were the only means to directly compare the merit of officers across the board.

There were really three problems with officers’ education. The first was that there was a failure at all levels to systematically monitor the educational standards or content, and no concerted effort to make needed changes or to enforce a standard of either teaching or examination. Inspections of Sandhurst appear to have been formalised and superficial and assumed the quality of the education could be determined by a day of military inspection. There appears to have been even less effort in the case of garrison education and the promotion exams. Another problem was that if an officer candidate passed the entry exams for Sandhurst, he was almost certainly home free. It took a very moderate effort to pass. The third problem was that, although the promotion exams were linked directly to whether a junior officer

was promoted, promotion was also equally directly linked to seniority. This made the study for and taking of these exams to be an obstacle in the way of rising through the ranks that, because of seniority, required no especial effort on the part of the officer. And, as Bond pointed out, “zeal and ability” seemed disconnected from prospects for advancement.²⁶⁰ A Staff College education, on the other hand, gained in respect and prestige because it became increasingly valuable in advancing an officer’s career faster than the rate of regimental seniority.

The high hopes of successive directors-general for the continuing garrison education of officers were repeatedly damaged by failure to enforce examination standards by more senior ranks. Despite official efforts to discount the importance of exams as a necessary evil to enforce a commitment to keep officer’s professional knowledge fresh, they were also a prerequisite to promotion. These slowly become a matter of rote memory, rather than the demonstration of knowledge that was initially intended. Both the RMC and the Staff College suffered from entrance exams more difficult than the course, in the former’s case, to bias the admission towards public school candidates. The course-work, increasingly emphasised a narrow expertise specific to the officer’s likely duties, demonstrated by a “practical” exam (i.e. out of doors physical demonstration) rather than a more general, academic or “theoretical” (i.e. classroom based) course and exam. It also confined itself to levels of knowledge needed by a regimental officer, but there was no element of the system designed to teach an officer his duties as a commander beyond that level, with the exception of some of the coursework of the Staff College. No balance was found between classroom instruction and practice in the field. Education was biased toward the concrete and away from larger, more contentious issues. This led to the study of European war, with its clear examples, and away from colonial war. It is ironic, then that British officers have been said to be non-professional until the turn of the twentieth century, on the grounds that they did not have the education, as did the continental armies, to wage continental war.²⁶¹ But the officers of the First World War were confronted with updating an obsolete body of knowledge, not a transition from the unprofessional to the professional. This argument assumes that only major European war is “professional” and the knowledge and organisation needed to fight a colonial war is not. However, unlike many other professional

education systems of the day, this one was intended to emphasise, and even require, continuing proof of competence in an officer's chosen field at the regimental level.

¹ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education, p. 13.

² Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, **The Army in Victorian Society** (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 140-41, Edward M. Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army: 1868-1902** (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 97.

³ Perkin, Harold, **The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880** (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 71-2, 368-9.

⁴ Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society**, p. 368.

⁵ Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society**, p. 367,

M. A. Ramsey, **Command and Cohesion: The Citizen Soldier and Minor Tactics in the British Army, 1870-1918** (London: Praeger, 2002), p. 60.

⁶ Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society**, p. 368.

⁷ Harries-Jenkins, **The Army in Victorian Society**, p. 135.

⁸ Harries-Jenkins, **The Army in Victorian Society**, p. 135.

⁹ Steven E. Clemente, **For King and Kaiser! The Making of the Prussian Army Officer, 1860-1914** (London: Greenwood Press, 1992), p. 209.

¹⁰ Ian Worthington, **Antecedent Education and Officer Recruitment: an analysis of the Public School-Army Nexus, 1849-1908** (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Lancaster, 1982), p. 166, quoting communications between the Civil Service Commissioners and the government.

¹¹ Worthington, **Antecedent Education**, p. 163-4, 166-9.

¹² Worthington, **Antecedent Education**, p. 181.

¹³ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 79.

¹⁴ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 14.

¹⁵ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 14.

¹⁶ Michael Yardley, **Sandhurst, A Documentary** (London: Harrap Ltd., 1987), p. 35.

¹⁷ Yardley, **Sandhurst, A Documentary**, p. 35. Quoted General Sir Ian Hamilton, **When I was a Boy** (Faber, 1929), pp. 246, 251.

¹⁸ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 15.

¹⁹ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.

²⁰ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education, p. 13.

²¹ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 14.

²² **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.

²³ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix X, Synopsis of the Course of Instruction at the Royal Military College, 1875., pp. 61-63.

²⁴ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix X, Synopsis of the Course of Instruction at the Royal Military College, 1875., pp. 63-65.

²⁵ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix X, Synopsis of the Course of Instruction at the Royal Military College, 1875., pp. 65-68.

²⁶ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix X, Synopsis of the Course of Instruction at the Royal Military College, 1875., pp. 68-69.

²⁷ C. Francis Clery, **Minor Tactics** (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, & Co., Ltd., 1890).

²⁸ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 14.

1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.

²⁹ **WO 33/26**: Second Report of a Committee appointed at War Office Meeting of 5th March 1874, to consider the arrangements necessary to carry out the decision of the Secretary of State, "that Candidates for the Army shall, after passing a Competitive Examination, go to Sandhurst instead of joining a Regiment, and that the new system shall commence on the 1st May, 1874." pp. 2-3, Appendix C.

³⁰ Yardley, **Sandhurst, A Documentary**, pp. 30-31, 38.

³¹ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 11, and Appendix IX, Regulations for the Government of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, p. 58.

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- ³² **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 11-12.
- ³³ **1878 [c. 2168]** Report of the Board of Visitors Appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1878, pp. 4-5.
- ³⁴ **1878-79 [c. 2387]** Observations by the Governors of the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Military College on the Remarks of General Sir James Fitzmayer, appended to the late Report of the Board of Visitors, p. 5.
- ³⁵ **1880 [c. 2696]** Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1880, p. 3.
- ³⁶ **WO 33/48 A117** The Report of the Committee on Military Educational Establishments, p. ix.
- ³⁷ **1890-91 [c. 6465]** Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1891, p. 4.
- 1893-94 [c. 6879]** Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1892, p. 4.
- 1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1893, pp. 3, 5.
- ³⁸ **1883 [c. 3793]** Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College at Sandhurst for the year 1883, p. 3.
- 1884 [c. 4141]** Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1884, p. 4.
- 1884-85 [c. 4533]** Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1885, p. 4.
- 1886 [c. 4879]** Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1886, pp. 3, 4.
- ³⁹ **1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1893, p. 5.
- ⁴⁰ **1893-94 [c. 6879]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1892, p. 3.
- ⁴¹ **1890 [c. 6198]** Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1890, p. 4.
- ⁴² **1890-91 [c. 6465]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1891, p. 4.
- 1893-94 [c. 6879]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1892, p. 4.
- 1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1893, p. 5.
- ⁴³ **1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1893, p. 6.
- ⁴⁴ **WO 33/48 A117** Report...Military Educational Establishments, p. iii.
- ⁴⁵ **WO 33/48 A117**, p. iii.
- ⁴⁶ Harries-Jenkins, **The Army in Victorian Society**, p. 153.
- ⁴⁷ **WO 33/48 A117**, p. v.
- ⁴⁸ **WO 33/48 A117**, p. v.
- ⁴⁹ **WO 33/46 A42**, [untitled] Confidential Memorandum, pp. 1-2.
- ⁵⁰ **1902 [c. 982]** Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army; with Appendix., p. 20.
- ⁵¹ **1902 [c. 1790]** Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Royal Commission on the War of South Africa, Volume 1, question 9401.
- ⁵² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education, p. 6, 13.
- ⁵³ **1882 [c. 3440]** Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1882, p. 3.
- ⁵⁴ **1884-85 [c. 4533]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1885, p. 3.
- ⁵⁵ **1884 [c. 4141]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1884, p. 3.
- 1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education, p. 21.
- WO 33/48 A117**, pp. iv, vii-viii.
- ⁵⁶ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 22-3.
- ⁵⁷ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 21.
- ⁵⁸ **1902 [c. 1790]** question 4277.
- ⁵⁹ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education, pp. 7-8.
- ⁶⁰ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 8.
- ⁶¹ **1890-91 [c. 6465]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1891, Appendix A.
- 1893-94 [c. 6879]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1892, Appendix A.

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- 1893-94 [c. 7176] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1893, Appendix A.
- 1894 [c. 7485] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1894., Appendix A.
- 1895 [c. 7840] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1895., Appendix A.
- 1897 [c. 8344] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1896., Appendix A.
- 1898 [c. 8744] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1897., Appendix A.
- 1899 [c. 9170] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1898., Appendix A.
- 1901 [c. 517] Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1900., Appendix A.
- ⁶² 1878[c. 2168] Appendix F.
- 1880[c. 2488] Appendix B.
- 1882 [c. 3440] Appendix F.
- 1883 [c. 3793] Appendix D.
- 1884 [c. 4141] Appendix D.
- 1884-5 [c. 4533] Appendix D.
- 1886 [c. 4879] Appendix E.
- 1887 [c. 5146] Appendix E.
- 1888 [c. 5510] Appendix G.
- 1890 [c. 6198] Appendix F.
- 1890-91 [c. 6465] Appendix D.
- 1893-94 [c. 6879] Appendix D.
- 1893-94 [c. 7176] Appendix D.
- 1894 [c. 7485] Appendix D.
- 1895 [c. 7840] Appendix D.
- 1897 [c. 8344] Appendix B.
- 1898 [c. 8744] Appendix B.
- 1899 [c. 9170] Appendix B.
- 1901 [c. 517] Appendix B.
- ⁶³ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.
- 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 20.
- 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 7.
- ⁶⁴ Worthington, *Antecedent Education*, p. 302.
- ⁶⁵ Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, *Stalky's Reminiscences* (New York: The Macmillan Co.), p. 57.
- ⁶⁶ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix XII, Memorandum Respecting First Appointments to the Cavalry and Infantry, p. 78.
- 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 8.
- ⁶⁷ 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 8.
- ⁶⁸ 1878[c. 2168] Appendix F.
- 1880[c. 2488] Appendix B.
- 1882 [c. 3440] Appendix F.
- 1883 [c. 3793] Appendix D.
- 1884 [c. 4141] Appendix D.
- 1884-5 [c. 4533] Appendix D.
- 1886 [c. 4879] Appendix E.
- 1887 [c. 5146] Appendix E.
- 1888 [c. 5510] Appendix G.
- 1890 [c. 6198] Appendix F.
- 1890-91 [c. 6465] Appendix D.
- 1893-94 [c. 6879] Appendix D.
- 1893-94 [c. 7176] Appendix D.
- 1894 [c. 7485] Appendix D.
- 1895 [c. 7840] Appendix D.
- 1897 [c. 8344] Appendix B.

1898 [c. 8744] Appendix B.

1899 [c. 9170] Appendix B.

1901 [c. 517] Appendix B.

⁶⁹ **1902 [c. 982]** Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army, pp. 11-13.

⁷⁰ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.

⁷¹ Worthington, **Antecedent Education**, p. 302.

⁷² **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix XII, Memorandum Respecting First Appointments to the Cavalry and Infantry, p. 77.

⁷³ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.

⁷⁴ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18-19.

⁷⁵ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁶ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 7.

⁷⁷ **1902 [c. 982]** Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁸ Hew Strachan, **Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-54** (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 126.

⁷⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.

⁸⁰ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.

⁸¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.

⁸² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12, Worthington, **Antecedent Education**, pp. 161-2.

⁸³ **1878 [c. 2168]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1878, p. 3.

⁸⁴ **1878-79 [c. 2387]** Observations by the Governors, p. 5.

⁸⁵ **1878-79 [c. 2387]** Observations by the Governors, p. 5.

⁸⁶ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 21.

⁸⁷ **1880 [c. 2696]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1880, p. 4.

1881 [c. 3021] Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1881, p. 3.

1882 [c. 3440] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1882, p. 3.

1883 [c. 3793] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1883, p. 3.

⁸⁸ **1895 [c. 7840]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1895, p. 4.

⁸⁹ **1898 [c. 8744]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1897, p. 4.

⁹⁰ **1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1893, p. 4.

⁹¹ **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 22.

WO 33/48 A117, p. vi.

1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix III, Regulations respecting Examinations for Admission to the Royal Military College, and for First Appointments therefrom to the Army, p. 51.

According to **WO 33/48 A117**, the tactics instructor was underemployed for having a total class attendance of 9 hours per week, over two terms running from 10 February to 15 July (less two weeks at Easter) and 1 September to 20 December.⁹¹ These two terms total 36 weeks, and assuming the tactics instructor averaged 4.5 hours per week for each of two classes of cadets per year, he was presumably teaching 162 hours.

⁹² **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 22.

⁹³ **WO 33/48 A117**, p. viii.

⁹⁴ **1886 [c. 4879]** Report of the Board of Visitors, 1886, p. 3.

1893-94 [c. 7176] Report of the Board of Visitors 1893, p. 4.

⁹⁵ **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 21.

⁹⁶ **1883 [c. 3793]** Report by the Board of Visitors, 1883, p. 3.

1884 [c. 4141] Report by the Board of Visitors, 1884, p. 3.

1884-85 [c. 4533] Report by the Board of Visitors, 1885, p. 3.

1887 [c. 5146] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1887, p. 3.

1888 [c. 5510] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1888, p. 3.

- 1890 [c. 6198] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1890, p. 3
- 1895 [c. 7840] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1895, p. 4.
- 1897 [c. 8344] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1896, p. 4.
- ⁹⁷ 1890 [c. 6198] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1890, pp. 4-5.
- ⁹⁸ 1895 [c. 7840] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1895.
- 1897 [c. 8344] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1896.
- 1898 [c. 8744] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1897.
- 1899 [c. 9170] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1898.
- 1901 [c. 517] Report of the Board of Visitors, 1900.
- ⁹⁹ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 21.
- ¹⁰⁰ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, pp. 19, 22-23.
- ¹⁰¹ David French, "Officer Education and Training in the British Regular Army, 1919-1939", **Military Education Past, Present, and Future** ed. Gregory C. Kennedy and Keith Neilson (London: Praeger, 2002), pp. 106, 108.
- ¹⁰² **WO 33/26** Second Report of a Committee appointed at War Office Meeting of 5th March 1874, to consider the arrangements necessary to carry out the decision of the Secretary of State, "that Candidates for the Army shall, after passing a Competitive Examination, go to Sandhurst instead of joining a Regiment, and that the new system shall commence on the 1st May, 1874." p. 2.
- ¹⁰³ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.
- ¹⁰⁴ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁵ **WO 33/48 A117** Report...Military Educational Establishments, p. ix.
- ¹⁰⁶ **WO 33/48 A117** Report...Military Educational Establishments, p. ix.
- ¹⁰⁷ 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 21-22.
- ¹⁰⁸ 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 22.
- ¹⁰⁹ 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 9.
- ¹¹⁰ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.
- ¹¹¹ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Memorandum Respecting First Appointments to the Cavalry and Infantry, p. 77.
- 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 11.
- ¹¹² 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.
- ¹¹³ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.
- ¹¹⁴ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 11.
- ¹¹⁵ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VIII, Garrison Instructors, pp. 81-83.
- ¹¹⁶ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers. p. 18.
- ¹¹⁷ Harries-Jenkins, **The Army in Victorian Society**, p. 153.
- ¹¹⁸ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers. p. 17.
- ¹¹⁹ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers. Appendix XIII, p. 80.
- ¹²⁰ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers. p. 17.
- ¹²¹ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers. pp. 17-18.
- ¹²² 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers. p. 14.
- ¹²³ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers. p. 15.
- ¹²⁴ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers. p. 16.
- ¹²⁵ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers. p. 14.
- ¹²⁶ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹²⁷ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹²⁸ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹²⁹ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹³⁰ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.
- ¹³¹ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹³² 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹³³ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 16.
- ¹³⁴ Colonel Lonsdale Hall, "The War-Game", **The Nineteenth Century** (February 1891)
- ¹³⁵ Captain Alec L. Ridpath, "The War Game", **The Royal Magazine** (May 1900)
- ¹³⁶ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 23.
- ¹³⁷ 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 28.
- ¹³⁸ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹³⁹ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.

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- ¹⁴⁰ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹⁴¹ **1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹⁴² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 22, 23.
- ¹⁴³ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 22.
- ¹⁴⁴ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix IV, Commissions from the Militia, pp. 61, 66.
- ¹⁴⁵ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix IV, Commissions from the Militia, pp. 61, 67.
- ¹⁴⁶ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 23.
- ¹⁴⁷ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 28.
- ¹⁴⁸ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 15.
- ¹⁴⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 22.
- ¹⁵⁰ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁵¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 22.
- ¹⁵² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 21, 23.
1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 26, 28.
1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 14, 15.
- ¹⁵³ Dunsterville, *Stalky's Reminiscences*, pp. 84-5.
- ¹⁵⁴ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 27.
- ¹⁵⁵ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 22.
- ¹⁵⁶ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 27.
- ¹⁵⁷ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 15.
- ¹⁵⁸ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 15.
- ¹⁵⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 21, 23.
1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 26, 28.
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- ¹⁶⁰ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹⁶¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 17.
- ¹⁶² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 17-18.
- ¹⁶³ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁶⁴ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix V, Examinations for Promotion, pp. 67-83.
- ¹⁶⁵ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁶⁶ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁶⁷ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix V, Examinations for Promotion, pp. 71-78.
- ¹⁶⁸ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 25.
- ¹⁶⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix V, Examinations for Promotion, pp. 71-74, 79-80.
- ¹⁷⁰ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix V, Examinations for Promotion, pp. 74-79.
- ¹⁷¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix V, Examinations for Promotion, p. 80.
- ¹⁷² **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, pp. 31-2.
- ¹⁷³ **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 32.
- ¹⁷⁴ **1902 [c. 982]** Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 32.
- ¹⁷⁵ The Akers-Douglas report lists in the margins the following officers: Sir E. Wood, General Lyttelton, Major Ruggles Brise, Major-General Slade, Lieutenant Colonel Challoner, Colonel Mende, Lieutenant Colonel Carey, Dr. Maguire, Captain James, Colonel Kitson, Colonel Verner, Colonel Henderson, Colonel Lonsdale Hale, Colonel Porter, Colonel Fisher, Colonel Mends, Earl Roberts.
- ¹⁷⁶ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁷⁷ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁷⁸ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁷⁹ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.
- ¹⁸⁰ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 25.
- ¹⁸¹ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.
- ¹⁸² **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.
- ¹⁸³ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 12.

- ¹⁸⁴ 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.
- ¹⁸⁵ 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.
- ¹⁸⁶ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 21.
- 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 26.
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- ¹⁸⁷ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 21.
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- ¹⁸⁸ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 19.
- ¹⁸⁹ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ¹⁹⁰ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 19-20.
- ¹⁹¹ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 19.
- ¹⁹² 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 20.
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- ¹⁹⁴ 1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 13.
- ¹⁹⁵ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 31.
- ¹⁹⁶ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 31.
- ¹⁹⁷ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 24.
- ¹⁹⁸ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 29.
- ¹⁹⁹ WO 32/8703, 23 May 1903, Promotion of Officers, Regular Army, p. 1.
- ²⁰⁰ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, p. 29.
- ²⁰¹ 1902 [c. 982] Report...Education and Training of Officers of the Army, pp. 29-30.
- ²⁰² 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix III, p. 23.
- ²⁰³ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 5, Appendix III, p. 23.
- ²⁰⁴ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix III, p. 23.
- ²⁰⁵ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix III, p. 23.
- ²⁰⁶ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²⁰⁷ Major David A. Fastabend, "G. F. R. Henderson and the Challenge of Change", *Military Review* Volume 69, No. 10, p. 74.
- ²⁰⁸ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix III, p. 24.
- ²⁰⁹ John Lee, *A Soldier's Life: General Sir Ian Hamilton 1853-1947* (London: Macmillan, 2000), p. 8.
- ²¹⁰ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6, Appendix III, p. 25.
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- ²¹² 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²¹³ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²¹⁴ Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, p. 110.
- 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²¹⁵ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 24.
- ²¹⁶ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 7, Appendix III, p. 26.
- ²¹⁷ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²¹⁸ Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, p. 110.
- ²¹⁹ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 4.
- ²²⁰ 1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 6.
- ²²¹ 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 5-6.
- ²²² 1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 5.
- ²²³ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 25.
- ²²⁴ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 24.
- ²²⁵ WO 33/34 O774 Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College. [22] March 1880, p. 2.
- ²²⁶ WO 33/34 O774, p. 3.
- ²²⁷ WO 33/34 O774, p. 2.
- 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College., p. 92.
- ²²⁸ WO 33/34 O774, p. 2.
- ²²⁹ 1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 92.
- ²³⁰ 1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix No. 4, pp. 49-59.

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- ²³¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 98.
- ²³² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 98.
- ²³³ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 93.
- ²³⁴ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix No. 4, p. 53.
- ²³⁵ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 32.
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- ²³⁶ **1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 18, 28.
- ²³⁷ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 93.
- ²³⁸ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, p. 5.
- 1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, p. 5.
- 1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, p. 26.
- 1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 32.
- 1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 18.
- ²³⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 93.
- ²⁴⁰ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, pp. 29-30.
- ²⁴¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 93.
- ²⁴² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 107.
- ²⁴³ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, pp. 94-5.
- ²⁴⁴ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 33.
- ²⁴⁵ **WO 32/6075** Rewards for Proficiency in Languages, memorandum.
- ²⁴⁶ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, pp. 94-5.
- ²⁴⁷ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p. 33.
- ²⁴⁸ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, pp. 94-5.
- ²⁴⁹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, pp. 93, 100.
- ²⁵⁰ **1873 [c. 875]** First Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix IV, pp. 36-42.
- 1876 [c. 1491]** Second Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix IV, pp. 29-33.
- 1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, pp. 116-129.
- 1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix No. 4, pp. 49-59.
- 1893-94 [c. 6859]** Fifth Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix 1, pp. 23-30.
- ²⁵¹ **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 95.
- ²⁵² **1883 [c. 3818]** Third Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix VII, Report of Committee on the Working of the Staff College, p. 96.
- ²⁵³ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.29.
- ²⁵⁴ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, Appendix No. 4, pp. 49-59.
- ²⁵⁵ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.30.
- ²⁵⁶ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.30.
- ²⁵⁷ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.34.
- ²⁵⁸ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.34.
- ²⁵⁹ **1889 [c. 5793]** Fourth Report on the Education of Officers, p.34.
- ²⁶⁰ Brian Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854-1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), p. 185.
- ²⁶¹ Tim Travers, "The Hidden Army: Structural Problems in the British Officer Corps, 1900-1918", *Journal of Contemporary History* Volume 17, (1982), p. 524.

CHAPTER FIVE

Pay and Pensions

By eliminating purchase and giving the officers a pension system, the government changed the terms of interaction between it and the officers: the officers were being paid by the government for a service, rather than the government paying the officers an honorarium while the officers made their money by trading the equity of their commissions among themselves.

The army, as a lobbying body competing for its share of public resources, could influence officer's pay rates. However, during the period covered in this work, the best the army was able to do was to prevent the erosion of the line officer's small slice of the pie. This meant that a superlative officer could not gain the kind of compensation a superlative physician or lawyer could. Nonetheless, the nature of his compensation and the debates over it were revealing as to the state of the attitudes towards the officer profession and officer's professionalization.

A man entering the line army as an officer faced high expenses, low salaries and in all probability a very modest pension at the end of it. An officer climbing the ranks at an average rate could, reasonably achieve the rank of lieutenant colonel in his career, but the general ranks required that he be selected, rather than be dependent on seniority. Reform tended to occur in response to officers and their problems. Like many other reforms of this period, much of the initial work on which further reform was based was done in the 1870's. Officers did get a regular pension system, with remuneration biased towards the highest ranks. At the lower ranks, the pension system served to maintain the pre-purchase rate of advancement by offering captains a pension just sufficiently large to be attractive enough to take, leaving the field of promotion open for their fellow officers. Pay and professional expenses, both official and unofficial, did not become a major issue until very nearly the turn of the century. Then the shortage of officers finally made itself felt, as the low pay and high expenses were seen to be having a negative effect on recruitment from the professional classes.

The Cardwell reforms ended the system of purchase of officer ranks. The purchase system had allowed men to purchase their first commission into the officer ranks, and then to purchase successive promotions to the rank of lieutenant colonel. An officer who did not have the finances to purchase up to the next rank could wait for the death of a more senior officer. All officers junior to the deceased officer would gain a step in seniority, and the most senior officer of a rank would gain a rank without purchasing it. An officer had to spend 2 years in rank as a subaltern, and six as a captain, but beyond that minimum, he could purchase his way up the ranks as fast as his finances would support him. It had become common practice to pay an "over-regulation" sum in excess of the official cost of purchasing a step in rank (the difference in value between present rank and the one being bought), an abuse that had come under fire from earlier reform commissions.¹ The end of purchase left many officers without any clear sense of the shape of their future and a sense of profound betrayal. The government had destroyed the system which they understood and within which they knew how to work, and left them without a clear understanding of how the new system was to be applied to their lives and careers. While the Cardwell reforms had ended the officers' purchase system of promotion and retirement, the initial programme to replace it was very limited. Retired full and half pay was continued, and commissions held on 1 November 1871 could still be sold, though only the government could purchase them. In an effort to maintain the average rate of promotion that existed before the end of purchase, the tenure of regimental lieutenant colonels and majors was limited to 5 years.² Concern for their futures and a feeling of betrayal by their government resulted in a series of memorials by the officers. By means of a convoluted tap dance around protocol, these memorials resulted in two commissions in the 1870's dedicated to creating a new system for ensuring the officers' financial futures. The system that resulted in 1876, based on a pension program at all ranks, remained until 1914.

In 1873 General Hope Grant wrote the covering letter for a collection of petitions by 2,245 officers of various line units, expressing the "widespread dissatisfaction and discontent" among the officers and their concern over their future pay and prospects under the new system.³ These officers represented about 40% of the total regimental strength of all regimental officers in the army.⁴ Originally, this

petition was to be sent to Parliament, but the Duke of Cambridge issued a general order expressing his disapproval of army officers sending petitions to Parliament. Major General Sir Percy E. Herbert said that he then went to the Commander in Chief to find out how these petitions should properly be brought to Parliament's attention. The initial result was the commission that sat in 1873 to inquire into the resulting memorials.⁵ A further commission sat in 1876 to make recommendations on creating a system of army promotion and retirement under the Cardwell system and a functional system of transition for officers who began their careers as purchase officers.⁶

The officers had two key grievances: first, that the purchase officers were debarred from selling commissions for ranks gained after 1 November, 1871, thus losing the expected proceeds that resulted from selling more advanced ranks, and second, that the commission to major or lieutenant colonel had been changed by the reforms to be for a limited period of five years.⁷

Regarding the second grievance, the officers feared that they would not get sufficient time in service - 30 years - to get a full pension, or 25 for a half-pay pension. Because of the limited terms for major and lieutenant-colonel, the officers would have to remain in the captain and lieutenant ranks for 15 to 20 years, unless they could be either re-appointed to their position at the rank of major or lieutenant-colonel or promoted further. Should they be forced on to half-pay after their five years as a lieutenant colonel due to lack of promotion prospects within the service, those years on half-pay did not count towards their retirement. This fixed maximum period of service in rank would also have the effect of decreasing their total pay.⁸ Finally, Herbert stated to the commission, the officers did not expect to be able to exchange to get off half pay and back into regular service.⁹

Of the two grievances that the committee noted, the first was the more critical. Under the purchase system, there were two ways of gaining rank. The first method was to purchase the next rank up within the regiment, subject to seniority.¹⁰ Clearly, those with sufficient means could purchase their way rapidly up the promotion ladder.¹¹ Those possessing more modest means would have to wait until

a non-purchase rank became open in their regiment. Though this meant slower promotion, it also meant that when they did retire that they would gain, by sale of their rank upon retirement, significantly more money than they had invested in buying their commissions.¹² The ultimate goal was a field rank, or at least a lieutenant colonelcy, which was sold at a profit on retirement.¹³

In fact, of the line officers speaking on their own behalf, 4 of 24 stated they had borrowed money to make at least one advance in rank and 3 said they had not yet repaid those loans.¹⁴ One of these officers testifying, Captain Galbraith of the 85th foot, had gone quite deeply into debt, having invested all his private means, as well as taking out a loan, so as to secure his purchased captaincy. His expectation had been that he would eventually become senior captain due to the purchase efforts of the other captains in his regiment, at which point he would be in position to step into the first non-purchase major's vacancy available.¹⁵ Captain Campbell, of the 30th foot, used an alternative method. "My means are small; I knew from the first that I should be unable to purchase any of my steps. When I entered the service I ran, as it were, for a prize, the value of which was 7,000*l.*, that being the regulation and over-regulation price, of a lieutenant-colonelcy."¹⁶ Finally, there was the possibility of active service. According to Major Scott, of the 42nd Highlanders,

I went to India in 1857. I purchased - I knew full well that I ran two chances in this way - I ran the chance of losing the purchase price of my commission while on active service in the field, but then again I ran the equal chance of increasing the value of my commission by gaining higher promotion while serving in the field.... Q. 799. For the purpose of retirement? - For the purpose of retirement.¹⁷

Exchange was another means used by the officers to promote their career and fiscal advancement, which had also been ended by the new system. In an exchange, an officer who wished to leave his regiment would pay another officer to take his place in the regiment while he took the buyer's place. 15 of 24 line officers specifically mentioned the importance of exchanges to their career. For the buyers, they gave opportunity to gain the higher pay and lower expenses of India, as well as the exchange money, which might be used to finance the necessary travel, pay off

debts, or purchase a rank. For the sellers, it was a means to avoid service in India, return early from India or go to half-pay due to illness or other personal reasons.¹⁸

The commission recommended in this case the restoration of this system, as it benefited both participants and saw no likelihood that it would lead back to the abuses of the purchase system.¹⁹

It was the inability to sell commissions (especially senior commissions, which were both more lucrative to sell and easier to gain through the principal's death) that distressed the officers.²⁰ The regulation prices for commissions in the infantry, as estimated by the army purchase commission, were as follows:

Table 1. Regulation and Over Regulation Purchase.²¹

rank/ cost of commission in £	regulation price	over regulation price
Lieutenant Colonel	4,500	2,000-3,500
Major	3,200	1,200-1,925
Captain	1,800	400-900
Lieutenant	700	0-200
Ensign	450	--

From these prices, it can be seen that the break point for both regulation and over regulation prices was from captain to major. This sudden jump in the cost of promotion from captain and major also shows in the percentage of commissions gained with purchase. This percentage dropped abruptly at the rank of major, as officers began to rely on more on seniority than purchase to obtain higher rank, as shown in the table below.

Table 2. Percentage of commissions held by officers of the infantry (excepting foot guards) obtained with and without purchase as of 1/1/70:²²

rank/ % of commissions gained	by purchase	without purchase
Lieutenant Colonel	46	54
Major	51	49
Captain	66	34
Lieutenant	64	36
Ensign	62	38

In effect, a purchase commission was both career and investment - to gain a significant return on the investment, the officer had to have a career's service with a modest, but increasing return (pay), intermittent purchases to increase the equity value of their investment, and, for poorer officers, the chance of gaining equity without cost. With the end of purchase service, the officers who had invested in purchase rank had their money at risk without hope of further return beyond the purchase price of their present rank.²³ A purchase officer would receive whatever the regulation price was for whatever rank he held in 1871, no matter when he retired.²⁴ The value of a captain's commission potentially contained (allowing for the risk of death in service) the equity (value after liabilities deducted) of a major or lieutenant colonel's commission. As Lieutenant Colonel Herbert put it:

Should circumstances oblige him to retire, he... will receive the 450*l.* which he paid on entry into the service, instead of the 1,800*l.*, the 3,200*l.*, or the 4,500*l.* to which he would have been entitled according as he had obtained the rank of captain, major, or lieutenant-colonel, under the system under which he entered under the agreement on faith of which he paid his 450*l.* The agreement you understand is a moral agreement.
9. (Chairman.) An understanding?--An understanding.²⁵

This moral 'understanding' was one of the points that Lieutenant Colonel Herbert, if not the committee, thought critical to present:

No claim is or will be put forward by the officers, that the Government were not fully entitled to make any alteration in their terms of service, to abolish purchase, to alter the rules of promotion, to forbid exchanges from one corps to another, or to make any changes which they thought desirable for the efficiency of the service. But the officers do maintain that as regards their individual pecuniary interests, when a system under which they had been called upon and obliged to pay large sums of money under Government regulations, was suddenly changed by the authority of Government without any option on their part, public honour and equity alike demanded that the contract between them which was cancelled by the Government, so far as the prospective benefit of individual officers was concerned, should be cancelled from its beginning in its entirety; and that to all those affected by the change the money due to them at the time when the contract was cancelled, money either actually paid by them for their commissions, or to which they had become entitled by service upon the faith of Government regulations, should be forthwith made good to them.²⁶

Many, including both Herbert and the officers who testified before the memorials commission, felt that the government was responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the purchase system and that the officers themselves were not responsible for the system's origin or continuance. They, as well as those who testified to explain the difficulties the end of purchase had cost them, clearly felt there was a moral breach of contract on the part of the government.²⁷ The officer's memorials commission skirted by this issue, but the following commission on promotion and retirement was careful to deny any moral obligation on the part of the government with respect to the new system:

.... we wish it to be understood that in our opinion no vested rights or moral claims, having the practical force of vested rights, should be created in respect of pensions or sums of money on retirement, inasmuch as their adjustment in point of amount to the needs of the service is a matter to be determined only by experience.²⁸

The 1874 committee, however, concluded, "the question of compensation *ought not to be dissociated from that of promotion*" and recommended that some form of pension be provided upon retirement.²⁹ On the assumption that the flow of promotion would remain steady (it was not within the mandate of this committee to discuss promotion), it recommended that officers who reached the ranks of lieutenant colonel or major be given, upon retirement, the regulation and over regulation price of their commissions and that such officers going on half-pay after their limit of five years in these ranks should be allowed to count their time on half-pay towards their retirement. They did not propose any compensation to be given to captains in that rank, in the expectation that they would gain higher rank. For lieutenants, they recommended a lump sum payment based on their years in service.³⁰

A second commission followed two years later on promotion and retirement, headed by Lord Penzance. This commission was a specific, directed effort to create a system for career advancement that could be recommended to Parliament. Since the abolition of purchase, the rate of promotions, being the critical issue for career advancement, had slowed. This was blamed on the fact that the only permanent sources of officer attrition were death and the five-year limit on the field ranks.

Because the battalion rank structure was 1 lieutenant colonel, 2 majors, 11 captains, and 18 subalterns, there was a real bottleneck in promotion possibilities at the captain to major level.³¹ In principle, the committee felt that the future rate of promotion in the army should be no worse than that under purchase.³² That rate of promotion was estimated to be as in the following table, based on those officers serving in January of 1840, 1846, 1852, 1858, 1864, and 1870. In fact, according to the commission, the average rate of promotion was slowing, and actuarial calculation suggested that it would become as shown in the table.³³

Table 3. Promotion Rate (average time in service to obtain given rank).³⁴

Rank	Time in service; est. in 1870 (years, months)	Time in service est. 1877 (years, months)
Lieutenant	2, 8	--
Captain	9, 0	15, 9
Major	18, 11	29, 3
Lieutenant Colonel	23, 6	33, 6

There is a further source that indicates the promotion rate at about this time. The first part is an abstract from a table submitted by Lieutenant Colonel Herbert to the 1873 memorials commission.

Table 4. Average service of infantry officers.³⁵

years in rank/ on attaining the rank of	Lieutenant (years, months)	Captain (years, months)	Major (years, months)	Lieutenant Colonel (years, months)
purchasing officers, 1870	2, 8	8, 3	17, 3	22, 4
non-purchasing officers, 1870	2, 8	9, 9	19, 2	25, 0

This matches reasonably well to the graphical tables of appendix N of that commission, which show the number of officers in each year of service in each rank on 1 November, 1871. Taking the averages from these tables, the average time in rank and the average time in service were as follows:

Table 5. Time in rank and service, 1 November, 1871.³⁶

Rank	Average time in rank (years, months)	Average time in service (years, months)
Ensign	3, 4	3, 4
Lieutenant	4, 9	7, 8
Captain	6, 5	15, 2
Major	5, 0	22, 7
Lieutenant Colonel	6, 4	28, 4

Ensigns, lieutenants and captains show a nice linear progression on these tables; the more years of total service, the more years in rank, but this linear correspondence breaks down for majors and especially for lieutenant colonels. For them the values cluster: 17 to 27 years of total service and 1 to 8 years in rank for majors and 20 to 34 years of total service and 1 to 6 years in rank for lieutenant colonels. This would suggest that seniority was a more significant factor in the junior ranks and less so in the field ranks, yet the evidence of this commission suggests that purchase was more likely in the lower ranks. Looking at Herbert's table above, it appears that purchase only shortened time in rank by one to three years, suggesting that most officers did not purchase their way up with any great speed, possibly due to lack of ready money, relatively few openings by retirement, or a personal sense of unreadiness to take on the higher rank too quickly. This, in fact, agrees with appendix N, which shows that few lieutenants had more than 14 years of total service, and few captains had more than 18.³⁷ This suggests that purchase was little more significant as a factor in promotion before 1870 than death or resignation were. It would be interesting to know whether there was a faster rate of career advancement in the more lethal (due to disease and war) colonies than at home. Given the general improvements in public health, and the general lessening of access to colonial war experience and the attendant risk of death, it is possible that promotion would have been slowed even if purchase had not been ended.

The key to maintaining a reasonable promotion rate, as the commission saw it, was to find a means to reduce the lower ranks so that fewer officers were ultimately competing for the few higher positions. Their solution was to apply the system of retirement to the lower ranks as well as the senior ranks. Offering retirement, voluntary or otherwise, to only the senior ranks would not vacate senior

positions at a fast enough rate, unless the maximum period allowed in that rank were to be shortened past the point of efficiency.³⁸ Following from the previous commission, they also recommended linking pension to time in service.³⁹ The committee considered that money given to induce voluntary retirement, or to accompany forced retirement, was a type of deferred pay and should be seen as an element, like pay, in the advantages offered in return for service.⁴⁰ The 1874 commission was referred to as stating that most officers quit in the ranks of ensigns to captains, meaning that purchase promotions were themselves due to attrition at lower ranks, rather than a high vacancy rate at the higher ranks.⁴¹ Thus a comprehensive pension system was instrumental to the creation of a system of career advancement.

More specifically, the committee recommended that commissions of lieutenant and captain be held for a total maximum of 20 years; if the officer had not obtained further promotion by then, he should be compulsorily retired from the regiment, accompanied by a pension of at least £200, given that one of the key reasons to abolish purchase had been to open the ranks of the army to those with limited means.⁴² Compulsory retirement, it was emphasised, should be a last resort.⁴³ A preferred means to remove officers from their regiments was to offer full pay positions in government departments to qualified regimental officers.⁴⁴

From the evidence of the minutes of the Penzance commission, it appears that another problem that exercised the officers was half-pay, especially just below the general ranks. The feeling was that it tended unnecessarily to remove good officers from useful work without leaving them any of the advantages of being in the system.⁴⁵ Lieutenant-General Simmons noted that, given the rapid changes over the past few years, a few years in half-pay and the officer would be too out of touch.⁴⁶ There was no consistent opinion on whether to give any lump sum or retirement pension to junior officers, and those who opposed it generally did so for fear that the best officers would leave.⁴⁷ The officers questioned generally much preferred that the senior ranks were thinned to improve promotion prospects for the ranks below them.⁴⁸ Some suggested age-related compulsory retirement, such as for captains with 25 years of service (who were presumably unlikely to gain another rank) or

retirement after a maximum age for senior officers, as a means to thin the ranks.⁴⁹ Compulsory retirement was opposed by most, but generally would be tolerated if proved necessary.⁵⁰ Given the option of compulsory retirement with a pension or half-pay status, they chose retirement.⁵¹ The idea of civil employment after retirement was received mostly with approval.⁵²

The Penzance commission made a number of specific recommendations regarding how the pension system should work, with further suggestions regarding a transitional system specific to purchase officers. For non-purchase officers and those who gained rank since the reforms the commission suggested a sliding scale lump sum payment based on the number of years in service, from 8 to 19 years inclusive. It was suggested that captains be given the option of retiring with half-pay out of the regiment at 15 to 20 years service, and an eventual honorary step in rank at the age of 45. At 20 years service, a captain was required to take either compulsory retirement out of the regiment, with half pay and a chance at non-regimental employment, or out of the army with full pension. For higher ranks, the options were retirement from the regiment with a step of unattached promotion and a chance at non-regimental employment, or retirement from the army with a full pension.⁵³

The recommendations were somewhat different for purchase officers. To begin with, The Penzance commission disagreed with the 1874 commission that financial compensation be granted for those who gained a rank only, because the purchase officers would choose to remain in the army as long as possible in hope of promotion.⁵⁴ Promotions among captains had, in fact, stagnated since the abolition of purchase.⁵⁵ Ensigns, coronets, and lieutenants were deemed to be provided for under the non-purchase recommendations. The adjustments had to be made at the captaincy level, where the commissions' recommended pensions were lower than the amounts these officers might have expected to gain by sale of their commissions.⁵⁶ First, they should be ineligible for promotion after 25 years of total service. After 12 to 20 years service, captains should have the option of retirement from the regiment, which would include brevet rank, over-regulation cost of rank, half-pay, and half brevet pay for brevet majors, with liability to serve on request, or retirement from the army, in which case they would get the sum they were entitled to under the Army

Regulation Act. After 20 years they were to be given the choice of either retirement from the army with a full pension, which included a widow's pension and a step of honorary rank, or retirement from the regiment with the rank of major, and a lump sum payment upon retirement from the army.⁵⁷ Similar offers for retirement from the regiment (unattached rise in rank plus chance of non-regimental employment and retirement pension) or retirement from army with full pension and over-regulation money and honorary step in rank were to be made to majors, and a similar offer of army retirement to lieutenant colonels.⁵⁸

Unless considerable retirements are effected (in the captain's rank especially) the promotion which has been promised to the Army cannot possibly be given. The choice therefore lies between stagnation in promotion and a sufficient amount of retirement obtained by some means or other. In this choice we have not hesitated to accept the conclusion that the general welfare of the whole body of officers must prevail over the desires or interests of individuals, subject to this condition, that a reasonably liberal provision should be made for the individuals who are called upon to make any sacrifice for the purpose.⁵⁹

Based on the above system of pensions, the commission recommended seniority in the regiment to be the basis of regimental promotion, which appears to include the promotion to lieutenant colonel.⁶⁰ They also approved of the informal system that had developed since 1871 of regular confidential reports by the lieutenant colonel of the regiment on the conduct, abilities and military qualifications of his officers. These were submitted to the inspecting general for his approval and remarks, and forwarded to the Commander in Chief. Should a particular officer prove through these reports to be unfit for promotion, he was not promoted. However, it was also recommended that some unattached promotions should be left open to the discretion of the Commander in Chief, to be filled on the basis of reports of officers of particular merit and promise made by their commanding officers.⁶¹ The commission felt that promotion by seniority, leavened by rejection, was the best system for promotion because it felt that there was no substitute for military action in showing the military qualifications of an officer, and that "we do not think that any amount of acquired knowledge, tested by any form of examination, is a guarantee for the possession of those numerous and varied qualities which go to form the character

of military excellence".⁶² Unfortunately, unless there was a major war, few would have the chance to experience military action, and it seemed unfair that these few, due to luck, should have their promotions accelerated.⁶³ From the minutes of evidence, it is clear that a system of promotion by seniority within the regiment, and selection (of officers to promote further) used to reject officers either too inexperienced or too incompetent to be promoted, had been in use since the Cardwell reforms were enacted, and most of the officers questioned on this matter approved of the system and wished to continue it.⁶⁴ Lord Sandhurst considered the current system to be a great improvement on the purchase system in which he had been totally unable to get rid of incompetent officers.⁶⁵ Only two officers approved of selection as the key factor in promotion, and both of them had done this while commanding in India.⁶⁶ Selection as a primary factor in promotion was rejected by most, on the grounds that it would be too difficult to determine merit in peacetime, or that it would cause too much discontent.⁶⁷ Exams as a means of testing fitness for promotion were generally not favoured, and there was a general opinion that an officer passed over for promotion should retire, though a few felt a second chance ought to be given an officer.⁶⁸ The real criterion for professional expertise was perceived to be practical service in the field, however uncommon, which was an option open to no other army in Europe at that time.

Though the Penzance commission considered the gradation of pensions to be a central principle of their recommendations, the government did not wholly apply their recommendations. In particular, no British government of the period ever implemented a fully graduated scale of pensions. By 1900, however, the Germans had a graduated system of pensions starting after 10 years of service.⁶⁹ Graduated pensions were not contemplated in Britain until 1902, and then only for majors and colonels and above, and rejected in the case of majors.⁷⁰ Instead Britain experimented with a much more limited series of step-wise cut-offs. It was intended that the rate of promotion that existed during purchase should be maintained. Since the whole point of the pension system was to convince some officers to retire so that others would be able to rise in rank, the pension system was, in effect, the officer selection system at the regimental level. Thus the decision point for an officer as to

whether to continue in this career or to retire out of it was the advance from captain to major.

The Penzance commission's proposal for a graduated scale of retirement, for 8 to 19 years, was converted, in the Appointment, Promotion and Retirement Warrant of 1877, to a stepped system of voluntary retirement, starting at 12 years of service. It was officially stated that this number of years was chosen because, "it has been considered that for sometime after his first appointment a young officer is learning his profession, [and] that many young Officers are willing to withdraw without putting the country to the charge of compensation".⁷¹ In fact, 15 years of service was considered. The draft warrant proposed 10 years, but the Treasury, having been consulted, balked at the prospective cost, and recommended 15 years as the minimum.⁷²

Holding, as they [the Treasury Lords] do, that compulsory retirement is essential to the efficiency of the Army under its new conditions, they are nevertheless, and they have already shown, strongly of opinion that it involves great hardship, and should be applied as sparingly as possible. They are, therefore, ready to admit that if Officers do not continue to enter the Army intending as formerly to remain in it for a few years only, it will be necessary to provide some inducement to them to retire of their own accord before the period fixed for compulsory retirement is reached. But it appears to my Lords that there is no proof as yet of such a change of practice, and it is clear that every pound paid to an officer in easy means, who would under any circumstances retire, is a pound needlessly expended.⁷³

This suggests that, as the Treasury understood it (and the War Office agreed), most officers in the purchase era did not remain with the army as a career, and did not see that there was, as yet, any indication that most men joining the officer ranks would be doing so for the long term. Following this, the Treasury felt that entrance to the army should be restricted to no more than that number which would keep the officer positions filled. However, given the army needed to lose junior officers so as to maintain promotion rates for the rest, the army would have to recruit more officers than they needed to fill the ranks (because they needed many more junior than senior officers). A 15 year cut-off would make the problem of maintaining promotion rates worse. The Treasury, on the understanding that "the main principle of the new

scheme is the retirement from regimental duty of un-promoted captains of twenty years' service", further felt that the warrant, as proposed, would fall hardest upon middle aged officers, (35 to 55 years),

...for it is difficult for men trained and inured to a special profession to find employment readily in other and new lines of life, while the sum which the State can afford to grant them at an early age must be insufficient for their wants. But it falls with the least hardship on those who have reached a period of life at which they can retire with little if any loss of emolument, and for whom well-earned repose is certainly not inopportune.⁷⁴

The Treasury proposal would set the first possible date of retirement to match nearly that of an officer's attainment of the rank of captain, according to actuarial estimates of the rates of advancement under then current conditions.⁷⁵ (see Table 5. Time in Service above) This would be about seven years after the average attainment of that rank according to the Penzance commission's estimate of promotion rates before 1871, which they recommended should continue in the future.⁷⁶ The War Office assured the Treasury, first, that they hoped that voluntary retirement would be sufficient, though they could not envision eliminating the compulsory clauses, and second, that the competition for entrance, and the new, higher educational qualifications, would tend to deter such officers as only joined for a few years. The War Office feared that officers would be more likely to hold on until retirement at 20 years at greater cost to the government than to take voluntary retirements at 10 or more years. They expected the cost of the retirement scheme to start showing up in the estimates of 1881.⁷⁷ In fact, the non-effective costs for officers (which included pensions as most of its cost) did rise by £215,200 in 1881, to £1.38M, but it had been rising since 1878, when that part of the estimates had nearly doubled from the previous year. From 1881, this vote continued to rise to £2M in 1900. Retirement benefits rose from £1,133,500 in 1878 to £1,591,500 in 1882. They then continued to rise very slowly to £1,948,264 in 1899.⁷⁸ As a percentage of the total estimates, this is a rise from 5% to 9%.

In terms of the total army estimates, the percentage cost of pay and allowances peaked at 35.7% of the total estimates in 1873, and fell unevenly

thereafter until around 1887 at 26.8%. From 1890, this percentage remained fairly stable, ranging from 32% to 34.5%. (See Chart 3 - Votes as a Percentage of Estimates: 1870-1887 and Chart 4 - Votes as a Percentage of Estimates: 1889-1901) The army estimates were rising steadily from 1870 through 1887, though the expenditures were less stable. The charts do not include sums voted in addition, separately from the budget. After four separate reorganisations of the presentation of the estimates (1887, 1888, 1889, 1890), the total estimates and the expenditures remained flat, at around £20M, until the South African war. (See Chart 3 - Estimates and Expenditures 1870-1887 and Chart 4 - Estimates and Expenditures 1889-1902.) Pay and allowances took a far larger bite of the estimates than pensions, but there is no plain correlation with the relatively stable number of officers. The number of active officers at home and in the colonies had levelled off in 1882 to somewhat over 2800, with an additional 1500 officers serving in India (See Chart 6 - Home and Colonies Establishment: Officers and Chart 8 - India Establishment: Officers).

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, due to the reorganisations, the estimates and expenditures for 1888 and the estimates for 1889 are left out in the charts. In Chart 1 - Estimates and Expenditures 1870-1887, Votes 1, 2, and 3 are “General Staff and Regimental Pay, Allowances and Charges”, “Divine Service” and “Administration of Martial Law” respectively. In Chart 2 - Estimates and Expenditures 1889-1902, Vote 1 is “Pay & c. of the Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve and Departments)”. These votes are coded in blue. Vote 14, “Establishments for Military Education” becomes vote 11 in the second chart, and is coded pink. Votes 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 are “Rewards for Distinguished Services &c.”, “Pay of General Officers”, “Retired Full Pay, Retired Half-Pay, Pensions, and Gratuities, Payments Allowed by Army Purchase Commissioners”, “Widows Pensions & c.” and “Pensions for Wounds”, respectively. In the second chart these are all accounted for under Vote 14, “Non-Effective charges for Officers, & c.” They are colour coded green. “Total estimate” and “total expenditure” are coded in red.

The final warrant allotted pensions for retirements as follows, though the option of choosing instead the Retired Full Pay List after 30 years’ service and the

Retired Half Pay after 25 years service was retained. There were variations on this in the warrant, based on the exact circumstances of an officer's commission.

SUBALTERN.

Voluntary.

- (a.) After 15 years' service a gratuity of £1,700
- (b.) After 18 years' service, a gratuity of £2,000⁷⁹

[The actual warrant states:

- After 12 years' service a gratuity of £1,200
- After 15 years' service a gratuity of £1,600
- After 18 years' service, a gratuity of £2,000⁸⁰]

Compulsory.

- (c.) After 20 years' service, Half Pay, or retirement on £200 a year.

CAPTAIN.

Voluntary.

- (a.) The same gratuities as a Subaltern.
- (b.) At any time, transfer for service in the Militia, (if he can obtain an appointment therein) with Half Pay for 10 years.
- (c.) After 15 years' service [12 years' service if a Purchase Captain of Infantry], but not after 20 years' service, permanent Half Pay.
- (d.) After 20 years' service, £200 a-year.

Compulsory.

(Only applicable to Post-Purchase Captains.)

- (e.) After 20 years' service in all, and 7 years as a Captain, half Pay, or retirement on a pension of £200 a-year.

MAJOR.

Voluntary.

- (a.) The same gratuities as a Subaltern.
- (b.) After 23 years' service, a pension of £250 a-year.
- (c.) After 27 years' service, including 7 years as a Major, £300 a-year.

Compulsory.

(Only applicable to Post-Purchase Majors.)

- (d.) After 27 years in all, including 7 years as Major, Half Pay, or retirement on a pension of £300 a-year.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.

Voluntary.

- At any time, a pension of £250 a-year.
- After 27 years' service, a pension of £300 a-year.
- After 30 years' service, a pension of £365 a-year.

Compulsory.

- After 5 years in the rank, withdrawal to half pay.

BREVET-COLONEL.

Voluntary.

At any time after completing 5 years' service as a substantive Lieutenant-Colonel, retirement on a pension of £420 a-year.

Compulsory.

Retirement on the same pension at the age of 55 (if promoted to Colonel hereafter).

GENERAL OFFICER.

Compulsory.

Retirement at the age of 70, retaining tenure of or succession to an honorary colonelcy."⁸¹

Purchase officers could choose any of the above retirement options, where applicable, or choose the following, in addition to their right of sale.

CAPTAIN.

After 20 years' service, a pension worth £3,200, so long as it do not exceed £259 a-year. [This being the commuted value of £3,200] If service has already been 25 years, this limit will not hold.

The Purchase-Captain of Infantry promoted to Major already, or within six months from date of Warrant, will retain this privilege.

MAJOR.

After 25 years' service, a pension of £292 a-year, with bonus.

This will be extended to a Purchase-Major promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel already or within six months after the Warrant issues. If promoted later and his health render him unable to complete five years in the rank he may nevertheless retire on £420 a-year.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.

At the age of 52, a pension of £600 a-year.⁸²

These changes in the retirement provisions are a significant shift from the intent of the Penzance commission. The commission wished to encourage the voluntary retirement of officers at the earliest possible point in their careers, after their basic education and some regimental experience. Instead the warrant put the burden on officers to decide whether to choose a minimum retirement lump sum payment at 12 years, or to hold out for 20 years either to be promoted past captain or to get the compulsory retirement pension at 20 years' service. The latter was precisely what the War Office did not want.

Given the net expenses of a junior officer (some £100 - £150 or more per year greater than his salary), the £1,200 a retiring officer received after 12 years would, at best, do little more than cover his expenses to date, quite aside from the costs of his education on or before entry, whether through Sandhurst, the Militia or a university. In the case of the legal profession, there was likely to be no income at all for the first few years after entering the profession, necessitating an estimated private income of £2,433 for that period.⁸³ Joining the military was the relatively cheaper investment, but was also without the opportunity of getting the very high incomes possible for legal professionals. An officer who retired with a pension of £200 was in possession of a very modest middle class income, though without the expenses entailed by service.⁸⁴

Therefore, given the average rate of advancement, any officer could reasonably expect to achieve the rank of captain and at least break even with an early retirement after 12 years. A captain could also end a career of 20 years with little to show for it other than a military education and a small pension that gave him an income at the bottom end of the middle class, with an income comparable to that of a legal clerk, a reporter, or upper division civil servant at the bottom of the pay scale.⁸⁵ However, that captain, after initial education costs and the positive net expenses of his first few years, ended his career on a solid, if very modest, financial footing. The risk of dying in battle was quite low, and the risk of death by disease was dropping. Unlike a purchase officer, he was not risking an increasingly large financial investment against the possibility of his death. Under the pension system, the investment of time in a career guaranteed a financial return, while each level of promotion in the purchase system was essentially an investment of money in expectation of making more money from that rank's later sale. By contrast, while lawyers had to make a higher initial investment and could potentially reap incomes of thousands of pounds per year, few did so. The military offered significantly less potential financial reward, but also less financial risk. Thus, financially, the army was the safer, and much more cautious investment, aside from the risk of injury or death.

Any of these pensions could be commuted (paid in gross rather than in yearly payments) to a maximum of half their total value, because, “it was decided that officers, many of whom had become paupers by having speculated with & lost their commutation money, should be protected against such foolish acts by a rule which placed a restriction on the amount of retired pay to be left uncommuted”.⁸⁶

As the table below demonstrates, most of the retirement occurred, voluntarily or not, at the rank of captain, between the point where an officer could get his first option of retiring with a lump sum at 12 years, and compulsory retirement at 20. This decision range was further enforced by the fact that there were by no means enough major positions for every captain, and this transition was the first significant narrowing of positions. This is also the rank at which an officer would most likely cross over to the staff, and gain promotion outside the regiment, and such officers could reach very senior rank; Buller, Butler, Haig, Methuen, and Robertson being examples of this.⁸⁷ (See Table 7. Distribution of Officers in Home and Overseas Battalions, 1879 below) In 1886, there was one further return that states that 214 cavalry and infantry captains and majors were compulsorily retired in the years 1870-85. Subtracting out the 18 captains and majors compulsorily retired as shown in the table below (and 2 compulsory cavalry captain retirements) this worked out to 15.6 compulsory retirements per year, an average double that of the 2 ½ years shown in the table below.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, the data does not indicate how these numbers were spread through these years.

Like many other reforms of this period, there was a round of adjustments in the early 1880's and, in particular, to match up the appointments, promotion, retirement and pay scheme to the new double battalion system. Two important changes were made that influenced retirement. First, a ceiling was placed on the age of all officers depending on rank, at which age they had to retire, “for the sake of regimental efficiency” it was said of captains.⁸⁹ Second, the numbered line battalions were amalgamated into 2 battalion regiments (excepting the first 25, which were already two battalion regiments).

Table 6. Retirement under the Warrant of 1877.⁹⁰

	Rank	October 1877 to 31 March 1879	1879-80
Voluntary Retirement	Second Lieutenant	3*	7*
	Sub-Lieutenant	5*	1*
	Lieutenant	75**	38****
	Captain	230***	129*****
	Major	81	16
	Lieutenant Colonel	52	24
Removal from Regiments and Appointments	Captain		15
	Major		3
	Lieutenant Colonel	30	13
Retirement on Account of Age	Colonel	9	1

*resignations

**includes 29 resignations

***includes 46 resignations on appointment to the Army Pay Department

****includes 21 resignations

***** includes 37 resignations on appointment to the Army Pay Department

Table 7. Distribution of Officers in Home and Overseas Battalions, 1879.⁹¹

Rank	Battalions at Home	Battalions Abroad	Total for 2 Battalions	Brigade Depot 2 battalions/3 battalions/Rifle
Colonel	1	1	2	--/--/--
Lieutenant Colonel	1	1	2	1/1/1
Majors	1	2	3	1/1/4
Captains	8	8	16	4/6/16
Lieutenants	8	8	16	4/6/16
Second Lieutenants	4	8	12	--/--/--

The new retirement scheme was as follows:

Up to the rank of Major inclusive:

Voluntary:

After 12 years' service, on a gratuity of £1,200

After 15 years' service, on a gratuity of £1,600

After 18 years' service, on a gratuity of £2,000

After 20 years' service, a pension of £200 a year.

Compulsory:

At 40, on £200 a year, subject to a deduction of £10 for every years service less than 20.

For a Major:

Voluntary:

After 20 years' service, a pension of £200 a year.

After 23 years' service, a pension of £250 a year.

Compulsory:

At 48, on £250 to £300 a year, depending on service.

For a Lieutenant-Colonel:

Voluntary:

At any time, £250 a year.

After 27 years' service, or after 7 years' service as a Regimental Major, or after 5 years' service as a Major on the Staff, £300 a year.

After 30 years' service, £365 a year.

Compulsory:

At 55, on £365 a year.

For a Colonel:

Voluntary:

At any time, £420 a year.

Compulsory:

At 55, on £420 a year.

For a Major-General:

Voluntary:

At 60, on £680 a year.

At 61, on £690 a year.

Compulsory:

At 62, on £700 a year.

For a Lieutenant-General:

At 65, on £830 a year.

At 66, on £840 a year.

Compulsory:

At 67, on £850 a year.

For a General:

At 65, on £980 a year.

At 66, on £990 a year.

Compulsory:

At 67, on £1,000 a year.⁹²

Compulsory retirement at the earned pension rate would also occur in cases where the officer had been continuously unemployed for 3 years as a major, 5 years

as a colonel, and for a general officer, once his promotion to major-general was at least 5 years in the past, at any time, or less than 5 years if it had been seven years since his employment as a colonel. On the other hand, it was also possible for a captain, major or lieutenant-colonel, retiring after 40 years of age, 7 years of regimental or 5 years of staff service, and 5 years of service, respectively, to be promoted a rank at half pay, and be eligible for regimental or staff service at that new rank, if the opportunity was available, to a maximum age of 55 in the case of a half-pay colonel.⁹³ Selection (selecting for promotion from among the qualified officers rather than promoting the most senior) was expanded in that seniority was not to be considered the main claim to promotion. This selection was in effect only for the promotion to major general; higher general ranks were promoted by seniority.⁹⁴ Also, brevet majors, having served 7 years as a major, would automatically be promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel. After 5 years service, a brevet lieutenant colonel would likewise be promoted.⁹⁵

As compared to the 1877 warrant, a captain's options were simplified, ceilings for compulsory retirement were defined by age rather than by years of service, the 5 year maximum on lieutenant colonels' tenure was dropped, and the maximum age of compulsory retirement for general officers was dropped by 3 to 10 years. A lieutenant colonel's retirement age rose by 5 years, to age 55, the same as a colonel. Assuming an officer's service began at the age of 20, then there was effectively no change in the time of compulsory retirement for all ranks through major. But because compulsory retirement was now defined by age, any officer who joined the army at a later age lost the years of income that were the difference between his entry age and age 20, and was also penalised in his retirement pension. Therefore, those who joined by attending RMC Sandhurst, and therefore gained a commission at age 20, were, in theory, selectively favoured against those who joined from the militia or through university. However, it is not clear whether it was more cost-effective to go to RMC, the militia or the university over the long term. The memoirs of Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, though he is commenting on promotion from the ranks, are suggestive. "I had several friends who have won their commissions in that way [from the ranks], and, on the whole, they seem to have enjoyed their experiences in the ranks; but it is a big handicap in later life when age

and commissioned service are balanced against each other. Then you regret the four years' seniority you lost by going through the ranks."⁹⁶

The problem for the individual officer was still the transition from captain to major. If an officer was captain long enough to have the seniority to become a major, then, assuming he did not run into the problem of other senior captains waiting for the same opportunity in his regiment and slowing promotion, that officer would likely make lieutenant colonel as well. As seen in the tables of Distribution of Officers below, there were about two majors for every lieutenant colonel in the line army as a result of the amalgamation in 1881, though that became, by 1887, four majors for every lieutenant colonel. (Compare Tables 8 and 10) The first retirement option with pension was for a captain of average seniority, given that, on average, an officer obtained this rank after 8-9 years service, and would not, on average, expect to be a major until after 18 years of service. Therefore an officer had to decide as a captain in his mid to late 30's whether he could expect to progress sufficiently in his career to command a regiment or to go on to general rank or to retire as a captain or major in another 5 years. Compulsory retirement at 20 years and £200 swept up excess captains and majors.⁹⁷

The average rate at which an officer gained the rank of lieutenant colonel in this period was 25 years (see Table 11. Duration of Service below), so an average officer who did not choose to retire early should have been able to achieve this rank, and would have 10 years to reach the field ranks before compulsory retirement at age 55. As with the captain to major advance, the colonel to major-general advance also showed a significant improvement in the pension. In effect there were two different groups of officers; those who expected to become majors or, at most, lieutenant colonels in their careers, and who may have instead chosen to retire early, and those with the finances, contacts, and patronage to leave the regiment for staff and pass the selection to the general ranks.⁹⁸ This might explain to some degree the high percentage of officers from the gentry and peerage in the senior ranks. This predominance of the higher classes at the most senior levels of the profession was also true of the legal profession.⁹⁹ Access to financial success was a result of political success within the army.¹⁰⁰

Table 8. Distribution of officers composing an ordinary double- battalion regiment of infantry, 1881.¹⁰¹

Rank	Home Bn. 8 Coy.	Foreign Bn. 8 Coy	Depot. 4 Coy. Including Sub-district command.	Total.
Colonel (present Brevet Colonel)	--	--	1	1
Lieutenant Colonels	1	2	1	4
Majors	4	4	--	8
Captains (including Adjutants)	5	5	4*	14
Lieutenants	12	16	2	30

* Inclusive of 2 Captains to serve as Adjutants of Militia battalions. In a few double-battalion regiments more than 2 Captains will be required as Militia Adjutants.

The significant change to the distribution of officers was that the new system raised the number of majors in 20 companies from 4 to 8 and lowered the number of captains by the same amount; in effect promoting some captains. It also raised somewhat the number of colonels from 4 to 5, and lowered the number of lieutenants from 30 to 28. While abolishing the rank of second lieutenant, each battalion of infantry also gained a second lieutenant colonel, who at home served at the brigade depot and abroad served in the position of second-in-command.¹⁰²

Table 9. Distribution of Officers in Home and Overseas Battalions, 1882.¹⁰³

Rank	Battalions at Home	Battalions in Colonies	Battalions in India	Brigade Depot 2 battalions/1 battalions/Rifle
Lieutenant Colonels	2	2	2	1/--/1
Majors	3	4	4	1/1/4
Captains	5	4	4	1/1/4
Lieutenants	12	16	16	2/1/8

Table 10. Distribution of Officers in Home and Overseas Battalions, 1887.¹⁰⁴

Rank	Battalions at Home	Battalions in Colonies	Battalions in India	Brigade Depot Low est./high est./6 coy est./rifle depot
Lieutenant Colonels	1	1	1	1/1/1/1
Majors	3	4	4	1/1/2/4
Captains	6	5	5	1/2/3/4
Lieutenants	8	8	8	2/4/10/8
Second Lieutenants	4	8	8	--/--/--/--

The actual distribution in later years, according to the estimates of 1882 and 1887 (1879, 1882, and 1887 correspond to small changes in the rank structure) shows that the number of lieutenant-colonels dropped to one per battalion, the number of captains per battalion rose slightly, and the number of lieutenants was divided between lieutenants and second lieutenants when the latter rank was reinstated.

The changes in the pension system were not large, but they made a significant difference in the officer corps. By decision of the Secretary of State, the revised warrant was to be brought in such a way as to carry out the promotions valid under it before the retirements. Thus officers retired under the previous warrant would be the first to be brought back into service, and then officers in the regiments on 30 June would be promoted to complete the regimental establishment. Finally, officers in any rank above the maximum age limits would be retired.¹⁰⁵ These policy changes, of linked battalions and age limits, were followed, in the budget years of 1881 and 1882, by a drop in the total number of officers in the army. The number of officers dropped in the categories of both regimental units generally (meaning including cavalry, artillery, engineers, foot guards, colonial and departmental corps) and non-regimental units as a whole. The number of officers in the line infantry also dropped, but, unlike the rest of the other regimental and non-regimental officers, it failed to rise again. (See Chart 6 - Army Officers) This was probably due to the enforced retirement of officers who were older than the new maximum ages. This selectively targeted officers who entered the line army through the militia or the

universities, who were more likely to be older than those who graduated out of RMC Sandhurst at the age of 20. Indirectly, then, RMC graduates were favoured over those who transferred from the militia or the universities. The number of officers, as tallied for the whole army, recovered the next year, and continued its slow rise. That of the regimental units recovered in the budget year 1888, but that of the line army did not rise again until 1897, having dropped from an average of 3274 officers in the budget years 1871 to 1881. An average of 2820 was maintained for the budget years from 1882 to 1897, a drop from previous years of 14%. It is unclear why the line army failed to recover its earlier strength in officers, though it may be connected to the amalgamation; the line army may have become less attractive due to personal or political opposition to amalgamation in general, or to the regiment to which one's regiment was paired with in particular, or due to the new pension regulations that forced retirement by age rather than years of service. This drop in the number of line infantry officers was magnified by the problem that the number of ranks in the line army was rising steadily. (See Chart 5 - Home and Colonies Establishment 1871-1902) In other words, there was, a real and increasing shortage of line officers relative to the size of the line army as a whole. The army administration was slow to notice. It wasn't until 1898 that concern was expressed that there would soon be an officer shortage in the future.¹⁰⁶ This problem was not solved in later years. From an average of 1 to 22 in the 1870's, the ratio of officers to ranks (including non-commissioned officers) rose to 1 to 31 by the late 1890's. The South African war brought this ratio to nearly 1 to 33, which was still greater than the ratio in the years leading up to 1914 of 1 to 34.3 officers to privates. This was a much larger ratio than that of the other European armies, who were less dependent on junior officers for leadership at the lower levels.¹⁰⁷ Various suggestions were made after the South African war as to how to increase the voluntary recruitment of officers, which generally centred on greater involvement with the public schools and universities. A 1906 committee chaired by Sir Edward Ward offered the proposal that eventually won out, and the Officer Training Corps came into being in 1907.¹⁰⁸ Bringing military training to the schools and universities may have helped to slow the increasing shortage of officers, but it did not stop it.

A new Warrant for the promotion and retirement of combatant officers was put into place on 31 December, 1886, making further corrections to perceived imbalances in the working of the promotion and retirement system, and improving professional and promotional prospects and standards. Some changes in the highest and lowest ranks were made, staff opportunities were widened, voluntary retirement was limited and honorary rank was ended. The intended effects were to make promotion prospects more even among regiments at the lieutenant ranks, to clarify the command structure, to give junior officers more experience, to connect rank, competence and prestige more closely, and to make it less easy for captains to take voluntary retirement.

The rank of second lieutenant was reinstated, as having the rank of only lieutenant meant that officers were spending many years in 1 battalion, which obstructed the intent of amalgamation and made more awkward any effort to minimise the variation in the rates of promotion among battalions.¹⁰⁹

The presence of two lieutenant colonels in a regiment for six years of service each, promulgated in the 1881 version of the warrant, was not working. It created too much turnover in command and second in command. Therefore one lieutenant colonel was eliminated, leaving the other in service for 4 years, and giving the senior major the duty of second in command and adding a captain to the establishment to take up the major's duties.¹¹⁰

Changes were made in staff appointments, so as to increase the numbers of junior officers with staff experience. Some minor (unspecified) extra-regimental positions were reduced to 3 years, and adjutants were reduced to 4 from 5 years. And, for officers in this appointment, in an issue that comes up later in discussing officer expenses, "it is proposed, by simplifications in the uniform, to render the measure not burdensome to the Officers".¹¹¹ Some minor appointments were, in the future, reserved for officers of the rank of major and below. "It is probable that these may be made the means of advancing distinguished Majors who have served two years as such, and are promoted specially to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and will

so tend to bring up a body of relatively young officers for higher Staff employment.”¹¹²

The War Office also ended the practice of granting a step of honorary rank to every officer retiring after 20 years service: “It is held to be an evil that there should be found throughout the country a numerous body of Officers, of nominally high rank, who have never exercised any of the functions of such rank. It tends to depreciate the ranks held by Officers to whom the nation is really indebted for great services performed; and it is considered that no man can justly claim a rank, the duties and responsibilities of which he has never had.”¹¹³

Voluntary retirement turned out, in War Office opinion, to have been too successful, and resulted in “promotion at a needlessly rapid rate”. Contrary to earlier War Office fears, officers did not choose to hold out for 20 years to receive the larger pension. According to this understanding, voluntary retirement was intended to thin out the captain ranks so that almost all the captains who continued to serve would be promoted, (contrary to the original intent of the Penzance commission, which was to start weeding the officers at 8 years, that is, at the rank of senior lieutenant).¹¹⁴ Selection (picking out suitable officers for promotion, rather than promotion by seniority), when it was mentioned here and in the previous incarnation of this warrant, applied to colonel and to the field ranks only.¹¹⁵ The maximum age of captains was also to be raised to 45 (and that of majors to 48, “taking into account the similarity of duties”).¹¹⁶ This did not show in officer retention, as the reforms would not affect the officers until around 1909, when the officers to whom it applied would be retiring.¹¹⁷ The point of raising the retirement ages for captains and majors was to “retard promotion from Captain to Major”¹¹⁸. Given these new maximum ages, the option of retirement at 12 years with a lump sum payment was to be restricted to subalterns only. A captain in future would have to serve 15 years and could then retire on a pension of £120. This would be less than the commuted value of the lump sum of either £1600 at 15 years or £2000 at 18 years. The War Office could thus tell the Treasury that, in addition to the commutation savings, “it is anticipated that by reducing the inducement to retire, the average period of service will be sensibly increased, so that the number of retirements to be annually provided

for will be materially reduced".¹¹⁹ Thus the best option for an officer who did not expect to gain further rank was to hold out for compulsory retirement. Between limiting pensions and retarding promotion, the War Office kept officers in service longer at a lower rank, and their years on a pension shorter. In the long term this would probably damage an officer's financial standing (and save the government money). This was unlikely to enhance an officer's dedication to his profession in the long term.

There were other employment options for officers. Many officers wrote their memoirs, or wrote for the quarterly periodicals while in service as well as after retirement. Colonel G. F.R. Henderson, for example, while teaching at the Staff College, was also the military correspondent for foreign manoeuvres to the London Times.¹²⁰ Some officers held civil appointments with the Foreign Office in the colonies, which counted toward military promotion and pensions.¹²¹ Other regimental officers retired on their pension and moved to government positions. Supervising the civil service exams offered varying fees of up to £191.¹²² Regular work, such as clerking at the Admiralty, offered an income of £175 to a retired lieutenant, and a retired major held the position of Resident Magistrate in Ireland for £425 per annum (less 10% abatement), in addition to their pensions of 4 s. per day (£73) and £250 per annum, respectively.¹²³ Other civil service positions open to captains and majors included inspector (varying fees), deputy prison governor (starting at £250), professor at Sandhurst (£250), and Superintendent for the Poor (£400 less 10%).¹²⁴ However, less than 90 officers had such jobs under the relevant act. Some officers were seconded to police duties in the colonies or to colonial forces, such as the Rhodesian Constabulary, the West African Frontier Force and to the police force in Cyprus, and many of the police officers on the Gold Coast were retired army officers.¹²⁵ Many of the civil administrators in British India were also army officers.¹²⁶ Retired and half-pay officers joined colonial forces, such as those of Australia, until the Superannuation Act of 1887, which cut off pensions to retired officers who took up a colonial military appointment.¹²⁷ There does not appear to be any research that looks at post-service careers, so it is not possible to say whether retiring officers commonly converted their military service to civil service of some form, or changed careers altogether.

By 1898 the pensions had noticeably improved, at least for officers with a rank of lieutenant colonel and above, reinforcing the financial distance between the regimental and general ranks. The financial penalty for retiring early was greater, as it was no longer possible to retire with a pension after only 12 years of service. The original recommendation of the Penzance commission, to favour early retirement so as to speed the promotion of their colleagues, was lost to the need to retain officers. To do this, the War Office further penalised early retirement.

Up to the rank of Captain inclusive:

Voluntary:

After 15 years' service, a pension of £120 a year.

Compulsory:

At 45, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £200 a year.

For a Major:

Voluntary:

After 15 years' service and 3 years in rank, on £120 a year.

After 25 years' service, on £250 a year.

Compulsory:

At 48, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £300 a year.

For a Lieutenant-Colonel:

Voluntary:

After 3 years in rank

and 15 years' service, on £250 a year.

and 27 years' service, on £300 a year.

and 30 years' service, on £365 a year.

and after resigning the command of a battalion or regiment, on £420 a year.

Compulsory:

At 55, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £420 a year.

For a Colonel:

Compulsory:

At 57, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £500 a year.

For a Major-General:

Voluntary:

£700 a year, deducting £10 for every year under 62 years of age, to a minimum of £600 a year.

Compulsory:

At 62, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £700 a year, subject to the same deductions.

For a Lieutenant-General:

£850 a year, deducting £10 for every year under 67 years of age, to a minimum of £750 a year.

Compulsory:

At 67, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £850 a year, subject to the same deductions.

For a General:

£1000 a year, deducting £10 for every year under 67 years of age, to a minimum of £900 a year.

Compulsory:

At 67, or not actively employed for 5 years, on £1,000 a year.¹²⁸

The results of the pension reforms can be seen in the following table.

Officers becoming lieutenant colonels in 1886 had, on average, joined the line army in 1861. Similarly, the majors joined in 1870 and the captains in 1878. This table shows, that, whatever it had been doing in the intervening years from 1871 to 1885, the rate of promotion was now reasonably stable, excepting the anomaly for promotion from major to lieutenant colonel in 1893. The shorter time for promotion from lieutenant to captain after the Boer War was presumably due to the losses in the junior ranks in that war. Also, the number of years in service for the promotion from major to lieutenant colonel had lengthened slightly and the promotions to captain and major seem closer in line to purchase than non-purchase rates of promotion, as desired by the Penzance commission.

Though the graduated pension system recommended by the Penzance commission was never implemented, the stepwise pension system actually put in place did result in about the rate of promotion that was desired by that commission. These pensions, until an officer reached the general ranks, were relatively low. Because the first pension started at 12 (and later 15) years of service, an officer had to make difficult decisions at that point. He had the option of retiring then, or in the relatively near future, with a military education and a net financial gain of zero. If he felt he had little hope of advancement, he could hold out in the captain's rank that he had, and take compulsory retirement, or he could expect to become the most senior captain in the regiment and thereby gain the rank of major or lieutenant-colonel and retire in one of those ranks.

Table 11. Duration of Service (From First Commission).¹²⁹

Year	Lieutenant to Captain (years/months)	Captain to Major (years/months)	Major to Lieutenant Colonel (years/months)
1886	8, 1	16, 3	25, 4
1887	8, 1	18, 1	24, 10
1888	8, 3	17, 4	25, 1
1889	8, 2	17, 11	26, 5
1890	8, 2	17, 3	26, 5
1891	8, 2	17, 5	26, 2
1892	8, 3	17, 7	25, 9
1893	8, 3	17, 5	20, 2
1894	8, 6	17, 8	25, 3
1895	?, 6*	17, 10	25, 7
1896	8, 10	18, 1	24, 7
1897	8, 10	18, 6	25, 3
1898	8, 8	18, 2	24, 3
1903	6, 9	18, 9	-----

*number not printed in original.

The pay grades show much the same financial and career decision problems for an officer as the pension system. Like pensions, pay grades were significantly higher for the general ranks, and, also like the pensions, did not noticeably change in the regimental ranks. In terms of the range of middle class incomes (about £160 to £700), regimental officers were at the lower end.¹³⁰ The thought came late to the War Office that officers ought to have a level of pay that covered their professional expenses from the beginning, or that their pay might be insufficient recompense for their professional expertise. When the War Office compared the expenses of officers to their income at the turn of the century, it was found that a lieutenant had expenses, both directly and indirectly due to his profession, of about £100 to £150 in excess of his income. Yet the War Office decided £60 wasn't an unreasonable burden for a junior officer to carry. Allowances also remained flat, and did not, for junior officers, cover the expenses for which they disbursed. Again, allowances for senior officers were significantly better than those of more junior officers. An officer had to have the rank of captain before his income covered his expenses. It is perhaps

fortunate that these years encompassed a long, shallow economic depression, so that the lack of indexing did not become another burden on the officers' finances.

Pay was also an issue of social status. Other professions in the early years of a career also required large initial outlays that were expected to be met by a private income. The private income needed to start one's career was a social barrier based on personal or parental income, and therefore indirectly on social status. That the minimum private income needed to pass this barrier had lowered somewhat by the end of this period suggests a shift in the social position of the profession; not necessarily, or directly, downwards, but towards a more professional stance, that is, officers were being paid for their expertise. Part of the answer to what social and economic classes were entering a military career can be found in the appendices of the annual inspections of Sandhurst, which include tables of the cadets' paternal parentage. These give some indication of social standing. They also include tables of tuition rates, which indicate the financial standing of the officers who sent their sons to Sandhurst. Parentage was divided among princes, peer, baronets, Ministers of Parliament, army officers, navy officers, clergy, the legal profession (judges, barristers and solicitors), India Civil service, the medical profession, and finally private gentleman, merchants and bankers as a group. This last group is elaborated on in most of the reports of the 1890's, and included advocates, architects, authors, bank agents, bankers, brewers, a captain in the merchant service, members of the Ceylon civil service and the civil service in general, civil service engineers, a civil engineer, clerks, a coal factor, a colonial governor, a commissioner of the New River Co., a doctor of music, an Indian planter, an ironmaster, justices of the peace, land agents, a manufacturer, merchants, a postmaster-general, a professor, a publisher, a stock broker, schoolmasters, and a secretary. These are not the "gentlemen of leisure" postulated by Otley, but a wide variety of businessmen and public servants.¹³¹

The total number of cadets was rising throughout this period, so it is unsurprising that the number of sons of officers was rising also, until it levelled off in the 1890's. The number of sons of private gentlemen began to rise in the 1890's, whereas the number of other professionals remained relatively steady. The number

of navy officers' sons and sons of the nobility was never very large. However, the percentage of these groups changes differently. The percentage of army officers' sons rises abruptly in the 1870's, as the new requirements for officers are legislated and implemented, then levels off to a little less than 50% of the total, and then begins to decline again in the late 1890's. The percentage of private gentlemen reverses this, dropping in the 1870's to a little under 30%, then rising starting in the early 1890's. The percentage of professional's sons drops through the early 1880's to 16%, then slowly rises to 20% before dropping again in the mid 1890's. The percentage of nobles' and naval officers' sons varies below 5%. Which officers' sons are represented can be found from the tables of tuition rates.

Tuition was subsidised for the sons of officers based on their fathers rank, at rates ranging from 36% for sons of general officers who were colonels of regiments or received Indian Colonel's allowances to 84% for the sons of deceased officers whose families were "left in penury distress". "Private gentlemen" paid the full £125. These gentlemen's sons ranged between 50% and 60% of all cadets for this period, so the percentage of officers' son's ranged between 30% and 40%. Queen's cadets remained under 3% of the total and Indian cadets no more than 10% and sons of deceased officers whose families were in financial difficulties were never more than 2% of the total. Officers who had a rank of below that of colonel or a regimental field command, or was an instructor at one of the military colleges, that is, regimental officers, never comprised more than 15%, having risen to that level in 1886 from around 5%. However, officers' sons above the regimental ranks, that is colonels and general officers ranged between 23% and 33%. Obviously, some of the private gentlemen paying the full cost of tuition were retired officers, as more men claimed to be officers' sons than were paying subsidised rates, and could afford to do so. Of those officers paying subsidised rates, the percentage of regimental officers is much lower than that of more senior officers, suggesting that officers' families came from those who achieved high rank, and that those who retired as regimental officers were significantly less likely to send their sons to Sandhurst. The educational discounts offered to officers' sons supported an "own class" recruitment pattern, that "own class" being the most senior officers. At the same time, sons of other professions and careers went to Sandhurst, in competition with the sons of senior

officers, hoping to reach the upper end of this profession.¹³² Others have commented on the significant, but decreasing share of senior ranks held by the aristocracy and gentry.¹³³ There was, in a sense, two officers corps, first, those mostly from financially and socially middle to upper middle class households, who were regimental officers, and did not find the military a sufficiently successful career to justify sending their sons into it, and secondly, the officer corps composed of officers who achieved high rank, and were slowly, but increasingly, composed of successful competitors from the households of “private gentlemen” of professional, business or military backgrounds.

Neither the base rate of pay for regimental officers, nor their allowances, changed appreciably in 30 years. (see Table 12. Officers’ Base Rates of Pay) The rate of pay for the various lieutenancies varied by a few pounds, as the various second lieutenants, sub-lieutenants, cadets and full lieutenants were created and replaced. Pay for majors shifted by a few shillings, and the captain’s rate of pay shifted not at all, remaining a steady 211 *l.* 7 *s.* 11 *d.* for the entire period. A few pounds per annum were added for seniority; lieutenant colonels got command pay of 54 *l.* 15 *s.*, majors of 3 years seniority got 44 *l.* 3 *s.* 9 *d.* extra, captains got 36 *l.* 10 *s.* in addition if the rank was brevet, and 45 *l.* 12 *s.* 6 *d.* additional if adjutant, lieutenants got an extra 22 *l.* 16 *s.* 3 *d.* after 3 years service, and another 18 *l.* 5 *s.* on top of that after 10 years service in rank.¹³⁴ In 1887, a major got that after 2 years seniority, and an extra 18 *l.* 5 *s.* if the senior major in the battalion. Lieutenants lost the seniority pay at 3 years and at 10 years and instead got an extra 18 *l.* 5 *s.* for 7 years in rank. After this, there were no further changes.¹³⁵ Pay at levels higher than the regimental ranks was noticeably better. The 1871 estimates show that colonels made £1000 a year.¹³⁶ By 1899 this had slipped slightly, and a colonel in command of a regimental district was making £730 per year and a colonel in command of a brigade earned 912 *l.* 10 *s.* A major general received £1,095, a lieutenant general 2,007 *l.* 10 *s.* and a full general was paid £2,920.

Table 12. Officers' Base Rates of Pay per annum, per budget years 1871-72 to 1901-1902 (showing only years of change). [Vote 1 App. 2]

Budget Year	Lieutenant Colonel (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Major (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Captain (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Lieutenants and Sub-Lieutenants (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Ensigns (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
1871-72	310.5.0	292.0.0	211.7.11	118.12.6	95.16.3
1872-73	310.5.0	292.0.0	211.7.11	95.16.3	---
1873-74	310.5.0	292.0.0	211.7.11	95.16.3	---
	Lieutenant Colonel (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Major (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Captain (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Lieutenants (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Second Lieutenants (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
1877-78	310.5.0	292.0.0	211.7.11	6.6, 118.12.6	95.16.3
1882-83	328.10.0	247.17.11	211.7.11	95.16.3	Not exist
1887-88	328.10.0	247.17.11	211.7.11	118.12.6	95.16.3

Allowances also remained flat over this period, varying by a pound or two.

The point at which an officer could live within his means (given, in 1900, a minimum of £60 costs over a second-lieutenant's income) was an income of £155 or £195 (if £100 in costs), so in principle, with the additions to pay made by the allowances, a junior officer could meet his expenses on the lowest wage, with allowances, if he did not travel.¹³⁷ However, deployments were becoming shorter over this period, resulting in more moves, and hence, greater expenses.¹³⁸ The following table shows the home allowances for 1887.

Table 13. Pay and Allowances (per annum) in 1887.¹³⁹

Rank	Mess Allowance (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Forage and Stabling Allowance (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Lodging Allowance (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Fuel and Light Allowance (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Total Pay (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
Lieutenant Colonel	--	71.11.3	73.0.0	16.7.0	550.3.3
Major	6.0.0	41.1.3	54.15.0	12.18.7	362.12.9
Captain	6.0.0	--	41.1.3	6.9.3	264.18.5
Lieutenant	6.0.0	--	36.10.0	6.9.3	167.11.9
2 nd Lieutenant	6.0.0	--	36.10.0	6.9.3	144.15.6

The officers suffered from numerous expenses, particularly mess expenses, which required a private income to cover, at least during an officer's years as a

subaltern. Few of these expenses were of any concern of the government until officers' out-of-pocket expenses finally became an issue after the South African War. The expense that was of interest to the government was travel expenses, which was closely related to the cost of messing and quarters.

Under the purchase system, an officer who retired voluntarily (with less than 25 years service) was expected to pay both his own and his successor's passage, "it being held that an Officer selling his commission must bear all charges, directly or indirectly, arising from the step he took, and that the Public must not be put to any expense".¹⁴⁰ There were no immediate changes in 1871, as retiring officers initially received their purchase money from the state, but the policy was modified in 1881 because new regulations that required retirement before 25 years service made this obligation, according to the officers, a serious hardship. Thus officers were obligated to pay for their own passage only, unless compulsorily retired, or had over 20 years service, in which case the state covered their passage.¹⁴¹

The more general problem of travel expenses connects to messing and quarters through the issue of shipping officers equipment, furniture and other luggage. Officers' furniture alone was 1/6 of the total baggage of a battalion that was moved at government expense.¹⁴² The furniture itself was another expense for officers. The committee on furnishing officers messes and quarters of 1883, headed by Lord Wolseley, recommended that the provision of furniture could be contracted out to save the cost of shipping officers' effects. The committee recommended that captains' and subalterns' quarters be furnished with, at government expense, two chair covers, a bed and palliasse, a washstand with crockery and towel rails, a small table, an armchair, a chest of drawers, a clothes press, a looking glass, a paraffin lamp (if there was no gas lighting), a tin bath, and a door mat. Additionally, a field officer would have a sitting room, for which the committee proposed the government supply a door mat, two tables, a sofa, 2 arm chairs, four Windsor chairs, six covers for the chairs, a book case, and a lamp. The officer would have to supply any further bedding, carpets, curtains and hearthrugs. The cost of the government-supplied items was estimated at 18 *l.* 3 *s.* for the bedroom and an additional 37 *l.* 3 *s.* for the sitting room.¹⁴³ An officer was therefore presumably spending at least that much to

supply it himself, as well as whatever shipping costs for this the government would not cover. The Treasury, having quashed the initial proposal, finally granted, on pressure from the QMG, an experimental effort to furnish the GOC's houses, which was not successful.¹⁴⁴

The actual amount of baggage and furniture permitted a regimental officer was about 18 to 20 cwt. (cwt. = one hundredweight, or 112 pounds) for a lieutenant colonel, about 15 cwt. for a major, and 9 to 10 cwt. for captains and lieutenants. The allowance was considerably more generous at the general ranks, being from 30 to 40 cwt.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, an officer's wife, if he had one, was permitted 6 cwt. for herself and any children under 14, ½ cwt. for any daughter over 14 and any son age 14 to 16.¹⁴⁶ There was no baggage allowance for moves required for temporary duties such as camps or courses of instruction.¹⁴⁷ This fact alone would explain the numerous advertisements in the contemporary professional press for camp furniture that, for example, packed conveniently into a self-case and opened up into either a camp bed or a table at need. Field kit, which was also proposed to be free issue under the furniture scheme, was estimated to cost another £6, which, again, was yet another expense presumably covered by the officers.¹⁴⁸

It wasn't until 1896 that the costs of travelling, as compared to the allowances granted to cover it, began to be looked at. The Quarter-Master General, then Evelyn Wood, told the Secretary of State that the regulations for travel needed to be simplified because they were too rigid, control was too centralised, and because some allowances "press hardly on officers and Non-commissioned officers".¹⁴⁹ To approval in the minutes, the report of the committee for travelling expenses agreed with the QMG, and recommended that travel rates be significantly increased and expanded, and that commanding officers have greater discretion regarding the issue of expenses. More specifically, overnight travel rates for regimental officers were increased from 10 s. to 12 s. 6 d. (15 s. to 20 s. for senior officers), daily travel rates from 3 s. 6 d. to 6 s. (15 s. to 20 s. for senior officers), and the same for troop moves. In 1897 it was recommended that an officer taking up or quitting appointment to the personal staff of a general officer, or an officer appearing before a medical board, should be allowed travelling expenses because he was "on the public service", and

general officers specifically be allowed to extend further allowances when an officer's costs rose due to travel delays beyond the allowance provided, or when the officers were otherwise put to extra expense while travelling.¹⁵⁰

Not all expenses may have been necessarily official or sanctioned. In 1893 two letters in the Army and Navy Gazette complained about the burden of regimental charges for junior officers, including having to pay for bands. General Buller, offended, commented internally that these complaints were obviously false, as commanding officers were required to fill in a confidential report before the annual inspection that queried unit policy on, among other things, messing charges, mess and band funds, and regimental subscriptions, and that, according to regulations, officers below the rank of captain were not required to subscribe to or contribute to the band.¹⁵¹ Though General Buller plainly trusted the honour of his commanding officers over that of a junior cavalry officer, it does not follow he was correct to do so, and if contributions were being extracted from junior officers in the cavalry against regulations, it is possible it was being done in the line infantry as well. It would certainly aid to filter out those who could not afford the "right" regiments.

When the question of officer expenses became more general in 1900, as part of the wider move to a new round of reforming commissions, the army to which the government turned for comparison was the European army considered the most professional of its day - the German army. For the following numbers it should be noted that these papers convert 100 marks to 100 shillings (though the exchange rate was reckoned to be 102 to 100) and that the cost of living difference was stated to make a mark worth two to three times a shilling.¹⁵² In terms of the real cost of living, it was noted that an officer could live very well in Berlin on 4 s. per day and 3 s. per day elsewhere (73 l. and 54 l. 15 s. per year, respectively).¹⁵³ J. E. Edmonds, then a DAAG (deputy assistant adjutant general) and the writer of the report, further notes that he paid 28 s. a week for 2 rooms, all meals included, for the most expensive rooms in Heidelberg and that good rooms were to be had in Berlin for 10 s. per week.¹⁵⁴

Edmonds claimed that few junior officers in the German army had an allowance over £12 and that those second lieutenants with little or no private income got income supplements, and that “anyone above the rank of 2nd Lieutenant can live on his pay and want of private means is no bar to an officer rising to the highest commands”. This was less than the private income mentioned in a covering note by Colonel H. H. Waters, the military attaché in Berlin, who quoted the emperor’s statement of a decade earlier that an infantry officer should need no more than £27 per year in addition to their pay.¹⁵⁵ Perhaps the Emperor’s 1891 admonitions for greater simplicity of living style had been heeded, though perhaps not to the degree Edmonds claimed. Just prior to the First World war, 45RM per month (£27 at 100RM per 100 s.) was sent by parents to their subaltern sons to pay for uniforms, horses and lessons, and one third of pay was held back by the army for the cost of uniforms.¹⁵⁶

According to the military attaché, the German regimental pay structure was, in £:

officer commanding a regiment		390
"	"	
battalion		292
"	"	
company, squadron or battery		135 to 195
First Lieutenant		75
Lieutenant:		
a) Infantry		45
b) Cavalry & Field Artillery		50
c) Foot Artillery		59

Additional allowances were made for lodging and stabling, if necessary, if the State was not already providing them. H. A. Laurence, another DAAG, in a covering note to Water’s report states that there was an additional lodging allowance given, of unspecified amount, which was effectively part of pay.¹⁵⁷ Extra duties, such as adjutant, further education, and attachments, merited extra pay ranging from £10 to £45.¹⁵⁸ Wages for junior officers with colonial troops and abroad were significantly

larger. A second lieutenant earned £315 and a lieutenant £375. Second lieutenants and lieutenants with the China expedition earned £204 and £240 respectively, including £60 for their outfit.¹⁵⁹

Compared with British pay scales, (£96 for ensigns, £118 for a lieutenant, £212 for a captain, £248 for a major and £329 for a lieutenant colonel) the pay of the German army was somewhat lower for subalterns, and somewhat higher for the more senior ranks. However, if the cost of living comparison was correct, German pay was significantly better than British pay. It was stated that: “Married officers can and do maintain their position in Germany on that sum. It would barely keep the unmarried subaltern in this country.”¹⁶⁰ German officers required permission before marrying, and if they did not have the rank of captain first class, they were required to deposit sufficient capital at the War Ministry to make their gross income equivalent to the salary of that rank, that is 239 *l.* 16 *s.*, given an interest rate of 5%, or £4796.¹⁶¹ Another source puts the figure for the minimum private income to be 2500RM for a lieutenant and 1000RM for a captain in 1900. This was not the only hurdle. Permission also depended on whether the officer’s prospective wife passed an investigation into her background, upbringing, education, and was of a suitable social class. A suitable marriage would assist an officers’ quest for his majority.¹⁶²

The following are the German allowance rates, which may be compared to the British ones:

Table 14. German Pay and Allowances.¹⁶³

Rank	Pay (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Servis (consolidated allowance)* (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Lodging Money** (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Table Money*** (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Stable Money (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
Lieutenant	75.0.0	14.8.0 to 27.0.0 according to size and expense of the town, or 2.5.0 in barracks	10.16.0 to 21.0.0 according to size and expense of the town	5.0.0	5.0.0 first horse and 3.0.0 any other horses
2 nd Lieutenant	59.8.0	same	same	same	same

*barracks preferentially assigned to junior officers

**real addition to pay from 1873 to compensate cost of living in Germany

***cover dining in mess rather than in lodgings or cheap restaurants

German junior officer allowances and perquisites included 2 rooms in barracks, with furniture and coal and wood, though no servant room or allowance for light. If these officers stayed out of barracks, they were allowed to draw for furniture at a rate of 1 *s.* 6 *d.* of the servis. Their messes (an innovation recently copied from the British) were furnished and equipped by the government. There were allowances for change of station, detachment, travel and mileage, and these covered all expenses.¹⁶⁴ Servants were provided with uniforms and paid £5 per month.¹⁶⁵ Additionally, there were several financial support mechanisms. There was an assistance fund, supported by the government and by officer subscription, that covered expenses for the ranks for captain and under to cover the cost of the change of uniform on transfer, replacement of equipment due to fire or theft, absence on detachment, travel when ill, and staff college attendance. There was a special college assistance fund, and second lieutenants whose private income was £3 or less were permitted to apply to the Minister of War to get an allowance to make up their income to £12 per year. Finally, small loans were available at a rate of 2% per annum until shortly before 1900 and 1% thereafter.¹⁶⁶

Table 15. Comparison of Expenses (Inniskilling Fusiliers vs. Guardsman).¹⁶⁷

	British (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	German (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
Mess and Subscription	144.0.0	58.19.0
Tailor	40.0.0	14.8.0
Servant	6.0.0	3.0.0
Livery	1.0.0	Nil
Washing	12.0.0	2.12.0
Loss in moves and travelling claims	5.0.0	Nil
Annual depreciation of furniture	4.0.0	Nil
Extra expenses at manoeuvres at 10s. per day	7.0.0	Nil
Total	219.0.0	78.19.0

Expenses per month included the mess subscription at 3 *s.*, music at 1 *s.* 6 *d.*, the library at 4 *d.*, the above mentioned assistance fund at 1 *s.*, life insurance at 1 *s.*, for a total of 6 *s.* 10 *d.* per month or about 4 *l.* 4 *s.* per year.¹⁶⁸ Extra expenses were

refunded.¹⁶⁹ All Lieutenants and Captains contributed to a uniform fund at a rate of 1 *l.* 4 *s.* per month (14 *l.* 8 *s.* per year) and this was expected to cover the cost of all uniforms. The German officers' initial outlay for clothing was about 25 *l.* for 3 coats, two headdresses, trousers and a paletot.¹⁷⁰ The issue of clothing shows up some of the differences in culture and hence expenses between German and British officers. Inclusive of swords and belts, a German officer's outfit cost 18 *l.* 12 *s.* 6 *d.* from the *Waarenhaus für Armee und Marine*, and a British officer's 48 *l.* 12 *s.* from the Army and Navy Co-operative Society.¹⁷¹ This does not fully indicate the gulf in prices. The German officer actually obtained his uniform from the *Waarenhaus*, though he could alternatively get the fabric from the clothing depot and have the regimental tailors make it up, whereas the price of the British uniform was taken from the Army and Navy Store list, where, in fact, no British officer got his uniform, "for no Colonel would pass the cut and they are compelled to go to selected army tailors who charge from half as much again to double the Store prices".¹⁷² However, if the difference in cost of living was two or three shillings to the mark (around 1 *l.* to 1 *l.* 10 *s.* per 10 RM), as claimed, then the difference in total expenses of Table 15 is very much wider.

These estimates of 1900 can be compared with the information from the Stanley commission on officer's expenses of 1902. The latter's estimates were, again, a minimum estimate, not an average, of a junior officer's expenses.¹⁷³ On the other hand, the witnesses claimed that "the supposed extravagance of living in the Army nowadays is in a great degree imaginary", and the commission was satisfied that ordinary regimental expenses had declined in recent years.¹⁷⁴ The commission's estimate that a junior officer had to have a private income of £100 to £150, in addition to an initial outlay of £150 to £200 were probably in fact the minimum expenses for the period from the end of purchase to the South African war. Officers' expenses, and the private incomes they needed, were therefore higher throughout the period of this study than indicated by the commission's numbers.¹⁷⁵ Examples from memoirs support this. Major-General Dunsterville wrote, "my father gave me the small allowance of £100 a year, which just doubled my pay; but this fell far short of my Mess-bill, and further parental assistance was necessary at frequent intervals."¹⁷⁶ His mess bill was much enlarged when he found that the cost of learning mess

etiquette was to pay for mistakes with a round of port.¹⁷⁷ As a junior officer with the Gordon's, Ian Hamilton's mess bills were £270 a month.¹⁷⁸ Major General Sir George Younghusband, writing, as a captain in 1891, a guide for parents as to whether their son should consider a career in the army, wrote that a minimum of £120 a year more than pay was needed to live in England or the Mediterranean as a junior officer. A subaltern could live on his pay in India, but an extra £50 a month would be helpful.¹⁷⁹ For all the commentary that junior officers needed private incomes (and the landed class, or at least wealth, which such an income implied), what was needed was for their fathers to have an income sufficient, or at least stretchable enough, to supply an allowance to their sons until the latter were sufficiently advanced in their careers to support themselves.

As can be seen from the tables below, the commission did not contemplate lowering the minimum total expenses of officers, but rather shifting the costs away from necessities to ordinary incidentals; a recommendation that cut the cost of necessities by only £10. The commission felt that "it should be possible for an Officer's expenses as a whole to be kept within the totals mentioned in any regiment of Infantry...under ordinary conditions".¹⁸⁰ Either way, the minimum private income a junior officer would have to have to cover expenses in excess of income was at least £60.

Table 17. Initial Expenses.¹⁸¹

	Under present conditions. (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Under conditions recommended. (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
Necessities of Military Service:		
Uniform and cases	97.2.6	90.0.0
Mess Contribution	7.17.6	0.0.0
Requisites of Ordinary Life in the Army:		
Furniture	35.0.0*	0.0.0
Plain clothes and kit	60.0.0	60.0.0
Total	200.0.0	150.0.0

*Furniture could be rented at a rate of 25 s. per month.¹⁸²

Table 16. Current Expenses.¹⁸³

	Under present conditions. (<i>l. s. d.</i>)	Under recommended conditions. (<i>l. s. d.</i>) (<i>l. s. d.</i>)
Necessities of Military Service:		
Mess subscriptions	2.2.0	2.2.0
Mess incidentals	6.0.0	6.0.0
Mess guests	3.0.0	3.0.0
Messing (less 60 days leave)	61.0.0	53.7.6
Furniture, quarters, and mess	0.0.0	3.0.10
Moves and manoeuvres	5.0.0	0.0.0
Uniform and boots	10.0.0	8.0.0
Washing and mending	12.0.0	12.0.0
Pay 1 st servant	6.0.0	6.0.0
Balance for contingencies	0.0.0	2.5.11
Sub-Total	105.2.0	95.16.3 (current pay of 2 nd lt.)
Expenses of Ordinary Life in the Army:		
Tobacco and stimulants	15.5.0	22.0.0
Regimental clubs, &c.	3.0.0	3.0.0
Plain clothes, 1 st servant	5.0.0	5.0.0
Ditto self and incidentals	27.9.3	30.0.0
Sub-Total	50.14.3	60.0.0
Total	155.16.3	155.16.3

Even under the commission's recommendations, a junior officer was looking at looking at £60 of expenses in excess of his pay. Why? There seems to be little point in increasing the estimate of the officer's tobacco consumption except to make the numbers come out the same. The committee appears to have thought that dropping the required private income from £100 to £60 was sufficient to accommodate men of "modest" means.

There seems to have been some difference of opinion as to what the expenses meant. On the one side, there were those, such as Lord Roberts and the commission, who felt that standard expenses were not the source of financial difficulty, whereas others, such as Lord Lansdowne, felt that officers' normal expenses should not exceed their income. What is actually remarkable in these papers on the financial status of officers is the sudden change in aesthetic, with the *fin de siècle* and prior

standards of expenditure being denounced in favour of a new standard of fiscal modesty. Sumptuous entertaining by officers had become passé and asceticism was fashionable. The man of modest personal means was a desired recruit. It is possible that this change in attitude towards expected professional behaviour starts with the government, who had noticed the shortage in officers, particularly in the recent South African War, or the public, who had become more aware of the army due to that war. However, it is more likely that there was a generation and a half of families who had chosen the financially modest, low risk career of army officer, who had either not the ambition or not the contacts, and who were therefore in modest financial circumstances. The officers themselves probably felt they and their fathers (themselves officers or other kinds of professionals) were increasingly burdened by the costs of their profession. The expenses of the profession, even if they had declined over the years, were no longer supportable on the savings accrued from their careers and men of now modest means were looking elsewhere for a professional career. In effect, the government was crippling itself by paying its recruiting base out of existence. The sons of professional officers could no longer afford to join the officer corps, or were unwilling to when there were other, more lucrative professions to choose, and the pay and pension was not sufficient to justify the investment.

Yet the two factions may not have meant the same thing using the term 'expenses'. Lord Roberts did not see his fellow officers joining the army for the sake of the profession. In 1901 he wrote, "I would strongly depreciate any drastic measures of interference with the comfort of the Messes, or with the ordinary social life of the British officer; such measures would tend to lower the popularity of the service among the class from which we at present draw our officers and whatever faults there may be in the training of our officer, the material is of the best. A voluntary army must depend upon popularity and any falling off in that respect in the commissioned ranks, would inevitably be reflected on N. C. O's (sic) and men."¹⁸⁴ While he did favour allowances that would cover expenses, he felt that it was unforeseen expenses relating to transfers and duty at exercises, rather than regular expenses, that caused financial difficulties.¹⁸⁵ In Lord Roberts' view, men joined the officer corps for its convivial (and costly) fraternity with other men of the same

social and financial status. Lord Roberts himself was part of the Anglo-Irish gentry and, not being wealthy, served in India because it was cheaper than living in Britain.¹⁸⁶ After he retired from the position of Commander in Chief of India and was in London lobbying for a suitable posting, he turned down the position of governor of Malta because his income, which derived solely from his salary, would not cover his expenses.¹⁸⁷ Yet many junior officers were at least as conscious as Lord Roberts of the financial advantages of India. Captain Younghusband, in his 1891 guide for prospective subalterns, claimed that, of 350 cadets, 250 requested placement in the Indian army. The pay and pensions were better, and the furloughs more generous. Professional opportunities were greater as well. Independent command existed at more junior ranks, offering more chances to be noticed in a campaign, and more campaigns in which to be noticed. Appointment to the staff in India was possible without going through Staff College, which, Younghusband advised, was no longer a realistic possibility in Britain.¹⁸⁸

Lord Roberts thought that reducing expenses in the British army to the level the German emperor hoped (£27 per annum for the infantry) was impossible, though he felt that “much may be done to discourage extravagance and assist economy”.¹⁸⁹ This suggests that he had not necessarily read the information in the document carefully; it is possible that Roberts did not get along with Edmonds, or Roberts may have been too busy to read the document. The enclosed letter from the emperor was a decade old, and if Edmonds was correct that German career officers required an income of £12 (or £27 according to other sources), then the emperor had been successful in his intent to lower expenses. Edmonds also claimed that the social atmosphere did not work against those with little private income.

A very small proportion of the junior officers of the German army have an allowance of more than £12 per annum, some have not even this. The families which have supplied officers to the army for generation after generation are not rich and it is thought no disgrace for an officer to be poor. The present Emperor has done much in order that midst the increasing wealth of the nation the officer without means may not only exist, but if capable and hardworking may have the same opportunities for self-improvement, the same possibility of rising as his richer comrades. It may not be out of place to recall that von Moltke himself was without private means, that he raised the money necessary for his studies at the Kriege Academie (Staff College)

by writing military articles and that even when he was Chief of the General Staff his two maiden sisters took in boarders without derogation of his or their dignity.”¹⁹⁰

“Any parade of wealth is looked upon as snobbish and simplicity is encouraged. “I dined,” says Edmonds, “last month at the Mess of the 2nd Foot Guards in Berlin. The dinner consisted of Soup (sic), fish, joint, a cream tart and cheese. It cost 1 mark, 20 pfennig. (1 *l.*, 2 ½ *s.*). The wine was put on the table in its original bottles, the waiters were soldiers in uniform. There was no plate. Yet the officers who sat around me wore the time honoured names of Blücher Müffling, Moltke, Alvensleben, Herwert von Bittenfeld etc.”¹⁹¹ If his observations are correct, the emperor also succeeded, as per the exhortation of his letter, in changing the social attitude within the officer corps towards expenditure and incomes.

However, most German officers were not dining at the most prestigious and most socially exclusive mess in Germany. Most spent their careers drilling troops in small provincial towns on the borders. If they did not achieve the rank of major, and thereby access to higher commands, the only other option, aside from retirement, was to pass the exams to get into the War Academy. These were considered very difficult, and many more applied than were accepted.¹⁹² The vast majority of officers were retired as captains in their mid- forties, having failed to gain their majority.¹⁹³ Alternately, an officer might be accepted to one of the 160 places at the War Academy, and if he passed the three-year course, and was one of the one in ten accepted into the operational branches of the General Staff and the field divisions, his career was made.¹⁹⁴

Expenses were such that most junior officers needed to have a private income.¹⁹⁵ A parental subsidy of 45RM a month would cover uniforms, horses, dancing lessons, fencing instruction and suitable social activities.¹⁹⁶ Officers who did not have a private income shorted themselves food and heat and tried not to wear their coats to avoid wear. The stipends mentioned in the British reports could not be depended on and the travel allowances were lower than those for civilians, and so may not have covered the cost of travel, though the British understood them to do so. Food, drink, tobacco, lodging and regimental and widow’s funds were deducted from

pay, again contradicting the British understanding that food and lodging were paid for by an allowance on top of pay, and tobacco a matter of private purchase, though pay, in the case of this source, may include allowances. The officers also paid for changes in uniform style. Debt was not uncommon, but if it became unmanageable, a court of honour would dismiss the officer from service.¹⁹⁷ Just before World War One, second lieutenants were paid 125 RM per month, lieutenants 200 RM and captains from 182 to 425 RM per month, which approximately agrees with the figures given by the British reports [this repeats p. 43; cut?].¹⁹⁸ An anonymous British officer who had served in the Prussian army put the pay rates at £60 per year for lieutenants, rising to £85 and later £120 after some years in service, and that captains received £180 to £250.¹⁹⁹ One third of that covered the cost of uniforms, which were more expensive than the British reports claimed.²⁰⁰ Pensions are not discussed in current literature, if they existed. Current literature is significantly more negative about the financial situation of German officers than the British reports, which probably reflects the writers' efforts to show British expenses in a negative light compared to German ones. The low pay of the officer corps, intended to be a barrier to applicants of unsuitable social status was, in 1911, pointed to as having become a barrier to suitable ones.²⁰¹ The anonymous British officer estimated that a man would need a savings of £1000 to consider Prussian army a realistic career choice.²⁰²

The point here regarding the wider political context following the war is that, while the impetus for reform was short-lived, reforms were centred on other issues than officers. Having established to its satisfaction that it was ok for junior officers to have to have expenses over pay, so long as those expenses could be excused as relevant to their professional needs, and that, for the most part, the junior officers were perceived to have done reasonably well, though much could be done with their education, and the staff training needed work, the gradually worsening shortage of officers was not enough incentive for the government to change pay rates or make radical changes in their education or promotion. The community from which the officer corps was drawn was not under question; the question was how to continue drawing from this pool. As Lieutenant General Kelly-Kenny said in evidence to the Elgin commission, "I think he [the regimental officer] is a splendid leader, and I do

not think we will improve our position by going to another class. There will be great social difficulties and...even in the infantry I think scarcely any officer can live comfortably without £100 a year."²⁰³ That the cost of being an officer was causing recruiting difficulties and thus a shortage of officers was the opinion of several officers speaking in evidence before the Elgin commission, though Lord Roberts claimed there was no shortage of applicants.²⁰⁴ The failures of senior officers were solved by retiring them and bringing up the officers (like Haig and Kitchener) that were just below the level of independent command during the South African war. The problem of training senior officers to deal with masses of troops was dealt with by making the annual manoeuvres larger, more complex and more realistic.²⁰⁵

At the international level, it was becoming obvious that the currents of European politics were shifting, as France and Russia had made an alliance 1894, and German government decided to double the size of its navy in 1899.²⁰⁶ Worse, Germany, France and Russia, disapproving of this war, contemplated involving themselves in it.²⁰⁷ The need for troops was also risking Britain's security from invasion in favour of maintaining garrisons in the colonies and raised questions about Britain's ability to send a future expeditionary force while maintaining home and imperial security.²⁰⁸

As the South African war dragged on, it exposed numerous problems in the British army. The tactics of all branches came under question, as did the quality and effectiveness of the medical corps and transport and logistics and the competence of senior officers to hold independent command, and the need for regimental officers to show more initiative and more responsibility (and suffer less dampening supervision by more senior regimental officers).²⁰⁹

The unionist government, having survived the 1900 election, and assuming the war won, turned to the issue of army reform. St. John Brodrick took the position of Secretary for War from a Lord Lansdowne thoroughly tired of holding that position. Brodrick introduced his reform scheme in March of 1901, proposing an expansion of the regular army and its reorganisation into six corps, to not only protect India and cover home defence, but also to deal with the risk of European war.

He also planned to raise enlistment for expansion thorough short-term service, and increasing pay. These proposals were passed by the House despite opposition both from the Liberal opposition, whose leader, Campbell-Bannerman, remained convinced that home defence was a navy issue, and from within his own party, and the disapproval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks Beach. However, recruiting was less than successful. Neither did Brodrick get the support of the War Office. Brodrick also implemented the recommendations of the Dawkins Committee on Administrative reform of May 1901, expanding the War Office Council and giving the Commander in Chief control over the Adjutant General, the Military Secretary and the Director of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, but the Council discussed detail rather than policy and Lord Roberts thought that the powers of the Commander in Chief, limited in 1895, were insufficiently restored and offered his resignation in the fall of 1901.²¹⁰

The impetus for reform was short-lived. In the wake of a war that was both longer and much more expensive than expected, political, press and public enthusiasm for large-scale spending in aid of reform quickly waned. The Liberals, no longer divided by the war, felt freer to attack the government, and articles by The Times war correspondent, L. S. Amery, supported backbench Unionists opposed to military spending. Brodrick's political position deteriorated throughout 1903, and finally collapsed with the August publication of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa. The report aired the many shortcomings of the army's conduct of the late war, including the lack of strategic planning and the poor quality of much of the staff work, and exposed the disagreements between the Secretary and the War Office. Hugh Arnold-Forster, who accepted on the condition that a committee consider how to reorganise the War Office, replaced Brodrick. On the advice of this committee, headed by Lord Esher, the Committee of Imperial Defence gained a permanent secretariat, an Army Council was added to the War Office, and the army eventually got a General Staff in 1906, though the new heads could not agree whether the Esher committee was correct to recommend that the General Staff officers be recruited form the staff college, or that they be rewarded with faster promotion. As a precondition, the Committee required that Lord Roberts and the heads of the four military departments be replaced, ending the influence of Lord

Roberts as the influence of Wolseley's clique effectively ended due to the reverses early in the war.²¹¹

While criticisms were made about the cost of being an officer the success of reform efforts in dealing with these issues was limited. While the costs of becoming an officer had ensured that, hitherto, the members of the upper and middle classes, that is, the graduates of the public school system, would supply the officer corps, the shortage of officers that was becoming a problem before the South African war continued afterwards, and well past the first world war. In the face of quickly declining interest in costly reform, the government was not going to increase officers' pay rates.²¹² Recruitment continued to decline because being an officer was simply too costly, and too much work for the remuneration.²¹³ The Akers-Douglas committee's suggestion, that promotion be determined by merit, foundered on fears of patronage and favouritism.²¹⁴ A clear definition of merit, that could be measured, remained a problem. The end of both Lord Roberts' and Lord Wolseley's cliques destabilized the patronage system within the army, which left promotions to the whims of arms rivalry and personal favouritism, and the success of cavalry patronage was evident in the command of the British Expeditionary Force of 1914.²¹⁵ In the post world war one period, the army was well known to be a career avoided by the ambitious; the pay was low compared to the up front costs, promotion was still by seniority within the regiment, and officers were being compulsorily retired in their late 40s or early 50s (that is, at the rank of major and its attendant pension) when they were no doubt facing the costs of post-secondary education for their own sons.²¹⁶ The problems that had existed before the Boer war, that risked the recruiting base, had not been addressed, and were becoming increasingly more obvious.

One year before Roberts made his comments, Lord Lansdowne, in an internal response to complaints about the cost of cavalry and other expenses made in the Army and Navy Gazette in 1893, wrote that he had no political leverage unless officers visibly cut back on their spending. "It must, however, be clearly understood that if the public is to be asked to improve the financial position of these Officers by bringing their pay more nearly into line with their inevitable expenses, the Military

Authorities must on their side put their foot down and discourage by the strongest of measures if necessary, the extravagance of which some Regiments are guilty.”²¹⁷ Furthermore, the commanders must be held responsible “if the tone and habits of the regiment become extravagant”.²¹⁸ Someone, whose initials are an illegible scrawl, supported and expanded on the idea that pay should have some connection to professional expenses. This person points out that an officer’s necessary expenses were about triple his income, resulting in a system where officers “are thus deliberately, and as a part of a recognized (sic) system, sustained in the discharge of public duties largely by private funds. Is there any other branch of public service where such a system prevails?” If there was any intention to open the officer corps to wider competition, then the officer’s income had more closely to match reduced expenditure, else “we shall still keep out, under the existing system, the man who does not lack brains and education, but who lacks money”.²¹⁹

The committee on officers’ expenses of 1902 tended to support Roberts’ view. “In the opinion of the Committee there can be no doubt that the demands made upon an Officer’s means by these customary expenses, (‘those falling on a Regimental Officer in view of the style of living habitually adopted by the majority of his brother Officers, irrespective of the demands of the Service, *i.e.*, chiefly expenditure incurred by Officers on pursuits and amusements quite independent of their professional position’) rather than any incidental to his profession as such, are mainly responsible for the high average of private incomes regarded as requisite in the Army generally, and particularly in certain units.”²²⁰ However, those customary expenses were in need of reduction, because they reflected badly on the officer corps as a whole, being “a profession which should set an example of simplicity of living”.²²¹ Secondly, because of the shortage of officers due to the South African war, the officer corps had to be no less attractive a professional field to enter than its competition. The members of the committee felt “that their recommendations on any specific point should only be regarded as a part of a comprehensive scheme for reducing the necessary expenditure of a young Officer to a minimum not disproportionate to that involved in entering another profession, and for promoting throughout the Service a standard of living generally not inconsistent with that

existing among the classes from whom the Services and the liberal professions generally are in the main recruited.”²²²

The expectation of “extravagant” expenditure to keep up with the other officers of the regiment was seen as detrimental to recruiting suitable young men. “Any action calculated to reduce the supply of candidates from existing sources, or to render the Army unattractive to men of good position and fortune, is to be deprecated. But it is obviously essential in the public interest, that the presence of such Officers should not be allowed so to influence the general standard of living in any regiment as to discourage the entrance of suitable candidates of moderate means.”²²³ The committee was trapped between the need to recruit from the right classes, and the realisation that the correct, professional and business, classes suffered from tight finances that made entry in to a profession, for which real financial remuneration was years into the future, a significant burden. By dividing the issue of officer’s expenses between those defined as required due to the profession and the extra expenses demanded by more socially exclusive regiments, the latter could be decried without ever questioning the former.

The pension system set up in the 1870s left officers with difficult financial and career decisions nearly a decade into their service. Pay was relatively low, and, after about 9 years of service and having the rank of captain, would have only just begun to surpass an officer’s professional expenses. Moreover, the pension he could expect to get after 12 years of service would only just cover his costs to date. His promotion prospects would, at an average rate of advancement, result in the probable possession of a lieutenant-colonel’s rank on retirement, but this was dependent on the prior retirement of many of his fellow officers when they were at the rank of captain, which event the pensions system did successfully encourage. It was also probably, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, dependent on the patronage that could speed his advance through the ranks, and out of the regiment altogether and into staff. The pension system probably removed many who felt they not have the social contacts to move up in rank. When early retirement became so popular as to speed up promotion to a rate faster than intended, the pension system was changed to enforce the retention of officers. Thus, the government used the pension system as a

tool to regulate the numbers and ranks of officers. For the officers, joining the army was a financially low risk career with a very modest return on investment. Officer's pay and expenses were not a matter of governmental concern until nearly the end of the century, by which time there was a noticeable shortage of officers. The official opinion was that it was the attendant social, rather than strictly professional, expenses, which put their recruiting base at risk of choosing another profession. Therefore, the government decided that promoting a more ascetic social standard and lowering professional expenses would attract the professional classes from which suitable officers would be found. Nonetheless, years of low pay and high expenses and modest pensions were driving away the recruiting base.

¹ Edward M. Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (London: Longman Group Ltd, 1980), pp. 15-16.

² **1877 [c. 1824]** Memorandum Explanatory of the Provisions of the proposed Warrant for the Appointment, Promotion, and Retirement of Officers in the Combatant Ranks of the Army, p. 2.
1874 [c. 1018] Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Certain Memorials from Officers in the Army, in Reference to the Abolition of Purchase, p. 7.

³ **1873 (306)** Return of Number of Officers of Army who have memorialised Commander-in-Chief with reference to their Prospects on Abolition of Purchase.

⁴ **1873 (35)** Army Estimates - listed 5508 regimental officers for all branches including 3251 officers in the line infantry.

⁵ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 1.

⁶ **1876 [c. 1569]** Report of the Royal Commission on Army Promotion and Retirement.

⁷ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 6.

⁸ **1874 [c. 1018]**, pp. 8-10.

⁹ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 1196.

¹⁰ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 7.

¹¹ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 6.

¹² **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 7.

¹³ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 1054.

¹⁴ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, questions 473-475, 545-547, 591, 946.

¹⁵ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 946.

¹⁶ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 440.

¹⁷ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, questions 798-99.

¹⁸ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, questions 436-39, 491-94, 544, 548-49, 596-97, 697-98, 718, 768, 800, 870, 889, 944, 1191, statement of witness prior to question 1236.

¹⁹ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 5.

²⁰ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 8.

²¹ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Appendix G, 1874 [1018], Appendix H.

²² **1874 [c. 1018]**, table abstracted from table submitted by Lieutenant Colonel Herbert, p. 36.

²³ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 11 and Minutes of Evidence, question 1054.

²⁴ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, questions 11-12.

²⁵ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, questions 8-9.

²⁶ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 1.

²⁷ **1874 [c. 1018]**, Minutes of Evidence, question 1.

²⁸ **1876 [c. 1569]**, p. xxxvii.

²⁹ **1874 [c. 1018]**, p. 10. Their italics.

³⁰ **1874 [c. 1018]**, pp. 11-12.

³¹ **1876 [c. 1569]**, p. ix.

- ³² 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxxvii.
- ³³ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xiii.
- ³⁴ 1876 [c. 1569], Appendix C, p. 226.
- 1877 [c. 1824], p. 2.
- ³⁵ 1874 [c. 1018], Minutes of Evidence, p. 35.
- ³⁶ 1874 [c. 1018], Appendix N.
- ³⁷ 1874 [c. 1018], Appendix N.
- ³⁸ 1876 [c. 1569], pp. ix-x.
- ³⁹ 1876 [c. 1569], p. x.
- ⁴⁰ 1876 [c. 1569], p. x.
- ⁴¹ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xi. Ref. to p. 138.
- ⁴² 1876 [c. 1569], pp. xiii-xiv.
- ⁴³ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xiii.
- ⁴⁴ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xiv.
- ⁴⁵ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 229-30,376.
- ⁴⁶ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, question 1949.
- ⁴⁷ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 139-42, 299, 403-07, 570-8, 683, 716-19, 1925-26, 1928, 1929, 2116.
- ⁴⁸ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 579, 685-8, 694-8, 1889.
- ⁴⁹ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 1889, 2105-2110, 2313-20, 3101-02, 3138-41.
- ⁵⁰ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 255-6, 1518-19, 1607.
- ⁵¹ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 372-88, 390-92, 581-3, 694-8, 1533-4, 1947-49.
- ⁵² 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 1590-5, 1611-15, 3360-4.
- ⁵³ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xvi.
- ⁵⁴ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xviii.
- ⁵⁵ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xviii.
- ⁵⁶ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xviii.
- ⁵⁷ 1876 [c. 1569], pp. xix-xx.
- ⁵⁸ 1876 [c. 1569], pp. xx-xxi.
- ⁵⁹ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxii.
- ⁶⁰ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxxii.
- ⁶¹ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxxiii.
- ⁶² 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxxiii.
- ⁶³ 1876 [c. 1569], p. xxxiii.
- ⁶⁴ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 1-5, 68-71, 265-67, 542, 644-52, 2212-15, 2311-12, 2355-59, 3017-72, 3129-32, 3280-81.
- ⁶⁵ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 2212-5.
- ⁶⁶ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 2032-39, 3294-97.
- ⁶⁷ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 32-38, 61-2, 68-71, 539-41, 2337-40.
- ⁶⁸ 1876 [c. 1569], Minutes of Evidence, questions 358-361, 2988 and 26-32, 644-52, 2216-18, 2998-99, 3081-83, 3189.
- ⁶⁹ WO 32/4927 Expenses of Prussian Officers. Comparison with British Officers. 1901, p. 15.
- ⁷⁰ WO 33/230 Report of the Committee appointed to consider the desirability of adopting a Graduated Scale of Pension on Voluntary Retirement, applicable to all Officers of over 15 years' service, p. 2.
- WO 33/6233 Graduated Scale of Pensions for Officers retiring voluntarily, 1899-1902, précis for war council, p. 4.
- WO32/7172 Retention of Officers who have been passed over for promotion.
- ⁷¹ 1876 [c. 1569], p. 15.
- 1877 [c. 1824], p. 3.
- ⁷² WO 33/31 Correspondence relative to the Royal Warrant for the Promotion and Retirement of Combatant Officers, dated the 13th August 1877. Draft Para. 92, letter 4, (Treasury to the War Office).
- ⁷³ WO 33/31, letter 4, (Treasury to the War Office).
- ⁷⁴ WO 33/31, letter 4, (Treasury to the War Office), letter 5, (WO to Treasury).
- ⁷⁵ 1877 [c. 1824], p. 2.
- ⁷⁶ 1876 [c. 1569], "Penzance Commission", Appendix C, p. 226.
- ⁷⁷ WO 33/31, letter 5, (WO to Treasury).

⁷⁸ Army Estimates.

⁷⁹ **1877 [c. 1824]**, pp. 4-5.

See also **1877 [c. 1851]** Royal Warrant for Appointment, Promotion and Retirement of Combatant Officers, Aug. 1877, pp. 23-24, 40-41.

⁸⁰ **1877 [c. 1851]**, paragraph 174, p. 40.

⁸¹ **1877 [c. 1824]**, pp. 4-5. See also **1877 [c. 1851]**, pp. 23-24, 40-41.

⁸² **1877 [c. 1824]**, pp. 4-5. See also **1877 [c. 1851]**, pp. 24-26, 29, 39, 41.

⁸³ Raymond Cocks, **Foundations of the Modern Bar** (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1983), p. 183.

⁸⁴ Harold Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880** (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 78.

1877 [c. 1824], pp. 4-5.

See also **1877 [c. 1851]**, pp. 24-26, 29, 39, 41.

⁸⁵ Harold Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880**, pp. 91-2.

⁸⁶ **WO 32/6237** Commuting Half Pay, Pensions, Other Allowances, 1869-72, 1888, 1892, memorandum 18.5.92

⁸⁷ Martin Samuels, **Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918** (London: Frank Cass 1995), pp. 59-60,

see also Edward McCourt, **Remember Butler: The Story of Sir William Butler** (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967),

Stephen M. Miller, **Lord Methuen and the British Army: Failure and Redemption in South Africa** (London: Frank Cass, 1999), and

Peter Trew, **The Boer War Generals** (Thrupp: Sutton Pub., 1999).

⁸⁸ **1881 (167)** Return showing, by Ranks and by Arms of the Service, the Number of Officers of the Army who have been Retired under Section VI. of the Royal Warrant of 1877, "Conditions of Retirement," during each financial year up to the 31st day of March 1880; and Abstracted from **1886 (166)**.

⁸⁹ **WO 33/36**, O821, Report. [Explanatory Memorandum and Draft Articles for new scheme of appointments, promotion, retirement and pay in the Army], p. 1.

⁹⁰ **1881 (167)**.

⁹¹ **1878-79 (25)** Army Estimates, 1879, Vote 1, Appendix 2, Regimental Pay Allowances and Charges, p. 148.

⁹² **WO 33/36**, O821, pp.1- 2 of memo.

⁹³ **WO 33/36**, O821, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁴ **WO 33/36**, O821, p. 1.

⁹⁵ **WO 33/36**, O821, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, **Stalky's Reminiscences** (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928), p. 57.

⁹⁷ **WO 32/6233**, Graduated Scale of Pensions for Officers Retiring Voluntarily, 1899-1902, Précis for the War Office Council, No. 44, p. 1

⁹⁸ Edward M. Spiers, **The Late Victorian Army: 1868-1902** (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), Table 1: "The social composition of senior officers in 1868, 1899 and 1914, expressed in percentage terms", p. 94.

⁹⁹ Harold Perkin, **The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880**, p. 88.

See also C. B. Otley, "Militarism and the Social Affiliations of the British Army Élite", **Armed Forces and Society: Sociological Essays** ed. Jacques van Doorn (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), pp. 84-108.

¹⁰⁰ Tim Travers, **The Killing Ground: The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern Warfare, 1900-1918** (London: Unwin Hyman, 1987), p. 7.

See also Hew Strachan, **The Politics of the British Army** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

¹⁰¹ **WO 33/36** O821, p. 3 of memo.

¹⁰² **WO 33/36** O821, pp. 2, 3.

¹⁰³ **1882 (69)** Army Estimates, Vote 1, Appendix 2, pp. 150-51.

¹⁰⁴ **1887 (70)** Army Estimates, Vote 1, Appendix 2, pp. 132-33.

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Conclusion

The thesis of this dissertation is that in the period from the end of purchase to the Boer war, the line officer corps was becoming more professional. Given the many problems enumerated, it can appear that the line officer entirely failed to become more professional. The army failed to beat the navy in political infighting, and thus failed to acquire a general staff, and failed to see the strategic visions of its senior officers adopted by the government. The officers had an apparently cavalier attitude towards education, resisted promotion by merit, and were prone to early retirement due to lack of access to internal patronage, posting to wars, or staff positions that would advance careers.

However, professionalization is a process, not an event. The point is that the line officer corps was trying to professionalize, not that they were necessarily always, or entirely, successful. They did not become professional overnight. Indeed, they did not become models of modern professionals in thirty years. This failure to achieve complete success, however, does not indicate complete failure of the project as a whole. British officers agreed on the need to professionalize, but disagreed on what the term entailed, even in the face of the Prussian model, which was agreed to be professional but whose applicability to the British situation appeared to be limited. What is critical is that elements of a consensus on the definition of professionalism, and the structures of a modern professional army, slowly and painfully emerged in the time period covered.

Part of the effort to professionalize, and to define professionalism, was on the officer's own initiative, some was by the decisions of the governments of the day, some fell out of the officers' individual decisions in the course of their careers. The views of the state and the officers did not always agree. However, in distinct contrast to the condition of the officer corps at the end of purchase in 1870, by the South African war the line officer corps had developed a relevant education system that was tested against numerous small wars, operating within the deployment

system established by the Cardwell reforms – which, contrary to common perception, largely achieved their deployment aims. These deployment patterns reinforced, and may indeed have created the structure of, the patronage rings that provided some merit-based promotions, an ad hoc system operating in lieu of a modern, impersonal, merit system. Officers' education was directly connected to their promotion within the regimental ranks, and education was likewise a prerequisite for passing Staff College and fast-tracking promotion into staff positions – though the patronage rings ensured that personal connections could also be exploited for rapid promotion in a manner relatively unconnected to an individual's professional merit or education. British officers had a pay and pension system which, though not generous, was likewise connected to rank, entirely replacing the rolling investment system of purchasing commissions. For all the condemnation of the British army's conduct of the South African war, the army was able to adapt its tactics, strategy and administration to win not once, but thrice: first in conventional combat, then against a guerrilla force, and third, it was able to formally assess what it had done wrong and make further reforms.

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- 1893-94 (88)
- 1894 (1)
- 1895 (73)
- 1896 (86)
- 1897 (36)
- 1898 (60)

1899 (63)

1900 (67)

1901 (41)

1903 (43)

1904 (73)

1902 (42) Supplementary Estimate 1902-03

1873 (306) Return of Number of Officers of Army who have memorialised
Commander-in-Chief with reference to their Prospects on Abolition of Purchase

1881 (167) Return showing, by Ranks and by Arms of the Service, the Number of
Officers of the Army who have been Retired under Section VI. of the Royal Warrant
of 1877, "Conditions of Retirement," during each financial year up to the 31st day of
March 1880

1888 (350) Return, under Rule 9 of the rules under Section 6 of the "Superannuation
Act 1887," of the Number of Officers who, having Non-Effective Pay, or having
commuted their Non-Effective Pay, or having retired on a Gratuity from Army
Funds, have been Granted by the War Department, in the Year ended 31st March
1888, permission, under Rule 2 of the same Rules, to hold any Civil Employment of
Profit under a Public Department, specifying the Names of such Officers, and the
respective Amounts of their Non-Effective Pay, and their Emoluments, and the
Abatement, if any, made therefrom.

1889 (349) Return, under Rule 9 of the rules under Section 6 of the "Superannuation
Act 1887," of the Number of Officers who, having Non-Effective Pay, or having
commuted their Non-Effective Pay, or having retired on a Gratuity from Army
Funds, have been Granted by the War Department, in the Year ended 31st March
1888, permission, under Rule 2 of the same Rules, to hold any Civil Employment of
Profit under a Public Department, specifying the Names of such Officers, and the
respective Amounts of their Non-Effective Pay, and their Emoluments, and the
Abatement, if any, made therefrom.

1892 (148) Return of Length of Service of Lieutenants promoted to Captains, Captains promoted to Majors, and Majors promoted to Lt.-Colonels in Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Cavalry and Infantry of Line.

1893-94 (426) Return of the Number of Officers, who, having Non-Effective Pay or having commuted their Non-Effective Pay, or having retired on a Gratuity from Army Funds, have been granted by the War Department Permission, under Paragraph 2 of the Rules under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act, 1887, to hold any Civil Employment of Profit under a Public Department, specifying the Names of such Officers, and the respective Amounts of their Non-Effective Pay, and their Emoluments, and the Abatement, if any, made therefrom, and distinguishing the Officers to whom such Permission has been granted since the conclusion of last Return.

1897 (155) Return of Army Officers on the Active List in each Branch of the Army holding Civil Appointments, whose time while so employed counts for Military Promotion and Military Pension.

1899 (90) Return of Length of Service of Lieutenants promoted to Captains, Captains promoted to Majors, and Majors promoted to Lt.-Colonels in Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Cavalry and Infantry of Line

1903 (121) Return of Length of Service of Lieutenants promoted to Captains, Captains promoted to Majors, and Majors promoted to Lt.-Colonels in Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Cavalry and Infantry of Line.

1873 [c. 875] First Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education

1874 [c. 1018] Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Certain Memorials from Officers in the Army, in Reference to the Abolition of Purchase

1876 [c. 1491] Second Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education

1876 [c. 1569] Report of the Royal Commission on Army Promotion and Retirement

1877 [c. 1824] Memorandum Explanatory of the Provisions of the proposed Warrant for the Appointment, Promotion, and Retirement of Officers in the Combatant Ranks of the Army

1877 [c. 1851] Royal Warrant for Appointment, Promotion and Retirement of Combatant Officers, Aug. 1877

1878 [c. 2168] Report of the Board of Visitors Appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1878

1878-79 [c. 2387] Observations by the Governors of the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Military College on the Remarks of General Sir James Fitzmayer, appended to the late Report of the Board of Visitors

1880 [c. 2696] Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1880

1881 [c. 3021] Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1881

1882 [c. 3440] Report of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Secretary of State for War for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1882

1883 [c. 3793] Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College at Sandhurst for the year 1883

1883 [c. 3818] Third Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education

1884 [c. 4141] Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1884

1884-85 [c. 4533] Report by the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1885

1886 [c. 4879] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1886

1887 [c. 5146] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1887

1888 [c. 5510] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1888

1889 [c. 5793] Fourth Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education

1890 [c. 6198] Report of the Board of Visitors on the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1890

1890-91 [c. 6465] Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1891

1893-94 [c. 6859] Fifth Report on the Education of Officers by the Director-General of Military Education

1893-94 [c. 6879] Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1892

- 1893-94 [c. 7176]** Report of the Board of Visitors upon the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for the year 1893
- 1894 [c. 7485]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1894
- 1895 [c. 7840]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1895
- 1897 [c. 8344]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1896
- 1898 [c. 8744]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1897
- 1899 [c. 9170]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1898
- 1901 [c. 517]** Report of the Board of Visitors, Appointed by the Secretary of State for War, for the Inspection of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in the year 1900
- 1902 [c. 982]** Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army; with Appendix
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Table 1: Index of the Line Regiments¹
Senior Foot Regiments

There were 25 senior foot regiments, of two battalions each.

Title to 1881	Title after 1881
The 1 st or The Royal Scots Regiment	The Royal Scots (The Lothian Regiment)
The 2 nd or The Queen's Royal Regiment of Foot	The Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment
The 3 rd (East Kent - The Buffs) Regiment of Foot	The Buffs (East Kent) Regiment of Foot
The 4 th , (The King's Own Royal) Regiment	The King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment)
The 5 th or Northumberland Fusiliers	The Northumberland Fusiliers
The 6 th (Royal Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Warwickshire Regiment
The 7 th (Royal Fusiliers)	The Royal Fusiliers (City of London) Regiment
The 8 th (The King's Regiment)	The King's (Liverpool Regiment)
The 9 th (East Norfolk) Regiment of Foot	The Norfolk Regiment
The 10 th (North Lincoln) Regiment of Foot	The Lincolnshire Regiment
The 11 th (North Devonshire) Regiment of Foot	The Devonshire Regiment
The 12 th (East Suffolk) Regiment of Foot	The Suffolk Regiment
The 13 th (1 st Somersetshire) (Prince Albert's Light Infantry) Regiment	The Prince Albert's (Somersetshire Light Infantry)
The 14 th (Buckinghamshire – The Prince of Wales's Own) Regiment of Foot	The Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment)
The 15 th (York, East Riding) Regiment of Foot	The East Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of York's Own)
The 16 th (Bedfordshire) Regiment of Foot	The Bedfordshire Regiment
The 17 th (Leicestershire) Regiment of Foot	The Leicestershire Regiment
The 18 th (The Royal Irish) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Irish Regiment
The 19 th (1 st Yorkshire, North Riding – Princess of Wales's Own) Regiment of Foot	The Princess of Wales's Own (Yorkshire) Regiment
The 20 th (East Devonshire) Regiment of Foot	The Lancashire Fusiliers
The 21 st (Royal North British) Fusiliers Regiment of Foot [from 1877-1881: The 21 st (Royal Scots Fusiliers) Regiment of Foot]	The Royal Scots Fusiliers
The 22 nd (The Cheshire) Regiment of Foot	The Cheshire Regiment

¹ A Register of the Regiments and Corps of the British Army. Ed. Arthur Swinson, (London: Archive Press, 1972).

The 23 rd (Royal Welch Fusiliers) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Welch Fusiliers
The 24 th (2 nd Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot	The South Wales Borderers
The 25 th (The King's Own Borderers) Regiment of Foot	The King's Own Borderers [from 1887: The King's Own Scottish Borderers]

Regiments of Foot numbered 26-109 and the Rifle Brigade

Through 1881 there were 85 of these regiments, which had one battalion each, the exceptions being the 60th and the Rifle Brigade, each of which had four battalions. After 1881, there were 44 regiments of 2 battalions each, with the continuing exceptions of the 60th and the Rifle Brigade, and the 79th, which continued to have one battalion until 1897, when a second regular battalion was added to the regiment.

These regiments are ordered in their post-1881 precedence.

<u>Title to 1881</u>	<u>Title after 1881</u>
The 26 th Cameronian Regiment	The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
The 90 th Perthshire Light Infantry	
The 27 th (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
The 108 th (Madras Infantry) Regiment	
The 28 th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment of Foot	The Gloucestershire Regiment
The 61 st (South Gloucestershire) Regiment	
The 29 th (Worcestershire) Regiment of Foot	The Worcestershire Regiment
The 36 th (Herefordshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 30 th (Cambridgeshire) Regiment of Foot	The East Lancashire Regiment
The 59 th (2 nd Nottinghamshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 31 st (Huntingdonshire) Regiment	The East Surrey Regiment
The 70 th (Surrey) Regiment of Foot	
The 32 nd (Cornwall) Light Infantry	The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry
The 46 th (South Devonshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 33 rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment of Foot	The Duke of Wellington's Regiment
76 th Regiment of Foot	
The 34 th (Cumberland) Regiment of Foot	The Border Regiment
The 55 th (Westmoreland) Regiment of Foot	
The 35 th (Royal Sussex) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Sussex Regiment
The 107 th Bengal Infantry Regiment	
The 37 th (North Hampshire) Regiment of Foot	The Hampshire Regiment
The 67 th (South Hampshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 38 th (1 st Staffordshire) Regiment of Foot	The South Staffordshire Regiment
The 80 th (Staffordshire Volunteers) Regiment of Foot	
The 39 th (Dorsetshire) Regiment of Foot	The Dorsetshire Regiment
The 54 th (West Norfolk) Regiment of Foot	
The 40 th (2 nd Somersetshire) Regiment of Foot	The South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers)

The 82 nd (Prince of Wales's Volunteers) Regiment of Foot	
The 41 st (The Welsh) Regiment of Foot	The Welsh Regiment
The 69 th (South Lincolnshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 42 nd (The Royal Highland) Regiment of Foot (The Black Watch)	The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)
The 73 rd (Perthshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 43 rd (Monmouthshire Light Infantry) Regiment	The Oxfordshire Light Infantry
The 52 nd (Oxfordshire Light Infantry) Regiment	
The 44 th (East Essex) Regiment of Foot	The Essex Regiment
The 56 th (West Essex) Regiment of Foot	
The 45 th (Nottinghamshire Regiment) Sherwood Foresters	The Sherwood Foresters (Derbyshire Regiment)
The 95 th or Derbyshire Regiment of Foot	
The 47 th (Lancashire) Regiment of Foot	The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment
The 81 st (Loyal Lincoln Volunteers) Regiment of Foot	
The 48 th (Northamptonshire) Regiment of Foot	The Northamptonshire Regiment
The 58 th (Rutlandshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 49 th Princess Charlotte of Wales's Hertfordshire Regiment	Princess Charlotte of Wales's Berkshire Regiment (the title 'Royal' was conferred in 1885)
The 66 th (Berkshire) Regiment of Foot	
The 50 th (The Queen's Own) Regiment of Foot	The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment
The 97 th (The Earl of Ulster's) Regiment of Foot	
The 51 st (2 nd Yorkshire, West Riding, The King's Own Light Infantry) Regiment	The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
The 105 th (Madras Light Infantry) Regiment	
The 53 rd (Shropshire) Regiment of Foot	The King's Shropshire Light Infantry
The 85 th (Bucks Volunteers) (King's Light Infantry) Regiment	
The 57 th (West Middlesex) Regiment of Foot	The Middlesex (Duke of Cambridge's Own)
The 77 th (East Middlesex) (Duke of Cambridge's Own) Regiment of Foot	
The 60 th or The King's Royal Rifle Corps	The King's Royal Rifle Corps
The 62 nd (Wiltshire) Regiment of Foot	The Wiltshire (Duke of Edinburgh's)
The 99 th (The Duke of Edinburgh's) Regiment of Foot	
The 63 rd (West Suffolk) Regiment of Foot	The Manchester Regiment

The 96 th Regiment of Foot	
The 64 th (2 nd Staffordshire) Regiment of Foot	The North Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)
The 98 th (The Prince of Wales) Regiment of Foot	
The 65 th (2 nd Yorkshire, North Riding) Regiment of Foot	The York and Lancaster Regiment
The 84 th (York and Lancaster) Regiment of Foot	
The 68 th (Durham Light Infantry) Regiment of Foot	The Durham Light Infantry
The 106 th Bombay Light Infantry Regiment	
The 71 st (Highland) Light Infantry	The Highland Light Infantry
The 74 th (Highlanders) Regiment of Foot	
The 72 nd (or The Duke of Albany's Own Highlanders) Regiment of Foot	The Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, the Duke of Albany's)
The 78 th (Highland) Regiment of Foot or The Ross-shire Buffs	
The 75 th (Stirlingshire) Regiment of Foot	The Gordon Highlanders
The 92 nd (Gordon Highlanders) Regiment of Foot	
The 79 th Regiment, The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders	The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
The 83 rd (County of Dublin) Regiment of Foot	The Royal Irish Rifles
The 86 th (Royal County Down) Regiment of Foot	
The 87 th (The Royal Irish Fusiliers) Regiment of Foot	Princess Victoria's (The Royal Irish Fusiliers)
The 89 th (Princess Victoria's) Regiment of Foot	
The 88 th (Connaught Rangers) Regiment of Foot	The Connaught Rangers
The 94 th Regiment of Foot	
The 91 st (Princess Louise's Argyllshire) Highlanders	The Princess Louise's (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders)
The 93 rd (Sutherland Highlanders) Regiment of Foot	
The 100 th (Prince of Wales's Royal Canadian) Regiment of Foot	The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians)
The 109 th (Bombay Infantry) Regiment	
The 101 st (Royal Bengal Fusiliers) Regiment	The Royal Munster Fusiliers
The 104 th Bengal Fusiliers Regiment	
The 102 nd (Royal Madras) Fusiliers	The Royal Dublin Fusiliers
The 103 rd Royal Bombay Fusiliers	
The Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade	Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own)

Table 2: Regions for Deployment Charts

Britain

India

- Madras
- Bombay
- Bengal
- Punjab
- Afghanistan
- Nepal
- NW Frontier

Africa

- South Africa
- Gold Coast

South East Asia

- Aden
- Burma
- Ceylon
- Malaya
- Mauritius
- Singapore
- Straits Settlements

East Asia

- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Tientsin

Americas

- Barbados
- Bermuda
- Canada
- Jamaica
- Nova Scotia
- West Indies

Mediterranean

- Crete
- Cyprus
- Egypt
- Gibraltar
- Malta

Chart 1 - Estimates and Expenditures 1870-1887

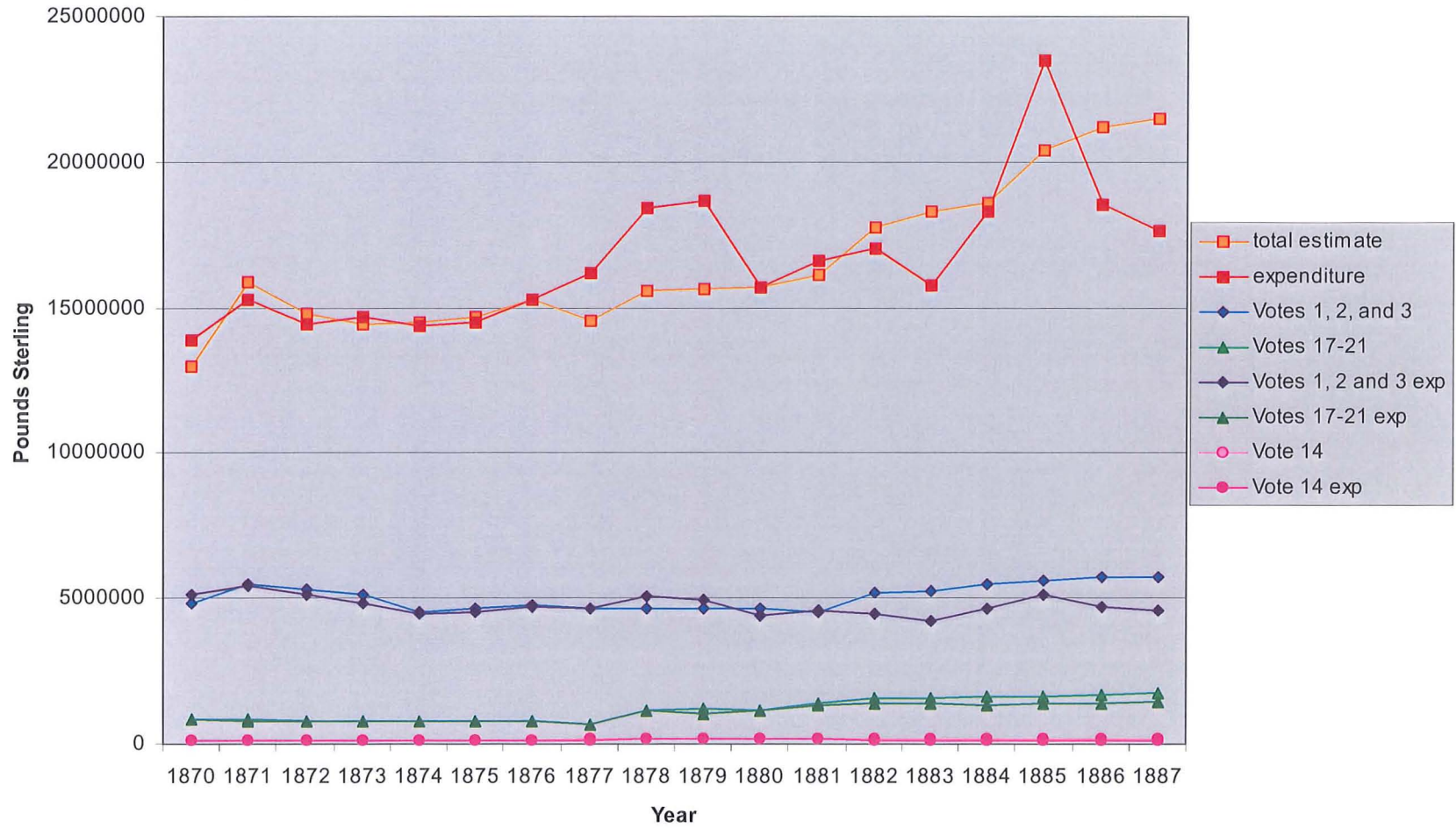


Chart 2 - Estimates and Expenditures 1889-1902

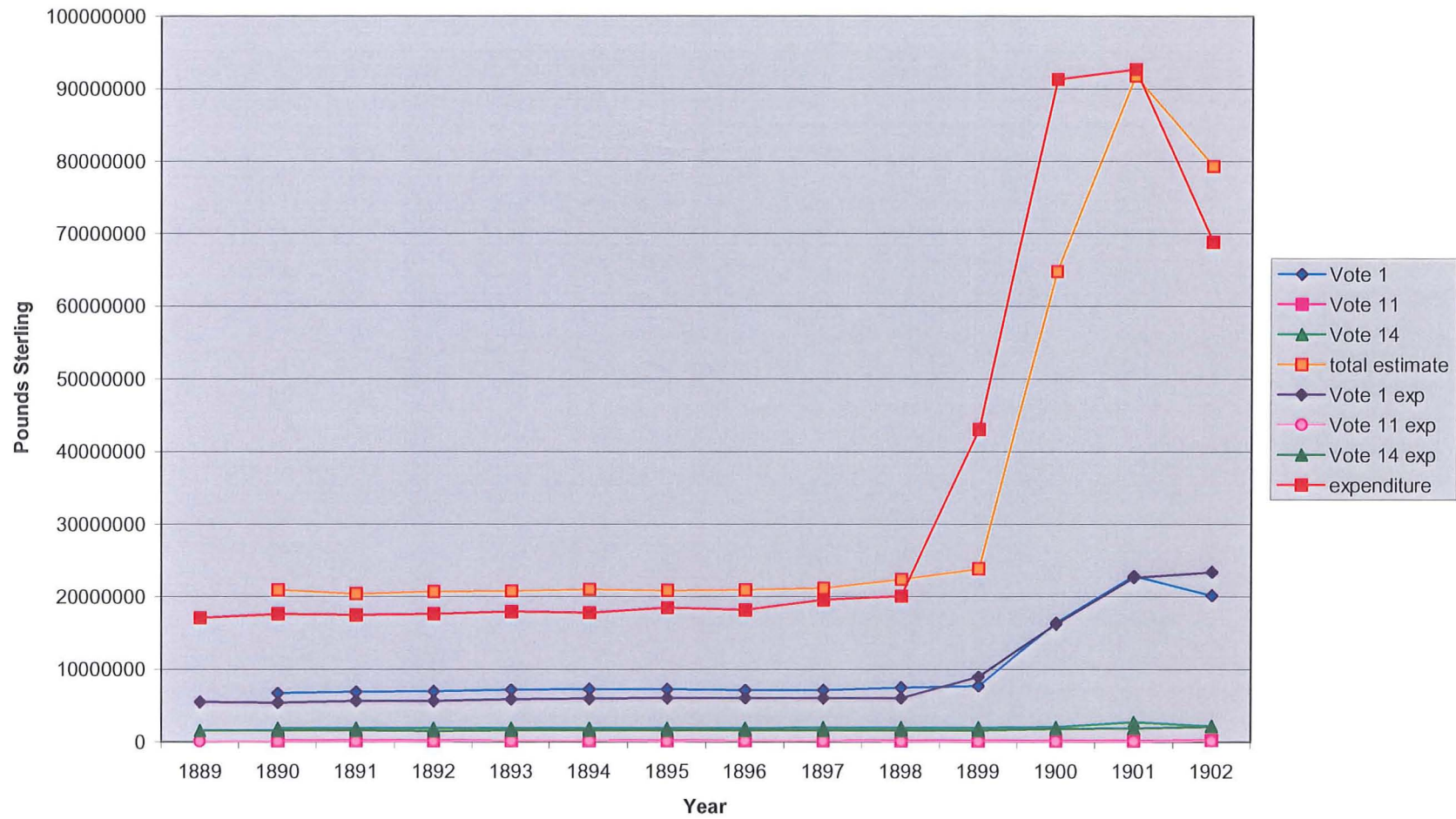


Chart 3 - Votes as a Percentage of Estimates: 1870-1887

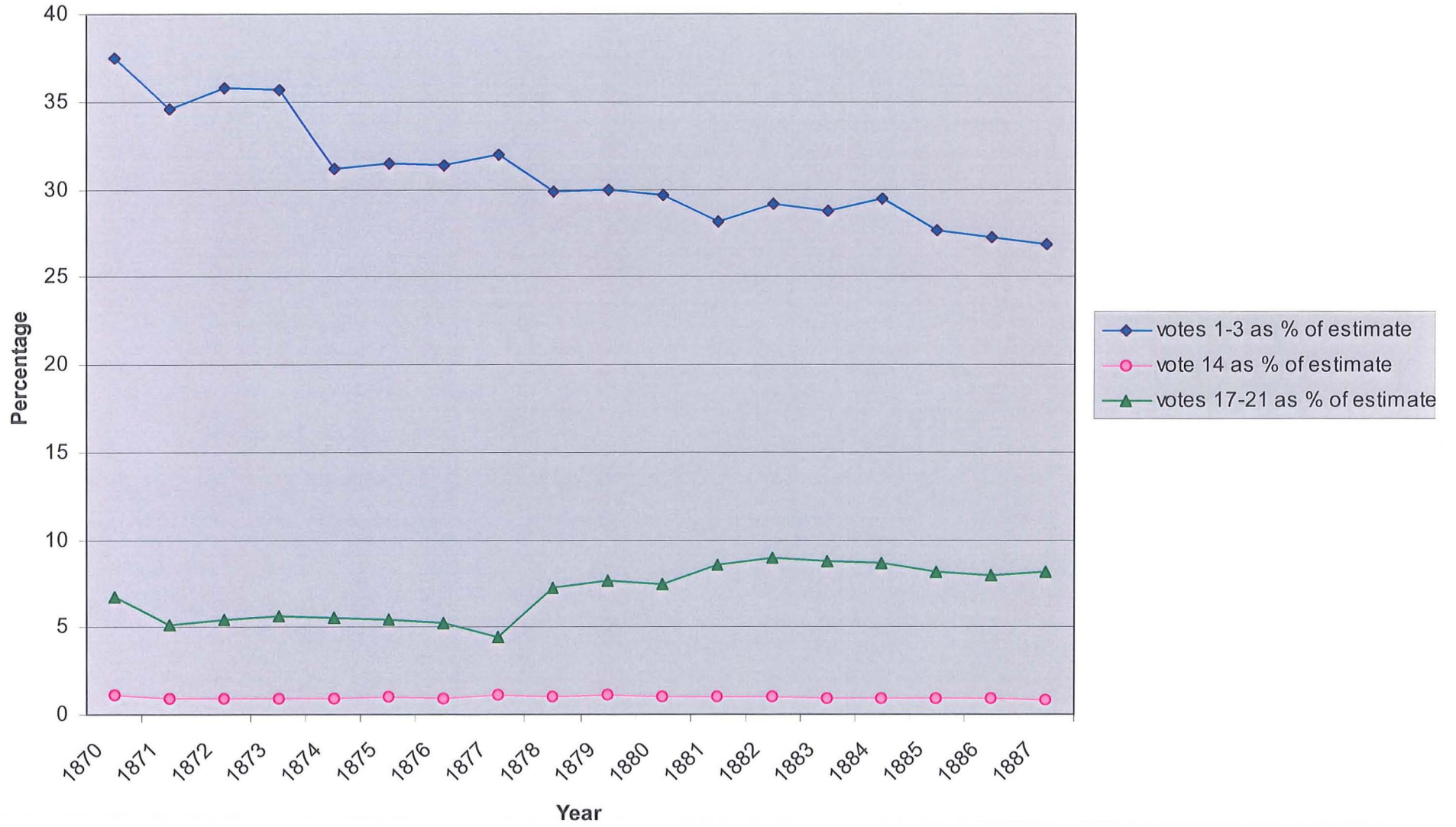


Chart 4 - Votes as a Percentage of Estimates: 1890-1901

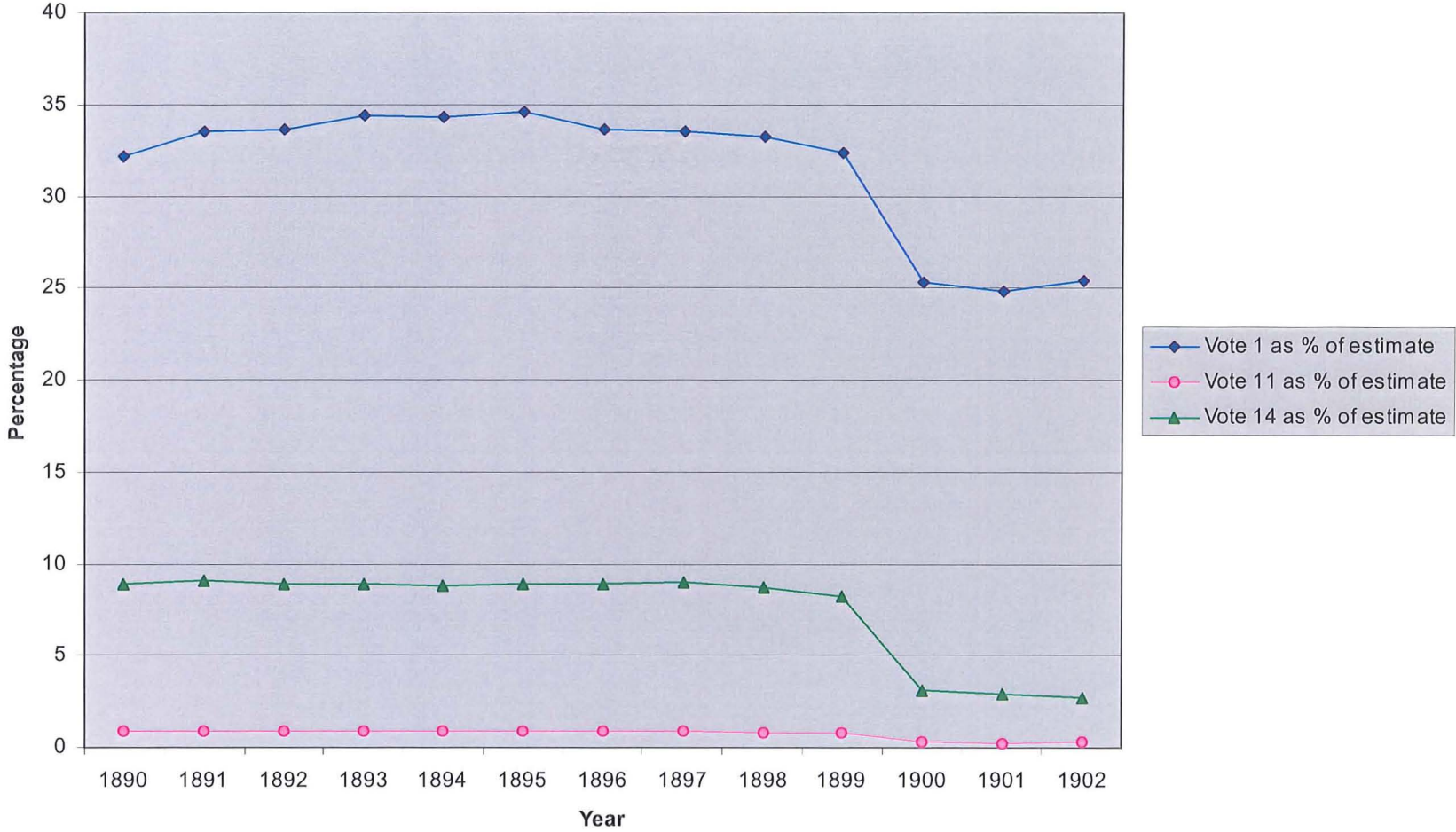


Chart 5 - Home and Colonies Establishment 1871-1902

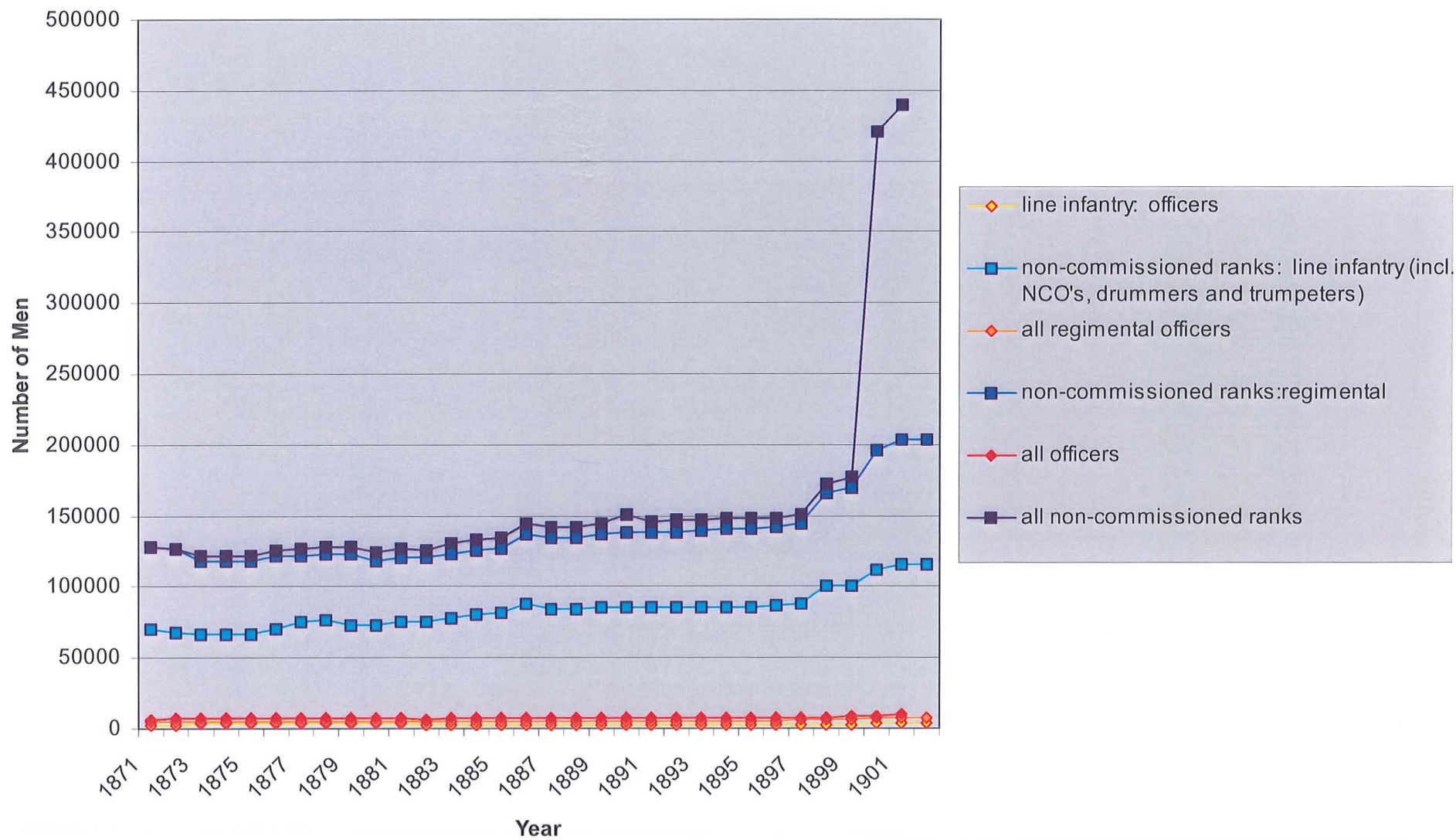


Chart 6 - Home and Colonies Establishment: Officers

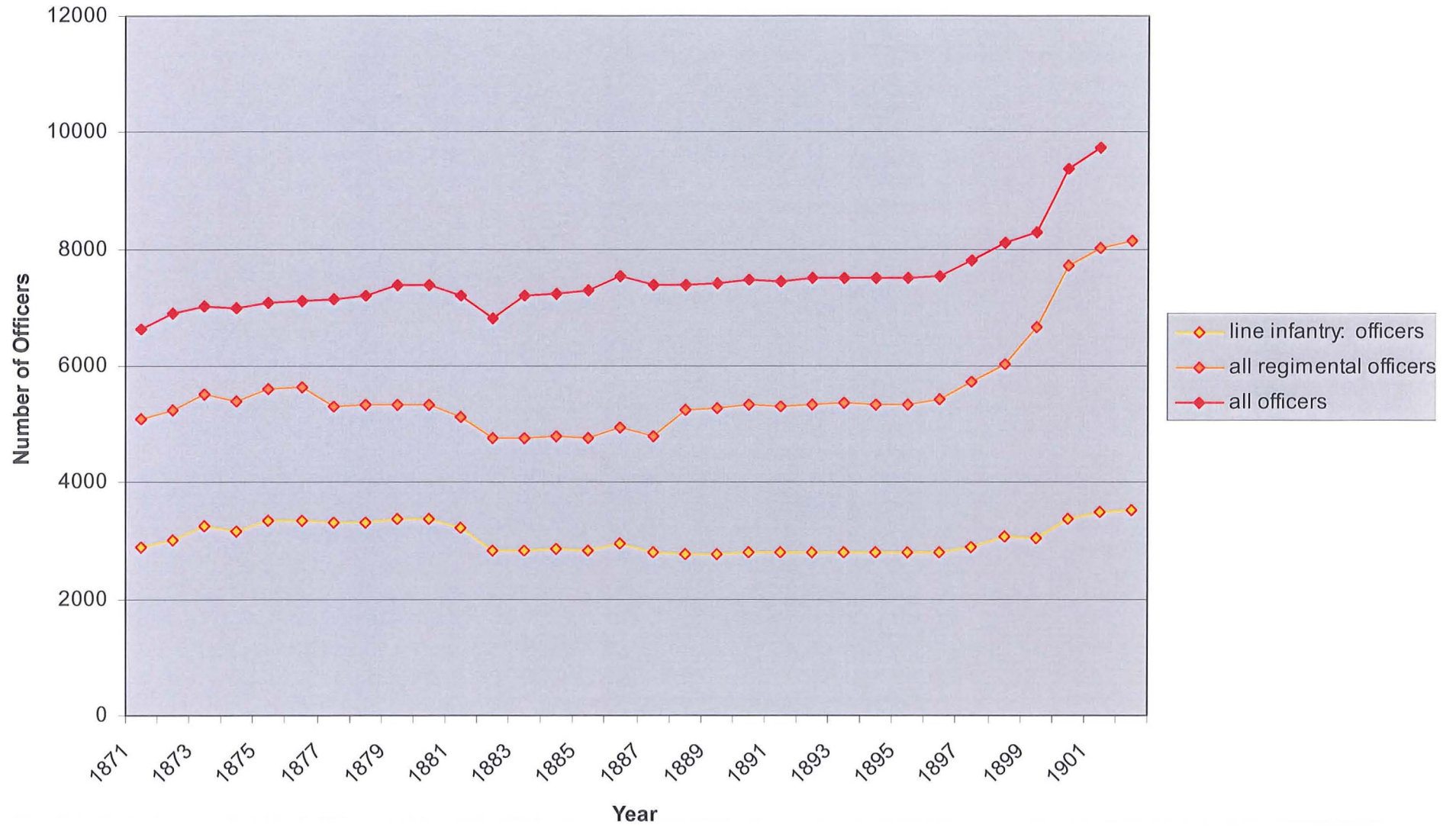


Chart 7 - India Establishment

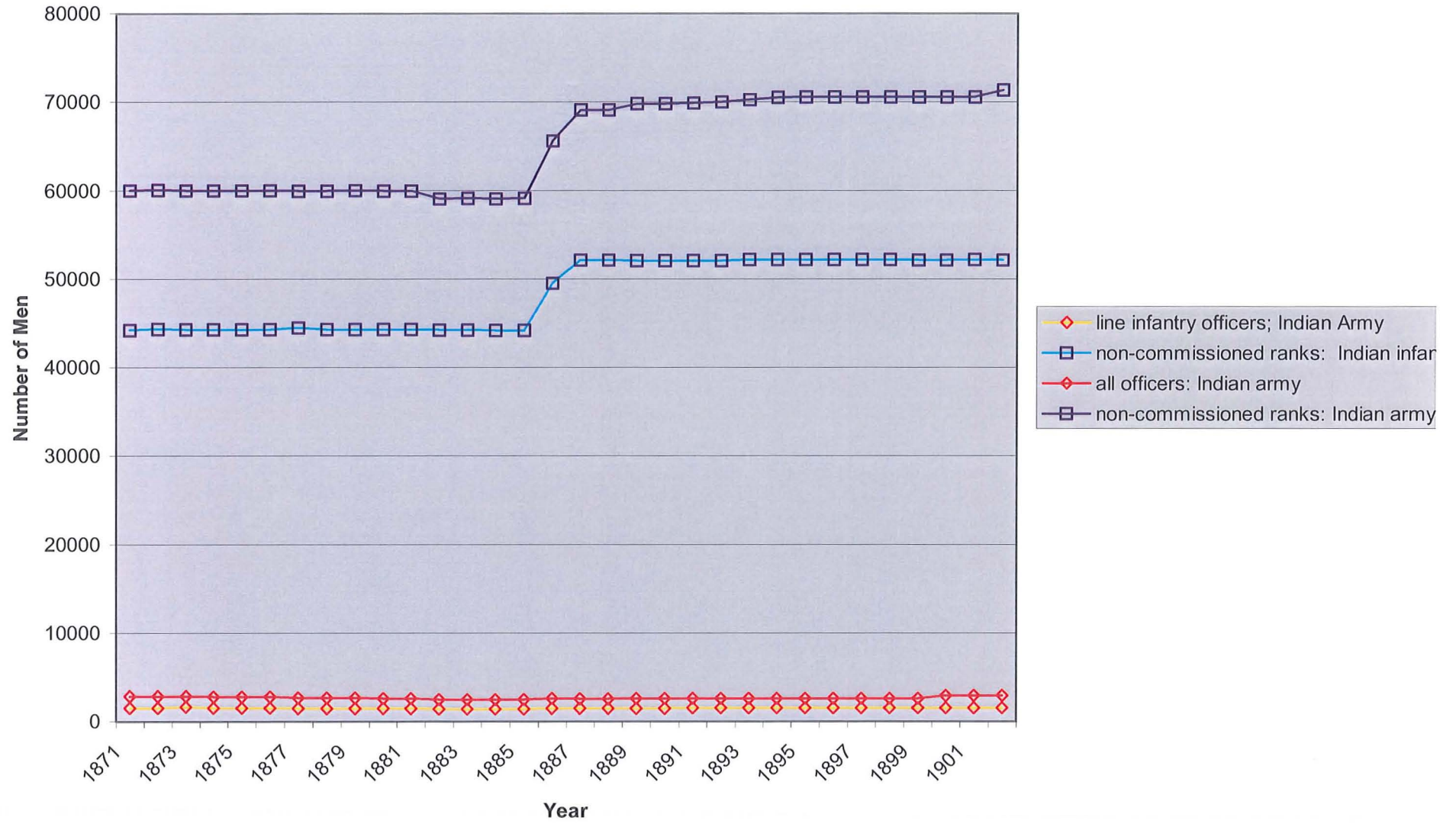


Chart 8 - Indian Establishment: Officers

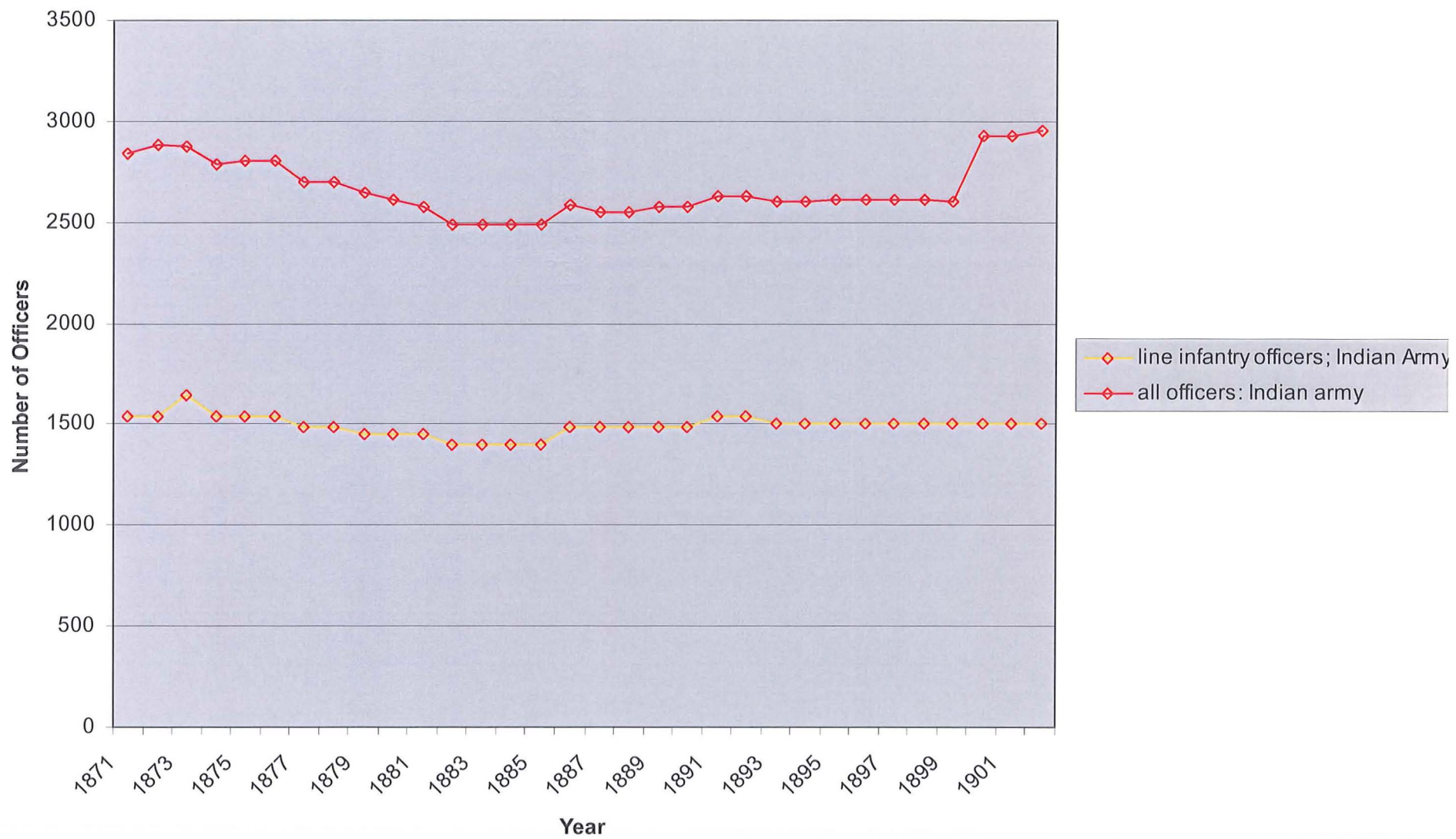


Chart 9 - Deployment of all Regiments by Region

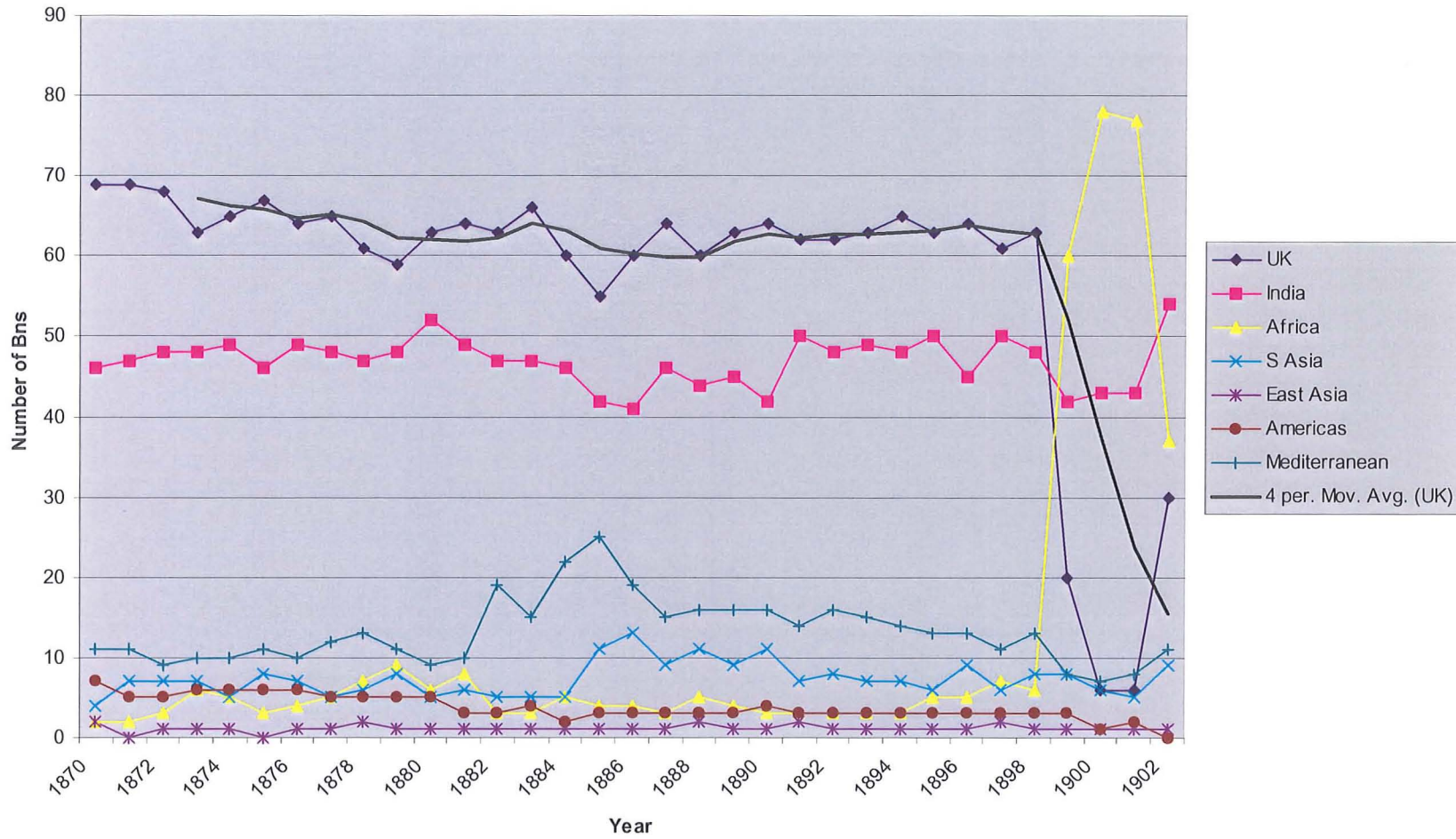


Chart 10 - Deployment of Regiments 1 to 25 by Region

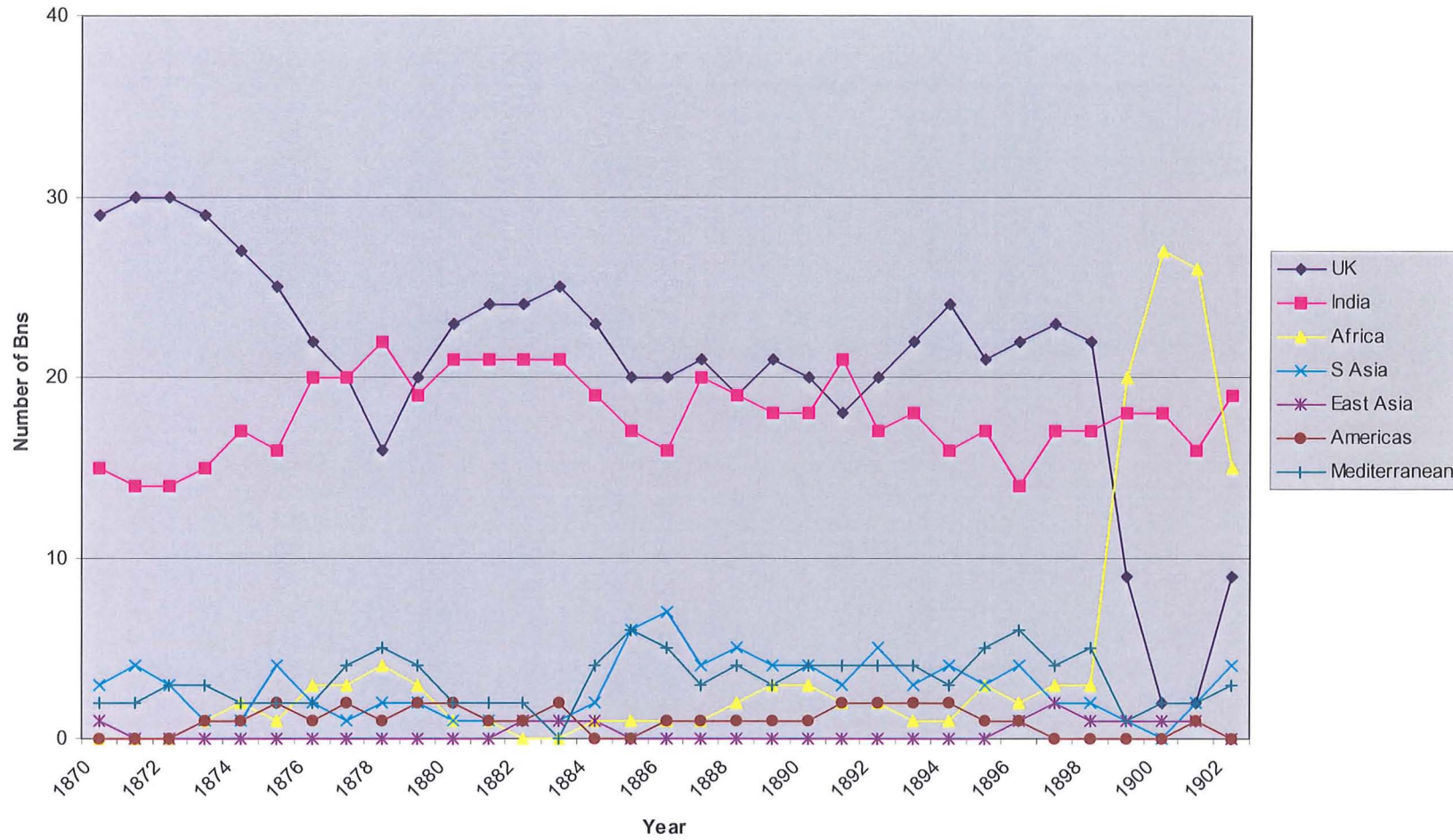


Chart 11 - Deployment of Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade by Region

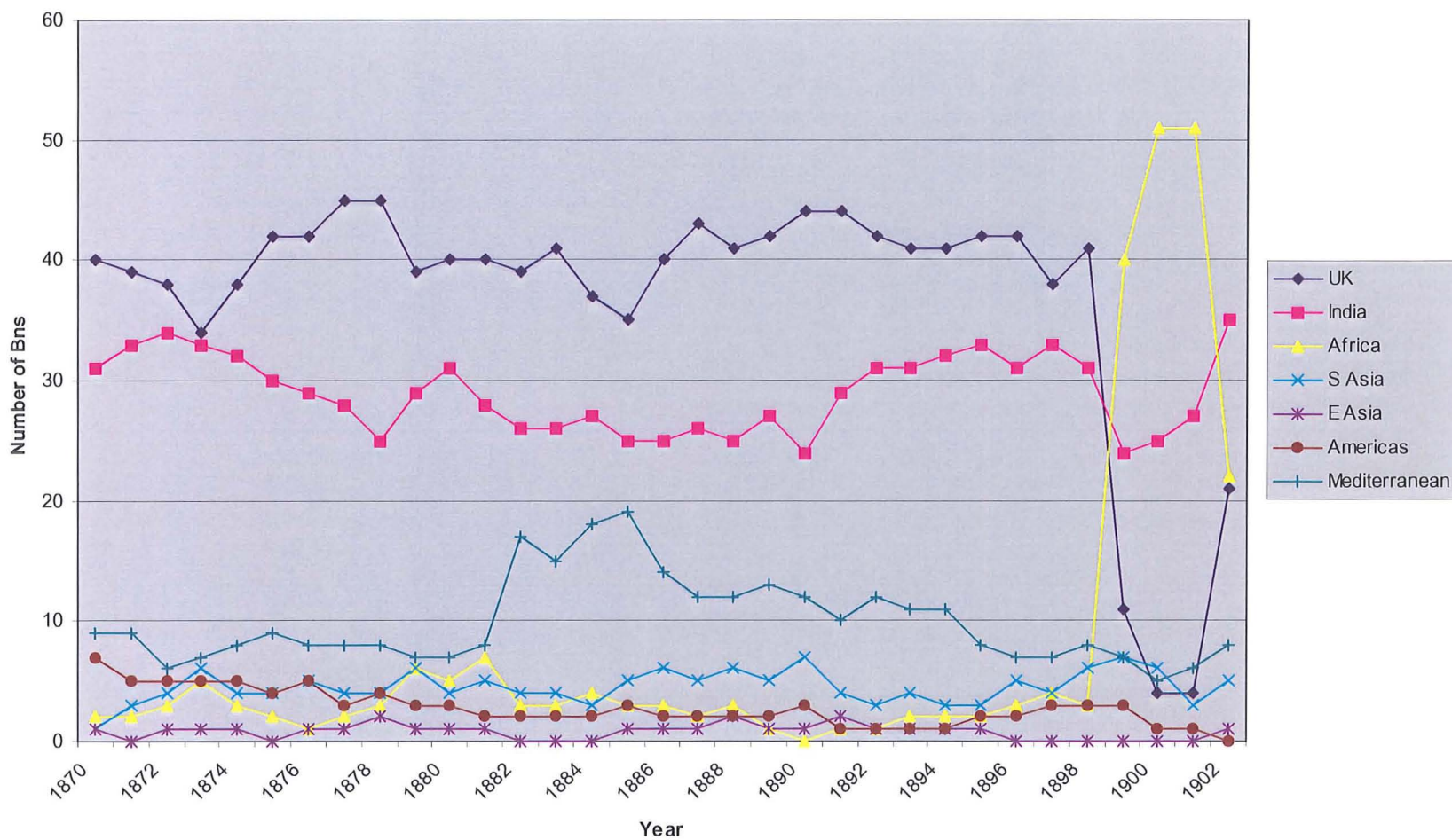


Chart 12 - Deployment of all Regiments: India

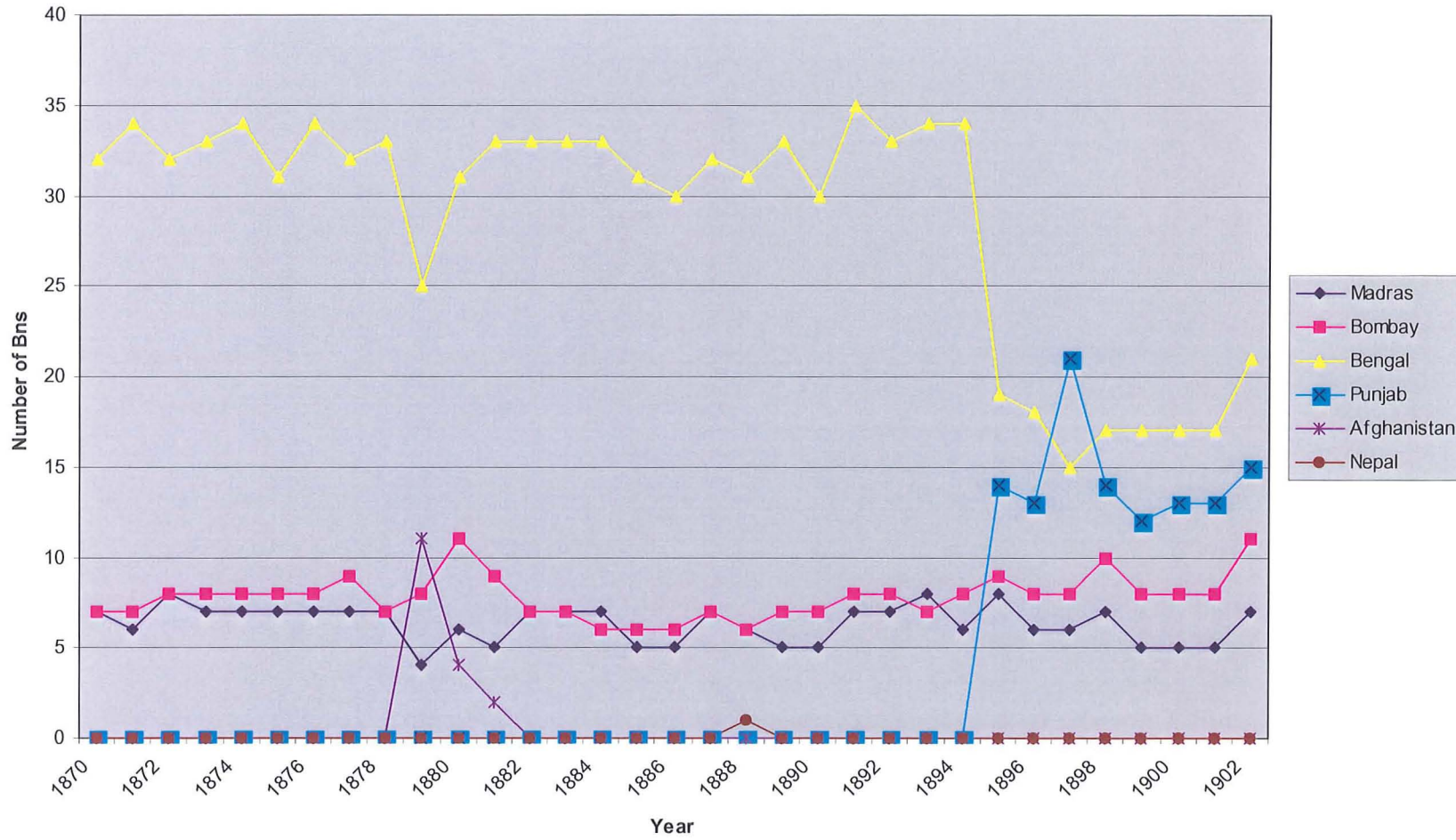


Chart 13 - Deployment of all Regiments: India (stacked chart)

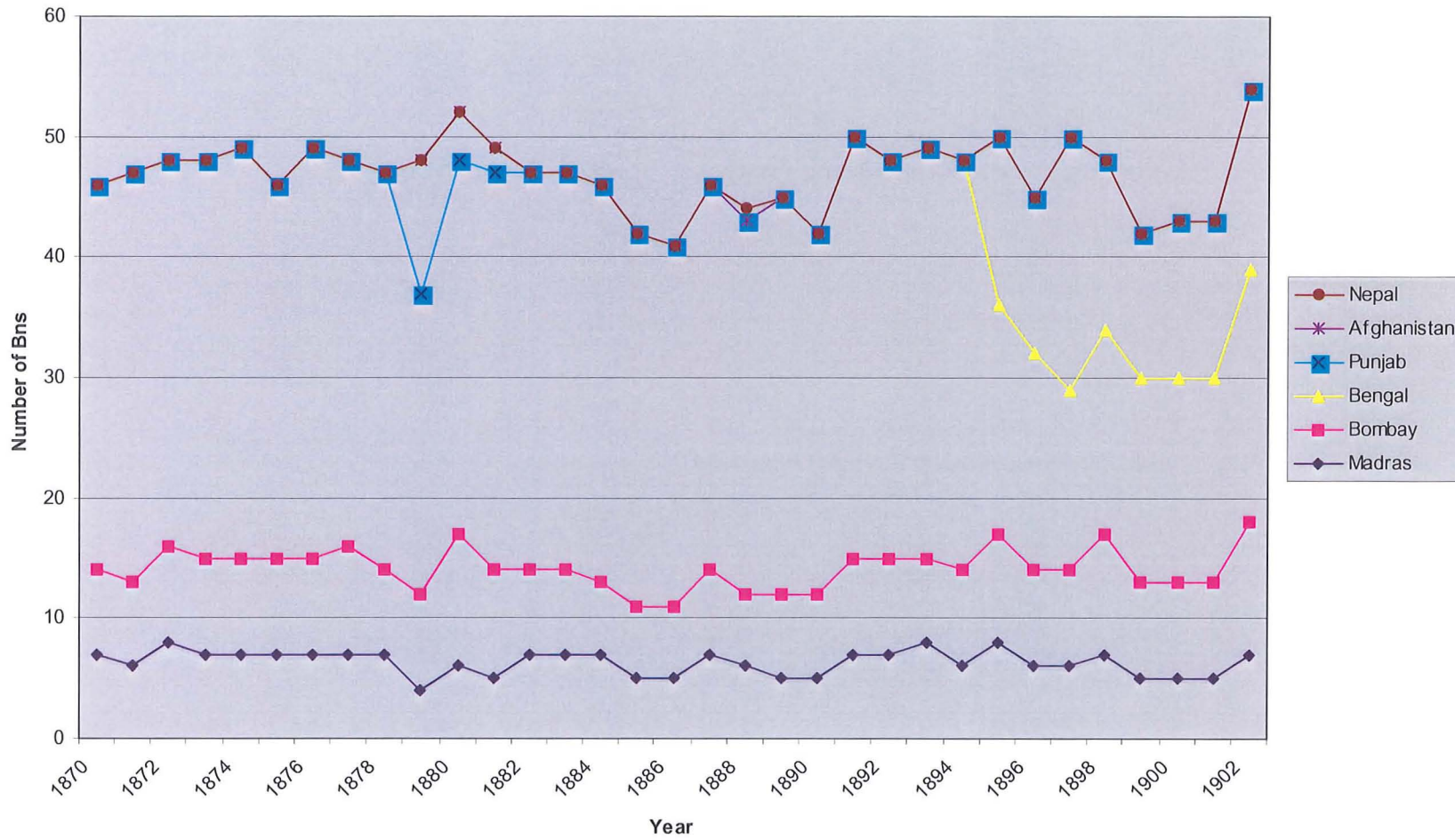


Chart 14 - Deployment of Regiments 1 to 25: India

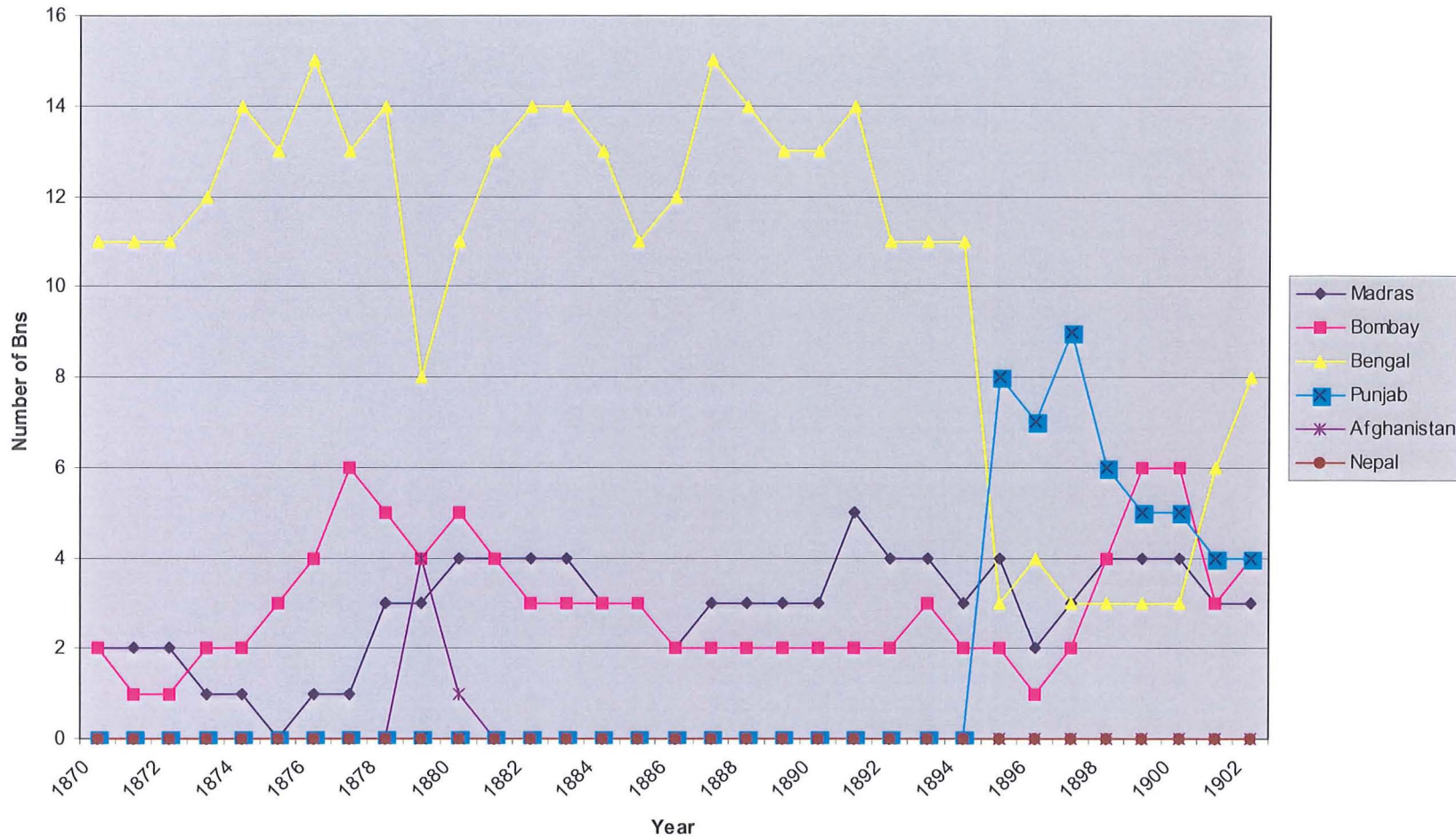


Chart 15 - Deployment of Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade: India

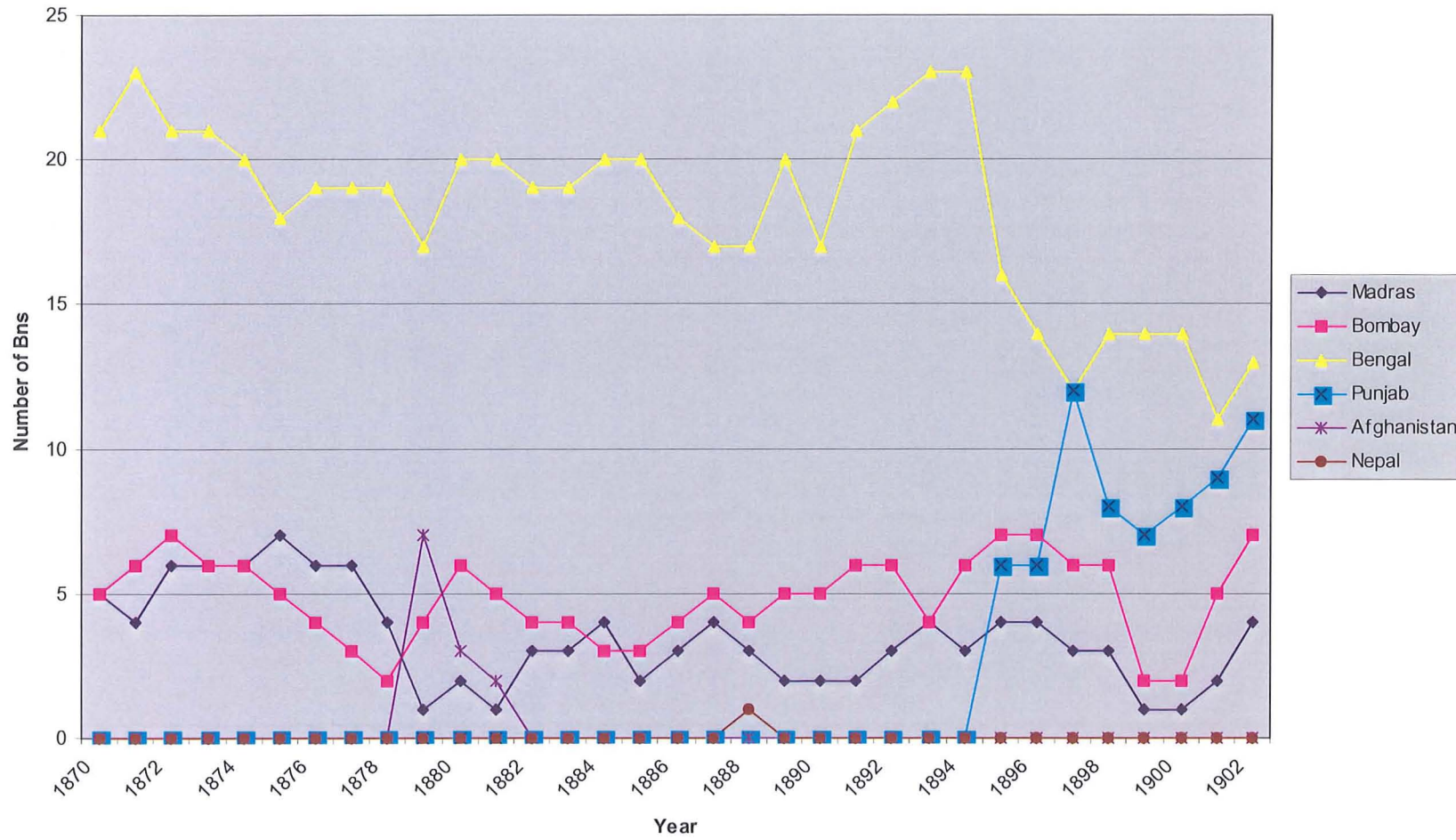


Chart 16 - Number of Deployment Locations Each Year

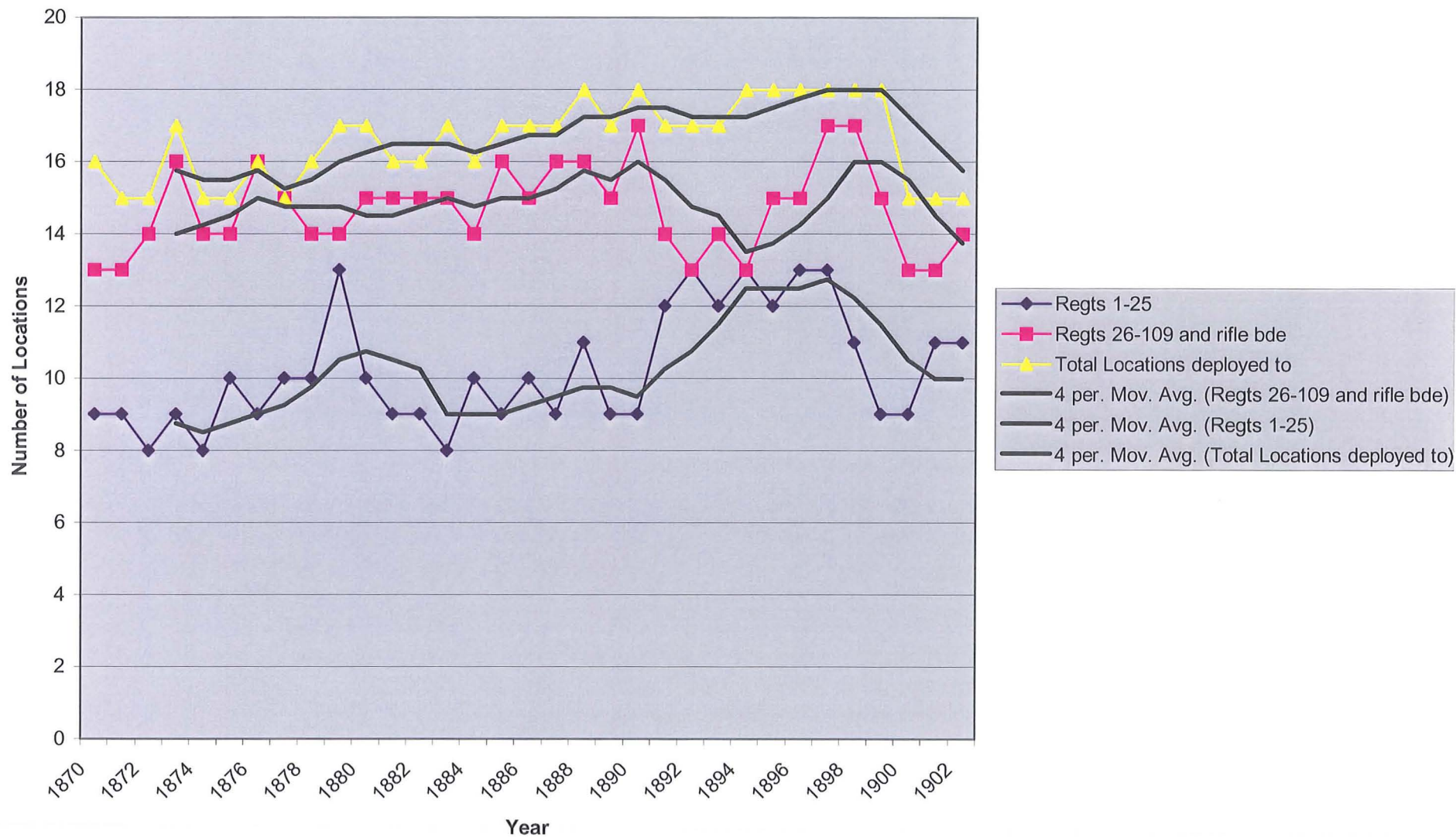


Chart 18 - All Regiments: Number of Years in Location

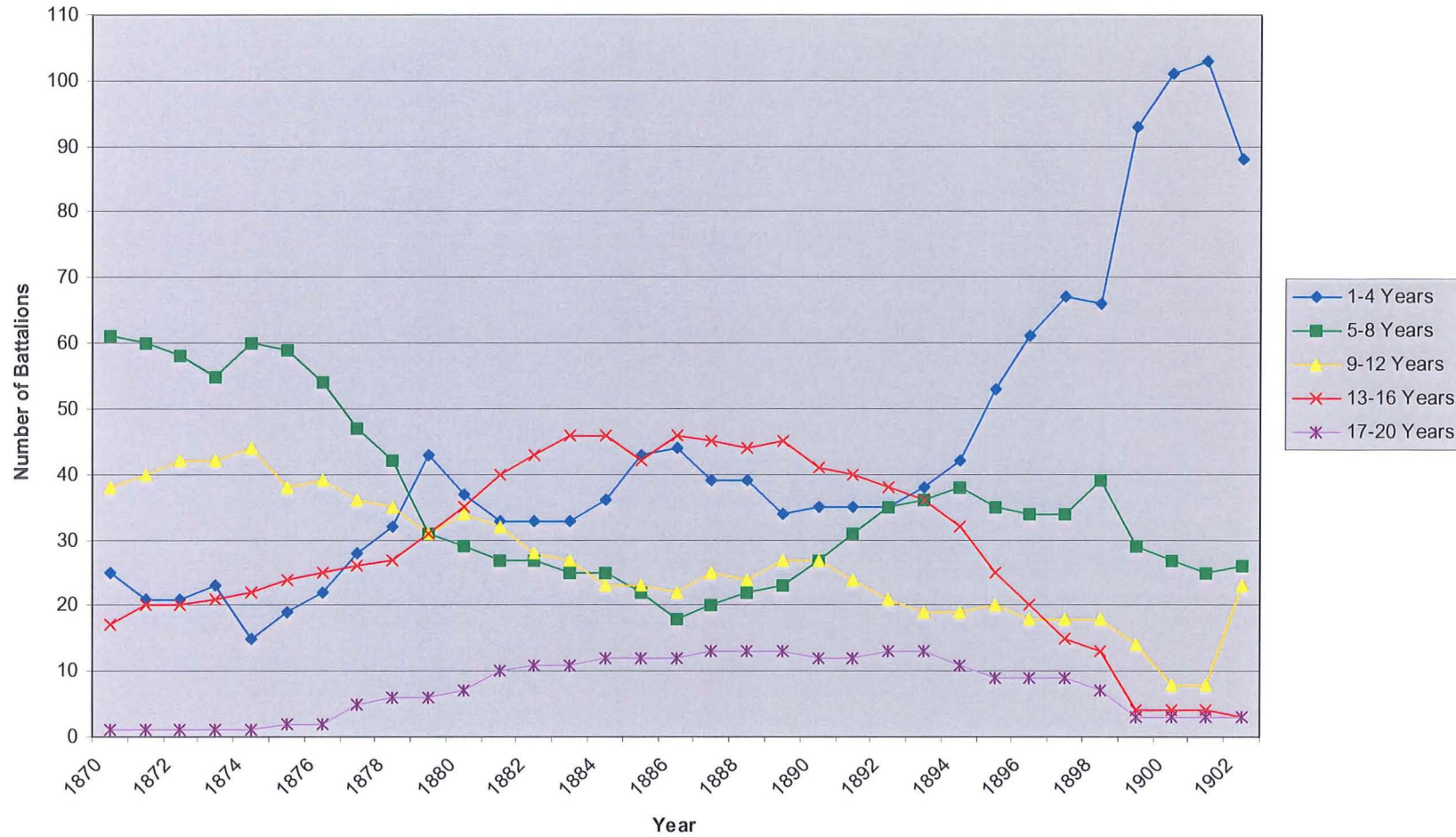


Chart 19 - Regiments 1 to 25: Number of Years in Location

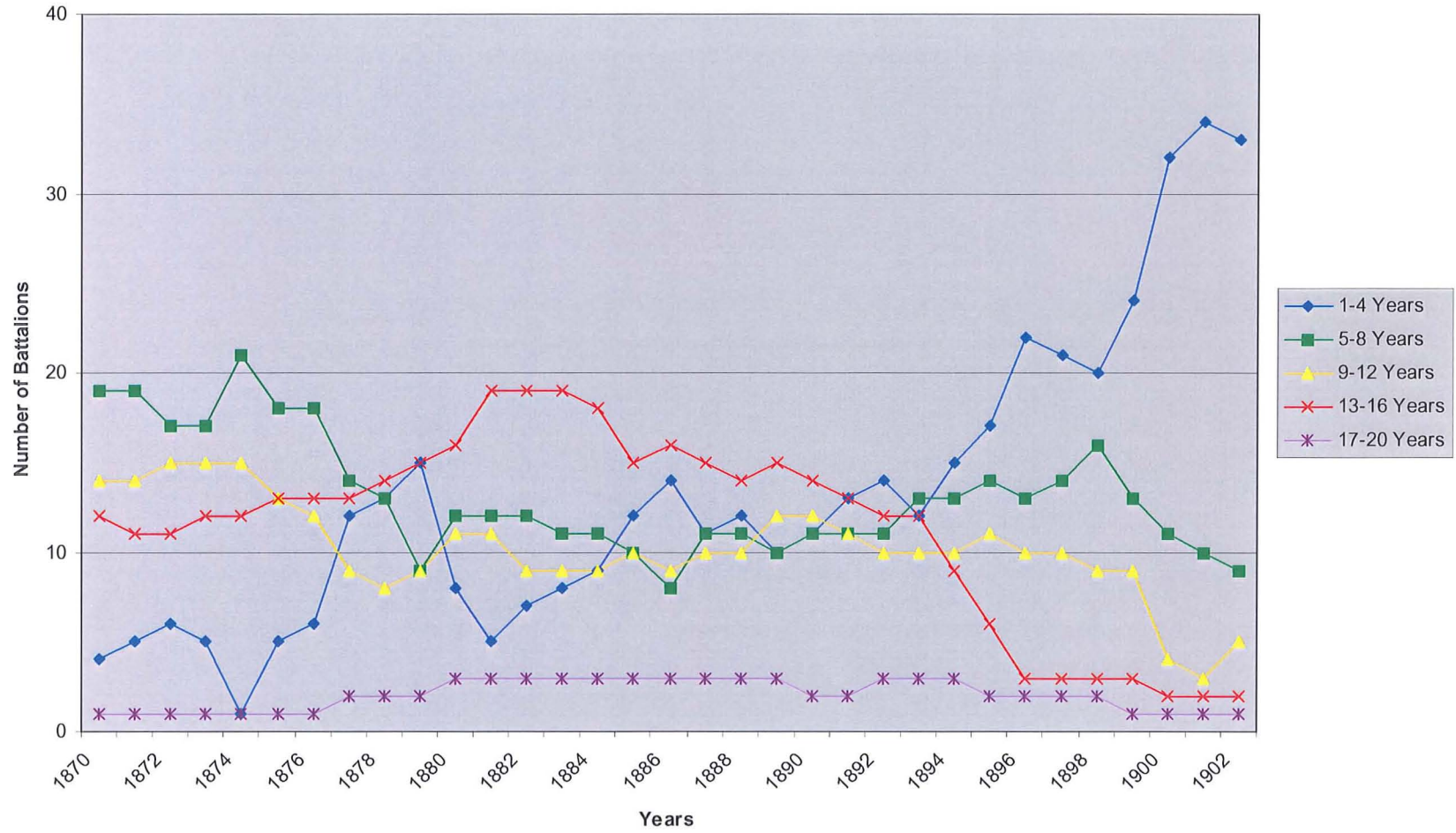


Chart 20 - Regiments 26 to 109 and the Rifle Brigade: Number of Years in Location

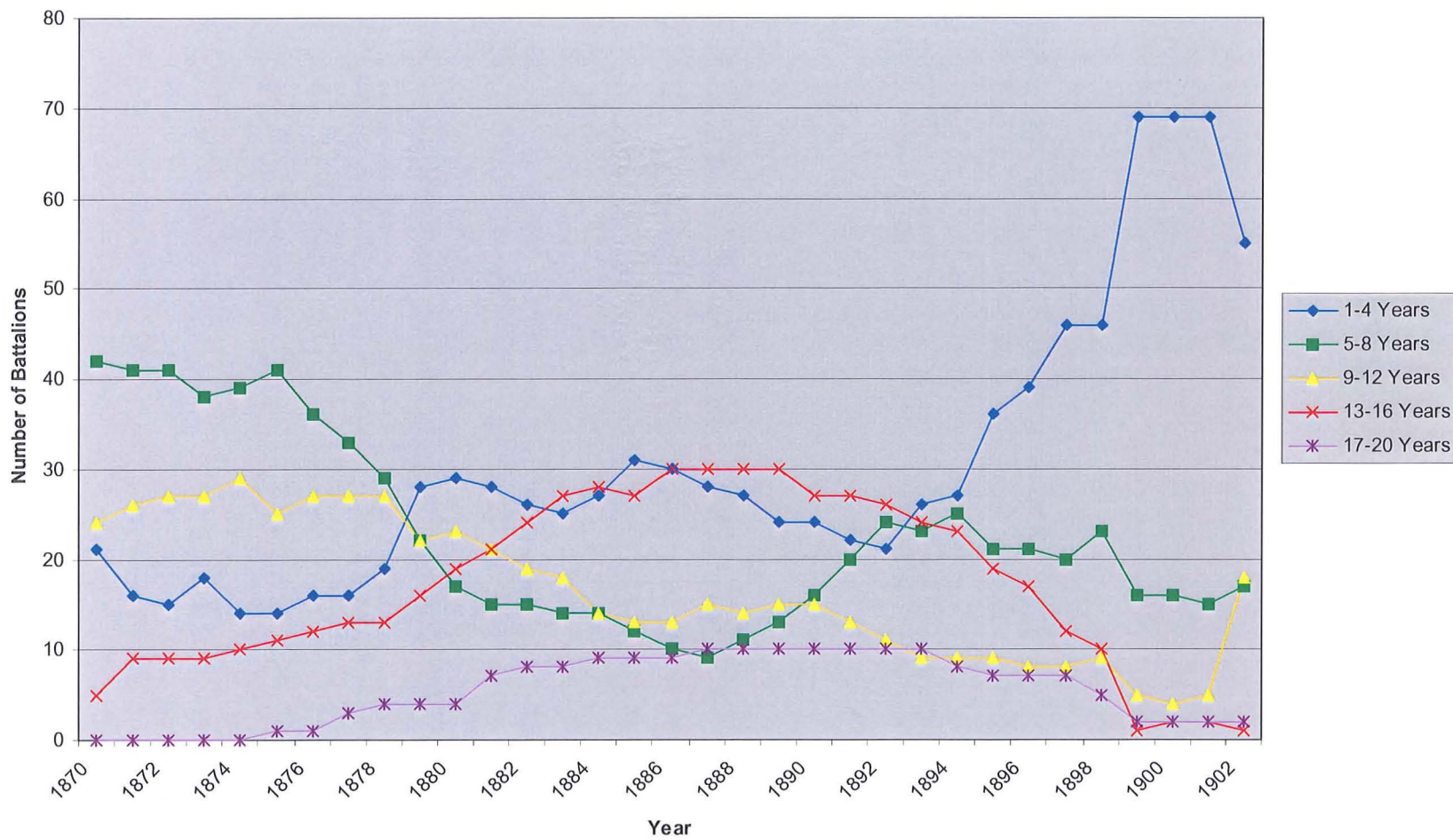


Chart 21 - Moves Per Year

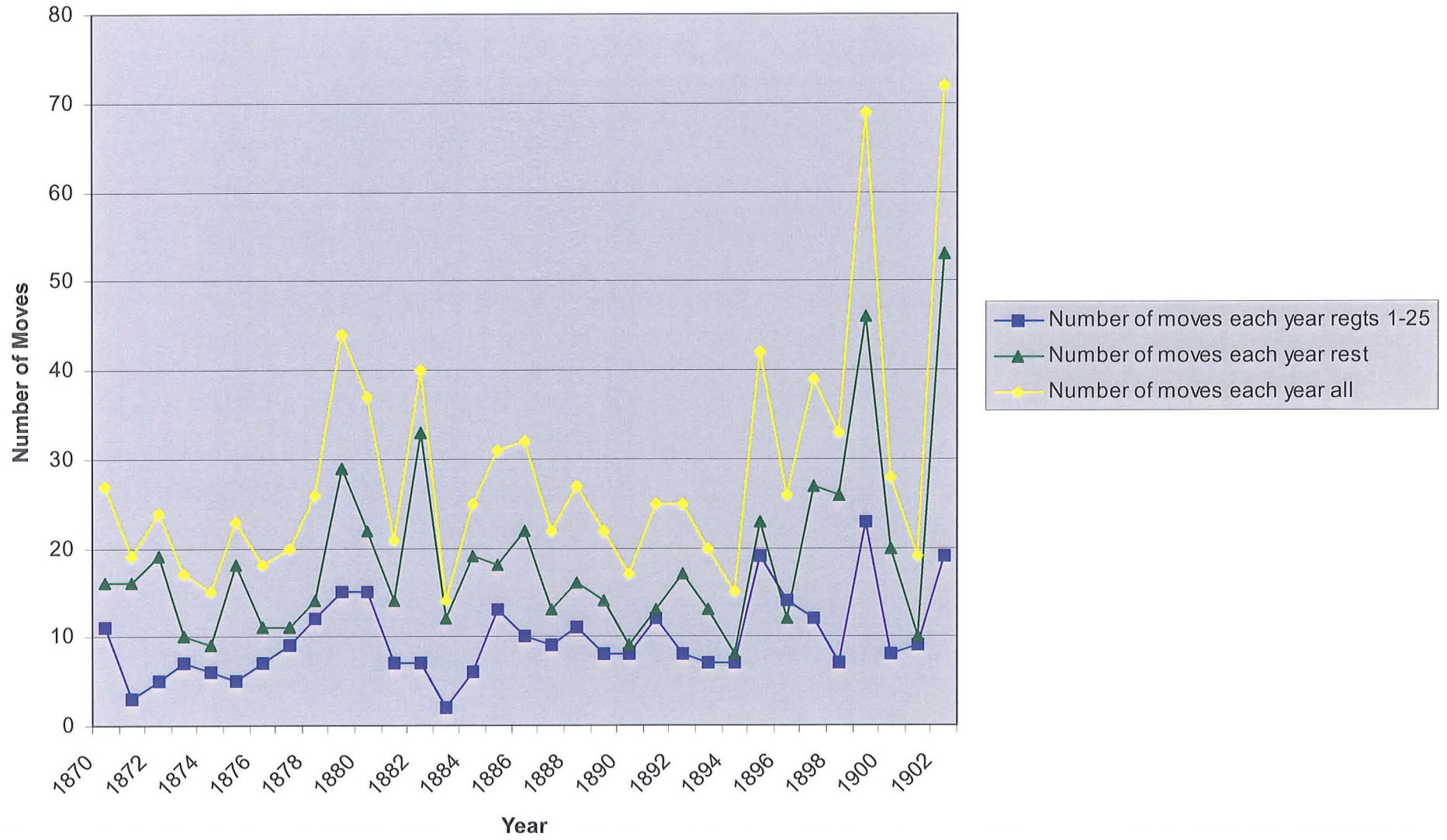
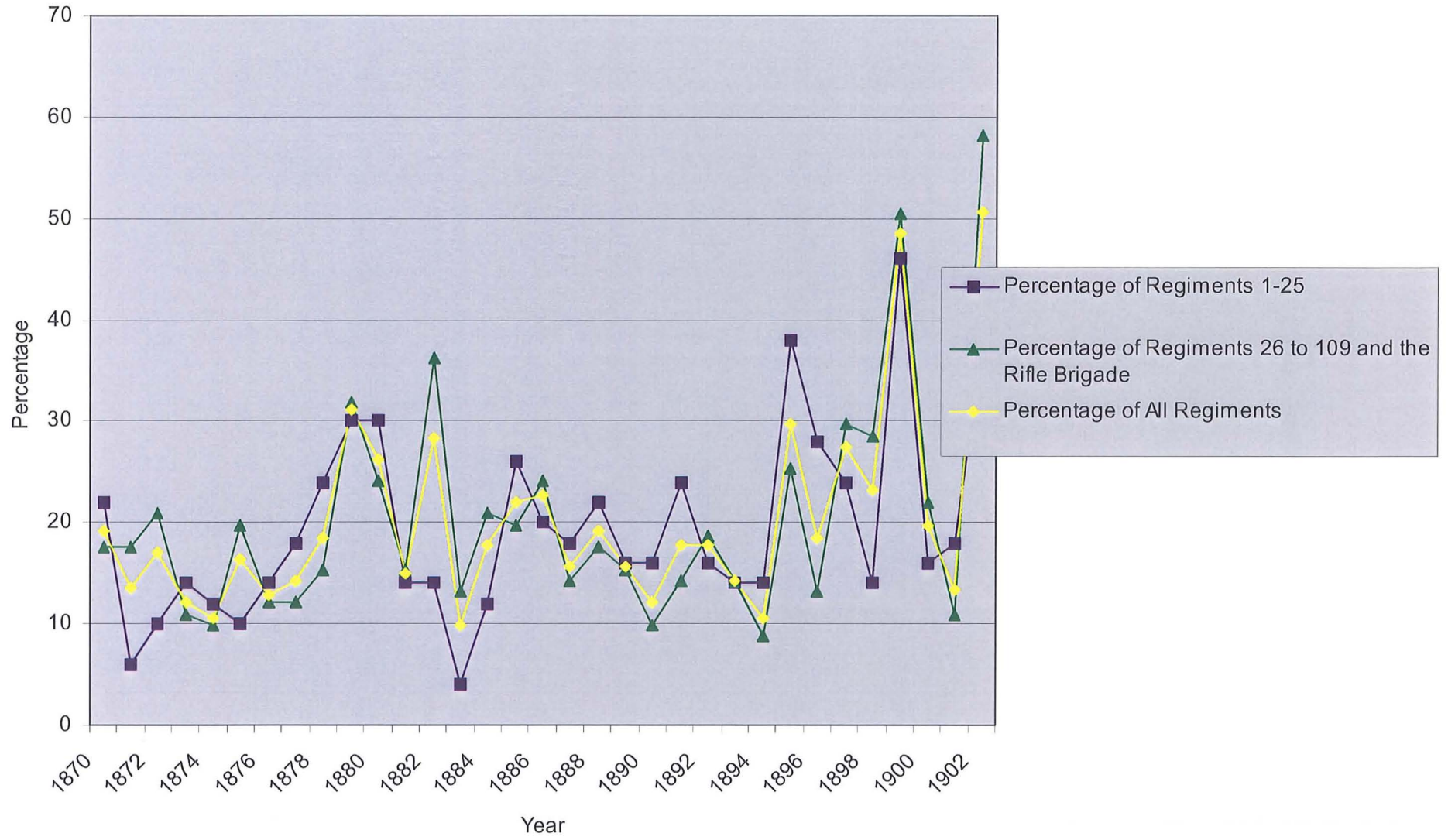


Chart 22 - Regimental Moves as Percentage of the Number of Battalions



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