

Interaction and Perception in Anglo-German Armies:
1689-1815

Mark Wishon

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Department of History
University College London
Gower Street
London

I, Mark Wishon confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark F. Wishon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'M' and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

ABSTRACT

Throughout the 'long eighteenth century' Britain was heavily reliant upon soldiers from states within the Holy Roman Empire to augment British forces during times of war, especially in the repeated conflicts with Bourbon, Revolutionary, and Napoleonic France. The disparity in populations between these two rival powers, and the British public's reluctance to maintain a large standing army, made this external source of manpower of crucial importance. Whereas the majority of these forces were acting in the capacity of allies, 'auxiliary' forces were hired as well, and from the mid-century onwards, a small but steadily increasing number of German men would serve within British regiments or distinct formations referred to as 'Foreign Corps'. Employing or allying with these troops would result in these Anglo-German armies operating not only on the European continent but in the American Colonies, Caribbean and within the British Isles as well.

Within these multinational coalitions, soldiers would encounter and interact with one another in a variety of professional and informal venues, and many participants recorded their opinions of these foreign 'brother-soldiers' in journals, private correspondence, or memoirs. These commentaries are an invaluable source for understanding how individual Britons viewed some of their most valued and consistent allies – discussions that are just as insightful as comparisons made with their French enemies. Although their impressions borrowed from many prevalent stereotypes, especially in analyses concerning national character, these soldier-authors had a unique perspective and their writings reflect this. These men belonged to the soldiering profession, and this solidarity among military men would often focus their attention away from national or cultural distinctions, and towards defining how their allies adhered to the common ideal of a good soldier. The result was that though the British public may have maintained a derogatory attitude towards German soldiery, Britain's own military men – due to shared identities and experiences – viewed them far more favourably.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CUP:	Cambridge University Press
HMC:	Historical Manuscripts Commission
JSAHR:	Journal for the Society of Army Historical Research
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OUP:	Oxford University Press
Add. MS	Additional Manuscripts (British Library)
CO:	Colonial Office Papers
WO:	War Office Papers
CKS:	Centre for Kentish Studies
HL:	Huntington Library
HRO:	Hampshire Record Office
HSTAH:	Niedersächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv, Hannover
HStAM:	Hessische Staatsarchiv, Marburg
MBK:	Murhardsche Bibliothek Kassel
NA:	National Archives, Kew
NAS:	National Archives of Scotland
NLS:	National Library of Scotland
WSRO:	West Sussex Record Office

INTRODUCTION

‘Now every thing is so totally unlike England you cannot conceive & which hurries one home to be absorbed in reflection’¹

So wrote the English officer William Knollys in a letter to his mother while on military campaign in Flanders in 1793. During his time in the Low Countries, Knollys, the self-styled Lord Wallingford, was every day encountering new places and being immersed in an environment that – while not as foreign as he would have us believe – nevertheless gave him a greater appreciation of his own Englishness. After one such evening of being ‘absorbed in reflection’, he confided to his family, ‘the more I see of foreign customs, the more plainly I feel the sterling good sense of our own Constitution.’² Knollys, and so many other British officers and soldiers like him, gained a better understanding of his own culture and nation by encountering others while on campaign, where they would not only interact with the local inhabitants, but also a whole variety of men from other nations with whom the British were so often allied. One of the most common subjects for such comparisons were the German allies and auxiliaries fighting alongside the British Army, a point of commentary recurrent in Wallingford’s letters and with scores of other British soldiers over the last century. Not only were these comparisons valuable in gaining insight into their own Britishness, but these soldiers would also formulate opinions of their fellow-soldiers within German armies, providing a unique perspective that, crucially, would be far different from the opinions of their countrymen back home. Utilizing the personal writings of the soldiers themselves, this thesis will examine these deliberations and what they tell us will reveal a great deal about the

¹ Hampshire Record Office (HRO) 1M44/110 fol. 66, Lord Wallingford to his mother, near Tournay, December 3rd 1793.

² Knollys went by Lord Wallingford while his father remained alive, and then became, unofficially, the 8th Earl of Banbury. HRO 1M44/110 fol. 66, Lord Wallingford to his mother, near Tournay, December 3rd, 1793.; Victor Stater, ‘Charles Knollys’, in Rev. Timothy J. McCann, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

relationships between British and German soldiers in the long eighteenth century, the military associations of these two polities, the encounters of their individual soldiers and the opinions born out of those interactions. Soldiers were some of the more well-travelled members of British society, and an examination of their thoughts and experiences will shed greater light on the relations between the British and German polities and British opinions of Germany in the eighteenth century, which have been to this point dominated by studies of grand tourists, politics, foreign policy, and the press.

In recent decades, scholars have tried to obtain a deeper appreciation of the lives of military men (and women), and their relationships with the nation at-large. We know more about the daily routines, experiences and motivations of eighteenth century soldiers due to these historical inquiries, but there has been very little written about their relationships with their allies – a crucial aspect of military life, which has more often only been addressed, obliquely, by historians of politics and foreign policy. In wars, it hardly needs saying: enemies are made. But friendships are also created, and ‘strange-bedfellows’, here created by the spectre of a hegemonic French monarchy, were perhaps not as strange as they have been portrayed. The seemingly ubiquitous presence of ‘Germans’ fighting alongside the British Army was no accident, for they were very much a part of the British way of warfare in the long eighteenth century, in Europe, and beyond. Had relations between these two forces been untenable, this relationship would have never lasted as long as it did.

The aims of this thesis are two-fold. Firstly, and as a preface to the social history of this relationship, this work seeks to highlight the evolving but consistently valuable role that German manpower played in contributing to Britain’s European, imperial and domestic military struggles from the commencement of the Nine Years War to the Battle of Waterloo. The primary reason for such an introduction emerges from the fact that this subject, as a whole, has escaped the eyes of most military historians save for those observing a specific instance in this century-long association. In the last two centuries, much has been written on the history of

German soldiers in and alongside the British army, but a comprehensive study of the entirety of this phenomenon has never been attempted. This is perhaps not surprising given that the period which saw the most interest in the military history of Britain, the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, also coincided with British nationalism in its strongest form, and certainly amidst two world wars and existential threats to the freedom of the British people and her armed forces, few would be willing to discuss the vital importance of German soldiery to Britain's military successes in the previous two centuries. The same was true for the histories by German soldiers and scholars, as unfortunately some of the most extensive monographs on subjects such as the Germans in the American Revolutionary War or the Hanoverians in the service of Britain in the Napoleonic era, are deeply mired in nationalistic bias. Furthermore, this period of multinational armies, filled with men showing very little national allegiance, was not popular among the late-Victorian and early twentieth century soldier-scholars, in either country. This is exemplified in the writings of authors such as Francis Henry Skrine, who wrote that 'society in the eighteenth century was hastening to decay', given that within these armies, 'racial ties were of small account.'³

For much of the past two centuries, histories of Britain's armed forces were written predominantly by active or retired servicemen and therefore were most often focused on military matters, tactics, dress, organization, and a handful of the era's *dramatis personae* – topics of particular utility for those within the profession. As a result, much of the social history of the British Army was overlooked until the latter decades of the twentieth century, particularly the social interactions with foreign foes and allies. Yet this prolonged interest in military histories, and especially the personal histories and writings of soldiers themselves, have provided for posterity an overwhelming number of published first-hand accounts, which have been of great benefit to this project.

This is not to say that the subject at hand is bereft of scholarly attention. While there may be no comprehensive study arching this entire period, there is

³ Francis Henry Skrine, *Fontenoy and Britain's Share in the War of Austrian Succession, 1741-1748* (London: Blackwood & Sons, 1906), p. 70.

certainly a host of treatises that deal with the military and social history of these two nations. For the military perspective, there have been several beneficial articles and monographs on episodes of Anglo-German armies, alliances and coalitions, with perhaps the greatest single contributor being C.T. Atkinson, whose work in the middle of the twentieth century has been a helpful gateway to archival resources and areas of inquiry. For the history of the British armies and their partnerships with German allies, Sir John Fortescue's extensive and invaluable studies are of particularly utility.⁴ More recently, Peter Wilson has made significant contributions to our understanding of the militaries of the smaller absolutist states within the Holy Roman Empire, and his comprehensive treatise on the subject, *German Armies: War and German Politics, 1648-1806*, is the best source for understanding this century-long relationship from the German perspective, especially given that other European powers were similarly engaged in hiring auxiliaries and subsidy troops from within the *Reich*, many of whom did so before Britain adopted the policy in pursuing her own interests.⁵ In subsequent chapters, there will be the introduction of further sources, as the various aspects or episodes of Anglo-German military relationships are discussed, as indeed this work is the beneficiary of a whole host of secondary works and published first-hand accounts. Nevertheless, there are few works that encompass this whole period, and sadly, this thesis can only scratch the surface of what is a compelling but sadly neglected military history.

The second objective for this thesis, which will receive the most emphasis throughout, is examining the social and professional relationships between British and German soldiers. The aim is to explore these key themes: where they encountered one another; how they interacted; and what comments they made about behaviour, manners, and their counterparts' abilities as soldiers. This is done with a view towards dispelling the impression that associations between these polities were unilaterally negative, adding another facet to the topic of Anglo-Hanoverian and Anglo-German relations which has become in vogue in the last two

⁴ Sir John William Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, 14 vols. (1899-1930).

⁵ Peter Wilson, *German Armies: War and German Politics, 1648-1806* (London: UCL Press, 1999).

decades, but has centred around political and foreign policy concerns, and at times, cultural, philosophical, religious, and mercantile connections. For these links with the Electorate of Hanover in particular, we are indebted to Brendan Simms and Torsten Rlotte and the various contributors to *The Hanoverian Dimension*, and other recent studies that have sought to address key gaps in this subject.⁶ One particularly relevant work is Frauke Geyken's monograph on British portrayals of Germany in public discourse and travel writings, and indeed, discussions of the grand tour are the most valuable studies for finding British depictions of Germans and Germany from which to contrast the accounts of soldier-authors.⁷ Jeremy Black and Christopher Hibbert have both made valuable additions to this particular subject, and this work hopes to contribute to this discussion of British impressions of Germans and Germany formed from first hand experience.⁸ Yet the British view of Germany in the eighteenth century has yet to be fully realized, and this thesis hopes to make some small contribution.

Certainly, with the popularity in the past two decades of studies on anti-Hanoverianism and the Hanoverian element in British foreign and military policy, the characterizations of the Electorate by the British press are well covered. Those looking at perceptions of Hanover in works such as Bob Harris' *Patriot Press*, or his article, 'Hanover in the Public Sphere', would certainly maintain that the impressions were by and large negative, yet the debates over subsidizing German troops were won by those who supported these policies, not their opponents.⁹ Expanding beyond merely the 1740's, where Gert Brauer has addressed many of these issues, a discussion of how these subsidy treaties were defended, justified, and maintained is in desperate need of a work similar to that of Hannah Smith's recent

⁶ Brendan Simms and Torsten Rlotte (eds.), *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

⁷ Frauke Geyken, *Gentlemen auf Reisen: Das Britische Deutschlandbild im 18 Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2002).

⁸ Christopher Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (London: Methuen, 1987).; Jeremy Black, *The British and the Grand Tour* (London: Croom Helm, 1985).; Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad, The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992).

⁹ Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-18th Century* (Oxford: OUP, 2002).; Bob Harris, *A Patriot Press: National Politics and the London Press in the 1740's* (Oxford: OUP, 2003).; Bob Harris, 'Hanover in the Public Sphere', in Simms and Rlotte, *The Hanoverian Dimension*.

publication on the supporters of the Georgian Monarchy.¹⁰ Nicholas Harding's fascinating work *Hanover and Empire* on the philosophical role of Hanover and its relation with the British Empire has done this in part, and future scholarship should expand such topics further to include the Hessians, who as frequent recipients of funds from the British government were in the crosshairs of the opposition press as well, often at the same time. While the political debates and the impressions in the 'public sphere' are indeed a fascinating aspect of this relationship, the opinions expressed there have a particular bias, and for this reason, those soldiers' accounts published as pamphlets or printed in magazines will for the most part be overlooked.

It should be noted that throughout this work the focus remains primarily – but not exclusively – on the opinions of British soldiers regarding their German counterparts. Nevertheless, where possible, the German accounts are utilized to gain the best possible understanding of these relationships, and to reveal their opinions in similar circumstances. Limited time and resources have prevented a highly desirable comparative history, but that should not prevent myself, or others, from trying in the future.

****Methodology****

Before addressing the history of this particular subject, there are a few issues that should be addressed, non-the-least some definitions that need to be clarified. This thesis unashamedly employs terms such as 'British', 'English' and 'German' throughout, to define the participants within these coalitions, with full awareness of the dangers in trying to suggest that these were perfectly homogenous or clearly definable groups in this period. Of course in the eighteenth century there was no true German 'nation' in the modern sense of the word, and the majority of those

¹⁰ Gert Brauer, *Die Hannoversch-englischen Subsidienvträge, 1702-1748* (Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1962); Hannah Smith, *The Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-1760* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).

mentioned in this work herald from northern, protestant regions, leaving out a significant proportion of the German-speaking world. This has resulted in the exclusion of some of the more prominent states of the Holy Roman Empire, such as Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg and the many ecclesiastical territories, not to mention, non-German speaking regions such as Flanders and Bohemia. Equally damning is that in examining the members of the British Army, there will be a paucity of references to the Irish, when certainly protestant Irish were ubiquitous throughout this era, though many defined themselves as Englishmen. Yet, the methods used in defining these peoples are done in the interest of clarity and to avoid convoluting this discussion by trying to avoid every incongruity. However there are other justifications for doing so. A discussion of politics or foreign policy would require definite terms, but this work focuses on individual soldiers, who may come from anywhere in British dominions or the German-speaking regions of the Holy Roman Empire, and the composition of armies in the eighteenth century did not necessarily mirror the states which mobilized them. More importantly, 'English' and 'German' were the most commonly used terms by the participants themselves, although the term 'British' is utilized with greater frequency here, as a means of being more inclusive.¹¹ Therefore, rightly or wrongly, this work, for coherency and lucidity, uses the terms utilized by the soldier-authors themselves, which is apropos, given that this is a dissertation about generalizations.

There is one term however that has been invented here: that of the Anglo-German army. This entity never existed in any formal sense, nor was a term used by participants themselves, and is indeed created as a means of tying together these various armies that were comprised largely (but of course not exclusively) of English and German speakers.¹² Yet this is also representative of a conflux of two military cultures, noticeable particularly to military theorists, however mollified they may have been by the homogenizing nature of early modern European

¹¹ For the use and significance of 'British' and 'English' in the writings of the soldiers themselves, see Stephen Conway, 'War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles', *English Historical Review*, 116 (September 2001), pp. 863-893.

¹² The one exception to this being German references to the 'English-German Legion', which was an alternative name for the King's German Legion of 1803-1815.

militaries. An Anglo-German army often incorporated or fought alongside other nations and nationalities, but throughout Britain's great struggles with France, armies consisting largely of British and Germanic forces were the most prevalent.

The main trajectory of this work does not entail an exhaustive military history of this lengthy and impactful relationship, though there has been provided here, and in later chapters, a brief narrative of British and German cooperation between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. Instead the focus will be on the relations between British and German soldiers, and in particular, British opinions of their German counterparts. To this end, the first chapter focuses on popular impressions of British and German 'nationalities', especially in theories of national character. This will be a point of embarkation for later chapters focusing on the soldier-authors who made and recorded their own impressions upon coming into contact with their 'brother-soldiers'. Chapter I will conclude with a discussion of the ways in which early modern European militaries were homogenizing agents, which brought together soldiers in a shared culture and professional fraternity that was surprisingly multi-national and transnational.

Chapters II through VI will each highlight a specific relationship or instance in the history of Anglo-German military associations. The relationship between British and German soldiers in this period has been divided here between allies, auxiliaries, and integrated corps. The first of these groups, allies, refers to the major powers within the Holy Roman Empire who served alongside British forces as equals in the large multinational struggles on the European continent. For the sake of clarity, this term will be used predominantly for Austrian and Prussian armies, although contemporaries used similar language to describe many other contingents fighting alongside the British. While Parliament would often provide subsidies for both of these two powers' armed forces, they remained for the most part independent entities, at times frustratingly so. While there are other minor distinctions, which will be outlined later, this is the main criterion used to delineate

and define an ally, as they would remain throughout any war under the direction of their own sovereign.¹³

This was not the case for the second group examined in this thesis: auxiliaries. A significant number of princes within the Holy Roman Empire, usually those with territories too small or too poor to sustain large standing armies, would for a variety of motives hire out their forces to a wealthier state. Such armies, or contingents from them, became 'auxiliaries' in Britain's armies, although they were (and often still are) referred to as 'mercenaries'. In the case of Great Britain, though they acted at all times in concert with the British Army and under the direction of British commanders, they would retain much of their organization, structure and composition, and would in almost every way remain an army within an army.

In order to explore this relationship further, Chapter IV will be a lengthy case study of the 'Hessians' in the American War, following a broader examination of relations between Britons and their German auxiliaries in Chapter III. While there are a number of good candidates for a case study of Britain's German auxiliaries, the Hessians were chosen due to the popularity and familiarity of the subject within modern historiography, and of course the quantity of first hand accounts which illuminate this particular episode better than any other.

Chapters V and VI discuss the last form Anglo-German association: the Germans integrated into British regiments or serving as 'Foreign Corps': i.e., foreign contingents within the British Army. As in the case of auxiliaries, a chapter-long case study will follow, which will highlight that exceptional entity known as the King's German Legion, which became a Hanoverian Army in exile during the Napoleonic Wars, and is the far and away the best source for examining relationships between British and German soldiers and their opinions of one

¹³ As late as 1794, Prussia was acting in the capacity of auxiliary to Britain, although they never properly mobilized their army or manoeuvred them in a way to assist the British, leading one British officer to exclaim that the Prussian subsidy was 'the most ruinous measure we could have adopted.' Sir Harry Calvert, *The Journals and Correspondence of General Sir Harry Calvert, Comprising the Campaigns in Flanders and Holland in 1793-4* edited by Sir Harry Verney (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1853), pp. 348, 350.

another, and therefore their high profile in this thesis should hardly come as a surprise.

The division between allies, auxiliaries and integrated soldiers, as will be shown in their respective chapters, is one that reflects the frequency and nature of interactions between the two groups of soldiers. This categorization does not reflect variations in the tenor of these relationships, as this was determined by other external factors, such as the success of the current campaign or the political relationship between the respective nations. Though it would be tempting to divide this work along the lines of positive or negative impressions or interactions, in fact, such relations might have resulted from either prolonged exposure, or such infrequent encounters as to prevent the overturning of pre-established dispositions, or some other variable. In the end, the approach chosen was done so because each form of association had recurrent themes that reflected the nature of each relationship.

Though these five chapters highlight the variety of associations and episodes of Anglo-German interaction between the Glorious Revolution and Waterloo, there is one notable omission from this discussion, which itself is deserving of its own particular study: that of British soldiers serving in German armies. Horace Walpole remarked of these Britons serving within the *Reich*: 'we seem to flourish much when transplanted to Germany – but Germans don't make good manure here!'¹⁴ Given the notoriety of several Britons in German armies, particularly the famed James Keith in the Prussian service (amongst others), this would indeed be a valuable and popular theme. However, aside from the political refugees and Irish Catholics serving abroad, the numbers of Britons and Protestant Irish were never great, for a variety of reasons, stemming from restrictions placed by the British government, to the difficulties of foreign service, and that German forces usually received lower pay.¹⁵

¹⁴ Horace Walpole, *Letters of Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Orford* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1906), vol. III, p. 37.

¹⁵ While Frederick Wilhelm I of Prussia was ever eager to recruit within Britain, especially in order to fill the ranks of his 'Giant Grenadiers', there is very little evidence to suggest others German states deliberately sought after British soldiers. See: F.L Carsten, 'British Diplomacy and the Giant

This disparity can best be seen in the Hessen-Kassel forces sent to America in the 1770's: despite a relatively high frequency of foreigners within their infantry battalions, aside from a handful of men in the officer class, fewer than two-dozen Britons were among more than 11,000 soldiers sent to the colonies and most of these were in the regimental bands.¹⁶ Contrasting this with the British regiments serving in America, which contained more than 2,000 German-born men, not to mention the tens of thousands of auxiliaries, reveals that this would hardly make for a comparative history.¹⁷ Yet their story is an intriguing one, and the subject will hopefully receive some more attention in the future.

In order to best understand the opinions of British soldiers towards their German counterparts, be they, allies, auxiliaries or integrated formations, the personal writings of soldiers and officers have been of the most utility. War Office and Colonial Office papers have been utilized, but more often they have provided context and a greater appreciation of the organizational and bureaucratic relationship, as opposed to the personal one. Instead, private letters to family and colleagues, personal diaries, journals, and memoirs (published and unpublished), have all been the main sources for examining these relationships. There are certainly pitfalls in relying so heavily upon such documents, especially memoirs, given the likelihood of inaccuracies and the prejudices of the author. For works designed specifically for publication, there is always the concern that their accounts were merely pandering to an audience. Furthermore, many of these memoirs, especially after the Napoleonic Wars, were written with the help of histories, such as William Napier's *History of the War in the Peninsula*, which many authors admitted using in order to corroborate their own accounts or to refresh their memories.¹⁸

Grenadiers of Frederick William I', *History Today*, [1:11] (1951: Nov.), pp. 55-60.; J.M. Bulloch, 'Scots Soldiers Under the Prussian Flag', *JSAHR*, vol. 3 (1924), pp. 108-109.; for a letter explaining the disadvantages of Prussian service, see: National Archives of Scotland (NAS) GD18/4198, John Christie to Sir John Clerk, January 10th, 1751.

¹⁶ For published Hessian muster rolls, see: Eckhart G. Franz, *Hessische Truppen im amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg* 6 vols. (Marburg : Archivschule, 1972-1987).

¹⁷ For German soldiers in British regiments, especially 'Scheithers Recruits', see Chapter V below.

¹⁸ William Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France*, 6 vols. (London: 1828-1840).

But in the vast majority of cases, these sources retain a great deal of consistency in their recollections of their German allies, and only in the end of this period is there any hint of bias – and this particular issue will be addressed in the final chapter.

The greatest pitfall are those journals and memoirs which were created solely for public consumption, even going so far as to be completely invented. William Defoe is attributed – amongst other things – to creating a war journal of the conflicts in Catalonia during the War of Spanish Succession, but the definitive example of a fictional war-diary is the comically dubious account of Sergeant Macleod.¹⁹ Certainly, if Macleod was the man that his journal would have us believe, he was truly a gifted individual, having fought in every conflict from the War of Spanish Succession (1710's) to his last campaign in America in the 1770's, all the while siring enough children to create his own clan, with the oldest and youngest being separated by some 80 years!²⁰ Most inaccuracies are not so easy to discover.

Despite these outliers, published works include the most insightful materials for the pursuit of this subject, and the hundreds of published diaries, journals, correspondences and memoirs released in the last two centuries by historians and military enthusiasts have made access to the opinions of British and German soldiers that much easier. Given that there are only a small number of these source from the Nine Years War and the War of Spanish Succession, particularly those that might include personal insights and opinions, the decision here has been made to focus on the social history of British and German soldiers beginning in the 1740's, with the War of Austrian Succession. Furthermore, by this time the concept of 'German' had become more firmly established in Britain: referring to member-states of the Holy Roman Empire to the exclusion of Habsburg dominions, whereas around the turn of the eighteenth century 'German' was a term commonly used to describe Imperial forces. When necessary, older sources are used in order to observe continuities and changes over time, but in most cases the dates for determining the British perspective of Germany begin with the 'Pragmatic Army' of 1742-3. Yet, this

¹⁹ Capt. George Carleton, *Memoirs of an English Officer, Who serv'd in the Dutch War in 1672 to the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713* (London, 1728).

²⁰ William Thomson. *Memoirs of the Life and Gallant Exploits of the Old Highland Soldier Serjeant Donald Macleod: 1688-1791* (London: Blackie & Son, 1933), pp. 76-7.

is not the case with the military history of this subject, which will address the history of Anglo-German armies beginning with the 'Grand Alliance' formed in 1689.

****History and Significance of Anglo-German Armies****

An Anglo-German military relationship extends far beyond the parameters of this thesis, and stretches back certainly to Roman times, if not prehistory. Though this survey begins in 1689, following the invasion of England and Ireland by William of Orange's army and the outbreak of the Nine Years War, only a half-century before there had been a strong British – particularly Scottish – presence in German armies on the continent.²¹ At the same time, there were a number of German-speaking combatants involved in the English civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century.²² The Nine Years War that engulfed Western Europe in 1689 would bring Britain into close partnerships with a number of German princes, including the Austrian Habsburgs, thereby forging relationships that would persist throughout the following century. Crucially, it was in this conflict that Parliament would first make large subsidy agreements with smaller states within the *Reich* to augment England's own military contributions, borrowing on the Dutch model – a theme with numerous parallels to other aspects of British society in this period. Within two decades of the first Anglo-Dutch subsidization of German auxiliaries, these two 'Maritime Powers' would be supporting some 97,000 German soldiers annually.²³ It was through such financial commitments that Britain was to help maintain a coalition army in Flanders large enough to meet Louis XIV's forces in battles where both sides numbered more than 80,000 men, though the English contingent in the

²¹ Th. A. Fischer, *The Scots in Germany: Being a Contribution Towards the History of the Scot Abroad* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1902), pp. 76-117.

²² Mark Stoye, *Soldiers and Strangers: An Ethnic History of the English Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 91-98, 101-105.

²³ Wilson, *German Armies*, pp. 108-9.

Low Countries hovered between 20,000-30,000.²⁴ Yet the war's most important legacy was not the prolonged association of British and German forces, but the policies instigated by Parliament after its conclusion, which would make these Anglo-German forces a seemingly inevitable feature of Britain's wars for more than a century. The friction between English and Dutch military men, owing to William III's favouritism towards Dutch and German commanders, would create a backlash among the English military and the nation at-large. At the war's conclusion, riding a wave of anti-foreign sentiment, Parliament passed the Disbanding Act of 1699, forcing all remaining Dutch forces out of Britain and Ireland, and later placed provisions within the Act of Settlement of 1701 with the aim of ethnically and religiously anglicizing the army.²⁵ These policies, alongside vast reductions after each successive war, prevented the British Army from becoming a menace to its own people, but in doing so made it of little threat to their recurring enemies, the French. Moreover, this would entail that throughout the following century the British Army would contain comparatively few foreigners, and the prevention of Catholics and foreign-born men from joining the army increased Britain's reliance upon allies for cooperation, and auxiliaries for augmentation.

As a result German manpower became of crucial importance to Britain's war efforts. There were other allies and foreign contingents, especially the armies from the United Provinces, yet in scope and scale no other group was as valuable as the German-speaking men from within the Holy Roman Empire: there was a German presence in each of Britain's most important and extensive military operations in Europe between 1689 and 1815. On the continent, German armies made up the

²⁴ The 'English Army' for much of this conflict was a mix of English and foreign. John Childs states that 10,000 British soldiers were sent to the Low Countries in 1689, and Fortescue places 23,000 Britons in Flanders in 1692, out of a total of 40,000 which were paid for by Parliament for the theatre. See Fortescue, *History*, vol. I, p. 360.; John Childs, *The British Army of William III, 1689-1702* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1987), p. 30.; John Childs, *The Nine Years' War and the British Army 1688-1697: Operations in the Low Countries* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1991), p.73.

²⁵ From Article III: 'no person born out of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging (although he be naturalized or made a denizen, except such as are born of English parents) shall be capable to be of the Privy Council, or a member of either House of Parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of trust, either civil or military', *An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject*, 12 & 13 Wm 3 c. 2. (1701)

plurality, if not the majority of the forces fighting against France in north and central Europe, and were particularly critical to those battles that have been remembered predominantly as British victories. The first such success would be at Blenheim in 1704, the Duke of Marlborough's complete defeat of French and Bavarian forces along the banks of the Danube in southern Germany. The battle will be forever tied to the brilliant English commander, yet the English and Scottish forces within the army numbered perhaps no more than 15 percent of the total force, and German armies, including Imperial troops, made up the vast majority.²⁶

This pattern would continue for each of these continental wars, where the British Army's signal victories against the French were supported, if not facilitated, by partners from within the Holy Roman Empire. At the Battle of Dettingen along the Main River in 1743 the British forces represented merely 40 percent of the victorious army under the command of George II, the last battle to be led by a British monarch. They did, however, do most of the fighting. Sixteen years later, the French were again defeated in Germany, at the Battle of Minden, by a British-funded army whose contingent of native-sons was even smaller (22 percent), though its presence no less significant. These battles, important as they were, did little to deciding the wars, and it could be argued that in an age of attrition and manoeuvre the mere presence of these foreign contingents was just as important as their roles in battles. To this effect, 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany', as the continental army in the Seven Years War was titled, lured France away from a purely colonial war, thereby helping to 'win America in Germany' for the Pitt-Newcastle ministry. The British contribution in manpower stood between 10-22,000, out of a British-funded army that normally numbered between 60,000 and 80,000.²⁷

During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Britain's coalitions with German states were far more disjointed, especially after 1794, when the Austrian forces let the French Army overrun the Austrian Netherlands. From that

²⁶ The British contingent was 18 squadrons of Horse, and 14 battalions of foot, of a total of 196 squadrons and 76 battalions. John Millner, *A Compendious Journal of all the Marches, Famous Battles, Sieges, and other most note-worthy, heroical, and ever memorable Actions of the Triumphant Armies of the ever-glorious Confederate Allies...* (London: 1712), p. 102.; Wilson, *German Armies*, p. 116.

²⁷ Fortescue, *History*, vol. II, p. 347, 486; Sir Reginald Savory, *His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany during the Seven Years War* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1966), p. 117.

point on, the era of partnerships on the continent was over, only being resurrected in the latter years of the Napoleonic Wars, particularly, the Waterloo Campaign. The Battle of Waterloo is perhaps the most iconic example of a battle that has long been referred to as a British victory, but on the day of the battle, the 22,000 Britons present again made up only 40 percent of the forces involved. The number of Hanoverians present at the battle was roughly equal, and if the Brunswick and Nassau forces are included, once again, Germans made up the majority. If the some 50,000 Prussians that arrived later in the day are included, the British contribution would figure to be roughly 20 percent.²⁸ Furthermore, the most critical and contested part of the battlefield, the farm-complex of La Haye Saint, was held for much of the day by veteran Hanoverian troops, many of whom had long served in the British Army. Yet this should not be interpreted as undervaluing the British involvement, at Waterloo or elsewhere, as indeed even if they made up a smaller proportion of the armed forces in such victories, they never-the-less endured the majority of the fighting, and the command and coordination of these disparate forces are in many ways attributable only to them. Indeed, over-emphasizing the German role would be as damning as ignoring it. Such is the key problem Peter Hofshröder's re-examination of the Battle of Waterloo, which postulated that it was a 'German Victory' on account of the role the Prussians and other German forces played in the battle and campaign.²⁹ This is overcompensation. It was a Anglo-German victory, and posterity would have been better served had Wellington acquiesced to Marshal Blücher's suggestion in having the battle named in honour of a nearby inn: *La Belle Alliance*.

²⁸ Writing of the Battle, Sergeant Thomas Morris wrote, 'But while I thus contend that we could not have been beaten, I feel bound, at the same time, to admit that the battle was decided by the Prussians; and but for their prompt arrival, and vigorous pursuit of the enemy, Napoleon would have... been able to resume offensive operations against us.' Thomas Morris, *The Recollections of Sergeant Morris* edited by John Selby with an Introduction by Peter Young (Gloucestershire: Windrush Press, 1998), p. 85.

²⁹ Peter Hofshröder, *1815: The Waterloo Campaign Vol. 2 – The German Victory* (London: Greenhill Books, 1999)

German manpower was not only crucial to these continental armies and Britain's greatest victories in central Europe during the long eighteenth century, but there were contributions of auxiliaries and integrated forces in the expansion and maintenance of Britain's 'First Empire'. Gibraltar, captured from the Spanish in 1704 was done so under the command of the charismatic but temperamental Prince George of Hessen-Darmstadt, who would command the garrison for the first year of occupation.³⁰ During the American War of Independence, roughly 1,500 Hanoverian soldiers were sent to Gibraltar, where they fought in and endured the 'Great Siege' of 1781-3 under General George Elliot, who viewed these men as some of his most capable and best-behaved troops.³¹ Similar German forces, either auxiliaries or foreign corps, would help defend other British Mediterranean outposts, including Minorca (1776-83), Sicily (1808-14) and Malta (1802-1814).

A similar relationship is found in the Caribbean, which became a destination for foreign-born soldiers in Britain's army beginning in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Infantry battalions with significant numbers of German soldiers would often be counted upon to defend British sugar isles, and in the 1790's several hundred German troopers recruited from Northern Germany would be part of the occupation of Saint Domingue. Even in far-flung corners of the globe, there was a German presence. Dozens of German men recruited from disbanded foreign regiments took part in military operations against Buenos Aires in 1806-7 and garrisoned Cape Town a year later. Further afield, two regiments of Hanoverians were hired out to the East India Company from 1782-92 to help maintain British possessions in India during the wars against Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, while much of Britain's manpower had been redirected to the American Colonies.³²

It was the American Colonies that saw the greatest impact of German manpower in the maintenance of the First British Empire. German-born men were recruited for service in the Seven Years War to help bring up inadequate enlistment

³⁰ For his conflicts with the British Naval commanders, see: A.D. Francis 'Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt and the plans for the expedition to Spain of 1702', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 42 (1969), pp. 66-68.

³¹ T.H. McGuffie, *The Siege of Gibraltar 1779-1783* (London: Batsford, 1965), pp. 45, 54.

³² See: Niedersächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover (HSTAH), 325 Hann. 38 C.

numbers, and in the American War, some 2,000 men from all corners of the Holy Roman Empire were placed directly into British line regiments for the same reasons. Even in the War of 1812, which is largely overlooked in this work, there was a battalion of men raised from Germany designed to contribute to the campaigns against the Americans. Regiments occupying outposts in the American hinterland and Canada would contain large numbers of German men (primarily colonists), and the port and base at Halifax would be continuously garrisoned by a largely German battalion of the 60th Regiment throughout the Napoleonic Wars. Yet the most significant, and memorable German military presence in the colonies was the 30,000 auxiliary soldiers in the American War, known to posterity as 'the Hessians'. From the summer of 1776 to the end of the war, German soldiers made up roughly one third of the forces in most armies, some times one half, and from 1777 onwards, the number of German-born soldiers fighting for George III in America was comparable to the number of Englishmen (particularly in Canada). While the defeat of these Anglo-German armies resulted in the loss of Britain's 'First Empire', nevertheless, without the ability to augment British forces with foreign manpower, these campaigns might not have been possible.

Lastly, we come to those German forces serving in the British Isles, helping quell domestic unrest and rebellion, and contributing to the defence of England during periods of vulnerability. Whereas William III, in 1688-90, secured his British dominions with the help of his Dutch subjects and Danish auxiliaries, the Hanoverian monarchs, relied more upon German manpower, particularly Hessians, in handling internal conflicts. Though the Dutch were the first to lend soldiers to secure the Hanoverian Dynasty in 1715 and 1745, some 6,000 Hessians were sent to help suppress the Jacobites in 1746. During the 1798 rebellion in Ireland, regiments containing large numbers of Germans were used to help quell the unrest, and

Hanoverians serving within the British Army would be routinely garrisoned in Ireland over the following decade.³³

Germans were used not only to put down rebellions, but also protect Britain from possible invasion. In 1756, 12,000 Hessians and Hanoverians, in roughly equal numbers, arrived to protect the southeast coast from the threat of a French landing, much to the relief of the British Army and the dismay of the British public. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Germans were once again stationed along England's eastern and southern coasts, this time in the shape of the King's German Legion, a formation of refugee soldiers from the disbanded Hanoverian Army. By 1807, there were more than 12,000 German men serving in this capacity, the largest collection of foreign soldiers in Britain for over a century.

Therefore, nearly all aspects of Britain's military policy *on land*, geared around the augmentation of native soldiers with a significant number of German troops. While Germans provided additional numbers, they also performed certain tasks or filled key gaps in Britain's own military force, a concept that will be covered in greater detail in later chapters. Taken collectively, the scale and importance of Germanic manpower to Britain's military endeavours is indeed impressive, but it should not be exaggerated. The highlighting of these contributions should not suggest that the imperial advances and domestic tranquillity enjoyed by Britain for the majority of the century was owed solely, or even primarily to the hiring of German 'mercenaries', or the assistance of allies among the states of the Holy Roman Empire. Yet these contributions deserve more attention than they have received to-date, and while this thesis looks to highlight some facets of this prolonged relationship, comprehensive works on the various military, fiscal, political and demographic characteristics are still needed.

³³ For the Germans in the rebellion in Ireland, see: Eva Ó Cathaoir, 'German Mercenaries in Ireland, 1798-1807', in *The Irish Sword*, vol. XXII (no. 90), pp. 406-426.

CHAPTER I:

NATIONAL CHARACTER AND TRANSNATIONAL PROFESSIONALISM

Delving into the writings of British and German soldiers, one constant uniting all periods and authors, is that commentaries regarding their foreign allies are almost always couched in terms of their national or ethnic origin. Indeed, whenever descriptions are made of allied or auxiliary forces, be they regiments, armies, or merely one or a handful of individuals, they are simply referred to as a collective: as 'Germans' or 'English'. The usage of this language reveals the degree to which men in these multinational armies saw the respective components in regards to their nationality, and in doing so used terms that carried with them not only an indication of their national origin, but a collection of characterizations and stereotypes prevalent in popular discourse. This chapter seeks to examine some of these popular conceptions, with the goal of providing a background and a point of comparison for the personal writings and opinions of soldier-authors. The focus here is on stereotypes, and particularly the discourse concerning 'national character', a term common among the writings of soldiers, which entailed a set of theories through which their accounts of foreign soldiery were often filtered. This emphasis on national character is relevant to the entire period under examination, but was especially pertinent in the quarter century of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, an era of heightening nationalism that saw an increasing number of soldier-authors trying to identify the peculiarities and characteristics unique to their own soldiery – intermixing traditional characterizations with their experiences on campaign.

This concentration on national character would, particularly in times of war, lead to discussions of the martial character of various peoples and their national armies. This discourse impacted the retelling of interactions between British and German soldiers in this time period, however, the focus was not always on nationality. Within the writings of soldiers, an emphasis on military duties would

inevitably alter or override many popular depictions, while others, owing to the homogenizing effects of early-modern militaries, would not be addressed at all. Alongside elements that would create similarities between armies, there were associations, such as military professionalism and a gentlemanly culture among officers, which would transcend national boundaries. These were the multinational and transnational elements that would shape or diminish distinctions of national character, where professional or class-based solidarities would emerge as stronger commonalities than ethnicity. Therefore this chapter will begin with many of the chief attributes of British and German national characters, and conclude with some of the homogenizing aspects of early-modern European militaries, as the conflict between nationalism and professionalism would be the primary agents effecting the retelling of interactions and associations between British and German soldiery.

****The Dissemination of Stereotypes****

In his essay 'National Prejudices', the Irish author and historian Oliver Goldsmith addressed, and hoped to curb, much of the negative characterizations of foreigners he heard during conversations amongst merchants and businessmen in London, lamenting somewhat rhetorically, 'we are now become so much Englishmen, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Spaniards, or Germans, that we are no longer citizens of the world.'³⁴ Goldsmith's essay was a reaction to the unilaterally negative impressions his countrymen had towards foreign peoples, and while Britain's enemies received the majority of these negative stereotypes, her allies were also recipients of a particularly vitriolic brand of public scrutiny. These disapproving characterizations were disseminated in a variety of mediums, which we can discuss here only briefly. Therefore, the focus here is on publications, in part due to the attention they have received from scholars focusing on the Anglo-German relations in the eighteenth century. Travel diaries, newspapers, magazines, books – usually histories of

³⁴ Oliver Goldsmith, 'Essay XII [National Prejudices]', in *Essays and Criticisms by Dr. Goldsmith with an account of the author...* (London: 1798). p. 130

dubious credibility – and the new-fangled encyclopaedias, all dispensed concepts of national character, and were all sources familiar to our subjects at hand.³⁵ However, this chapter will address those pamphlets and satirical prints which had a much more dramatic and wide reaching effect.

Despite the theoretical reasons for explaining a nation's character, most had to be created or corroborated through experiences within German States, or with German people. Though this thesis will include a number of accounts of soldiers travelling through the Holy Roman Empire, they were by no means alone. The most common were merchants, emigrants and tourists, but there were certainly numerous other connections: envoys, scholars, students, musicians and artists to name a few.³⁶ Of these, the British tourists have received the most attention in modern scholarship, and indeed, did much to shape opinions of those back home in Britain. For many wealthy aristocratic young males, a 'Grand Tour' of Europe, which was so popular in Britain in the eighteenth century, at times included forays into the Holy Roman Empire, either to Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Frankfort, and after the Dynastic Union, Hanover.³⁷ Here impressions of Germany would share a number of similarities to the accounts of soldiers themselves, in part because the influence of famous travel diaries would encourage soldiers to write accounts of the peoples, places, and foods they encountered in a similar style, either for private reflection or public consumption. In some instances, these journals or published letters were printed with the specific aim of describing the people met and places visited, more than the actual military campaigns themselves.³⁸ Aside from travel diaries, the other mediums for the dissemination of national stereotypes –

³⁵ For more on impressions of Germany in British print, see: Frauke Geyken, *Gentlemen auf Reisen*, esp. chaps. 2-3.

³⁶ For Britons in Europe in general, see: Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, Forthcoming, 2011).

³⁷ Jeremy Black notes that Hanover was a way-point for military enthusiasts in particular but was also of interest to politicians or those connected, or aspiring to be connected, to the royal family. Brunswick, the seat of the Dukes of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was another stop for those particularly interested in militaries. Jeremy Black, *The British and the Grand Tour*, p. 10.

³⁸ The most prominent of such writings come from campaigns in Colonial America. See Thomas Anburey, *Travels through the Interior Parts of America* (Anro Press, 1969); For an example of this in the German press, see: William L. Stone, *Letters of Brunswick and Hessian officers during the American Revolution*. Translated from Schloezer's Briefwechsel (NY: Joe Munsell's Sons, 1891).

particularly for the reading public – were through encyclopaedias, histories, magazines and geographical gazettes. Unlike those mediums outlined above, these particular sources do not figure prominently in the writings of soldiers themselves, and therefore will be overlooked for the purposes of this chapter, though they were no doubt quite influential in shaping the debate about English, British, and German national characters.

Lastly, and crucially, given recent trends in historical scholarship: stereotypes were reiterated and magnified in satirical prints in the British press. Woodcuts and engravings reproduced for a mass – and barely literate – audience were powerful tools in shaping perception of the British nation and their continental counterparts, and are very much at the cornerstone for examinations of English or British identity by modern historians. These and other forms of ephemera addressing political situations or key events on the continent would commonly show the respective peoples (usually their monarch, prince or other symbolic figure) in the trappings of their particular nation, further reinforcing the association of certain nationalities with key characteristics, fashions, or demeanour. Yet this was a medium that was not only important for describing foreigners, but for defining Englishness, usually in the guise of ‘John Bull’, or ‘Britannia’ as an embodiment of all British dominions. These were powerful symbolic tools, and gave a visual representation to many of their own and other stereotyped characteristics.³⁹

Just as they were an important aspect in creating a British self-image, the British press also had an important hand in shaping German character, particularly in the case of the Hanoverians. Common throughout the century, political tracts disparaging the people or soldiers of Hanover were especially numerous during wars and major events in British and Imperial foreign policy. Bob Harris has written an exhaustive work on the manner in which attacks on the Electorate were part and

³⁹ Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003).; Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner, The English Satirical Print 1600-1832* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986), pp. 13-4.

parcel of both Republican and Jacobitical opposition polemics in the 1740's.⁴⁰ Most depictions of Hanover emphasized its absolutist political structure, small population, few natural resources and, most importantly, its standing army maintained in wartime only with financial assistance from Great Britain. During the War of Austrian Succession (for Britain, 1742-1748), the Hanoverian forces that were serving as auxiliaries of the British Army were characterized as cowards led by self-serving generals, and in the summer of 1743 especially, rhetorical attacks on Hanover and her soldiers reached a fevered pitch.⁴¹ A letter from the Hanoverian General, Thomas Eberhard von Ilten in 1743, published under the title *Popular Prejudice*, complained that the British Press and its 'jealousy of Foreigners, so natural to that selfish Nation, is of late confined to us H[anoverian]s: Their Rancour to the French, holds, at present but the second place.'⁴² Through the course of the first century of the Union, Hanoverians were the targets of vitriolic pamphlets by some of the most famous or infamous polemicists of the age, including John Shebbeare and William Cobbett, both of whom were imprisoned (1757 and 1810 respectively) for criticisms of the Electorate and its troops.⁴³ Therefore, there was a strong link between the stereotypes seen in public discourse, and the soldiers who were often the target of them. But the characterization found within did not owe their origins to war and diplomacy in the eighteenth century, but instead, borrowed from an older and further reaching discourse in which they merely played a part.

****National Character****

Ideas of national character – traits, behaviours and proclivities associative of the inhabitants of a particular nation – were long established by the time the major

⁴⁰ Bob Harris, *A Patriot Press*, esp. pp. 109-110, 119-125, 154-167.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 122, 157.

⁴² Officer at Hanover [Ilten] *Popular prejudice concerning partiality to the interests of Hanover, to the subjects of that Electorate, and particularly to the Hanoverian ...* (London: [1743]), p. 3.

⁴³ John Shebbeare, *Letters to the People of England*, nos. 1-6 (London: 1755-8); William Cobbett, *Political Register*, vol. XV. No. 26 (1809).

states and territories of Europe began developing into the 'modern nations' we would recognize today. Nationality might from time to time take a back seat to another facet of identity, such as religious, political, regional or ethnic considerations, nevertheless national character was very much a part of the means by which differences with 'others' were constructed or articulated. This theme was intensifying as the century progressed, reaching new heights with the awakening nationalisms following the French Revolution and the titanic military struggles that began in its wake.

The equation of the character of a people to the political entity to which they belong has been in vogue for centuries and was as popular in the early modern period as it is today. The *philosophe* Montesquieu in discussing 'the spirit of nations' was particularly focused on classical accounts of national character, drawing examples from ancient Rome and comparisons of the Spartans and Athenians in his discussions.⁴⁴ Eighteenth-century Britain's most significant contributor towards this discourse was the philosopher David Hume, whose essay 'On National Character' aimed to address and in many ways refute some of the most widespread and widely accepted theories on the subject, many of which had been around for generations.⁴⁵ Although Hume and like-minded philosophers aimed to dismantle many of the impressions of national character seen in popular discourse, his arguments reveal the variety of ways that theories of national character were constructed, and in doing so, perpetuated other generalizations.⁴⁶ This was in part, because discussions of national character in this period were not about creating or rejecting new distinctions, but modifying older ones. By the end of the seventeenth century, many of the stereotypes that had become synonymous with 'English' and 'German' had long been developed, and for those discussing the natural inclinations or traits of various nationalities or ethnicities, there were usually references to

⁴⁴ Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois* [*The Spirit of Laws*] (1748), esp. Book XIX.

⁴⁵ David Hume, 'On National Character', *Three Essays, Moral and Political* (London: 1748).

⁴⁶ Roberto Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France, 1750-1914* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), pp. 159-60, 165-6.

classical authors who first penned these dissimilarities in the preceding millennia. Among these classical sources, the Roman author Tacitus was a useful guide to early Britannic character, but particularly influential for Teutonic characteristics, where the 'Tacitean model' became a depiction of Germans that still has residues in the modern impressions of German national character. Tacitus's accounts of Germanic and Britannic tribes would become the template for later depictions of English individuality and bravery, or Germanic barbarity, dipsomania and martial ability. Yet there were other authors of antiquity including Julius Caesar and the Venerable Bede, from whom eighteenth century writers could turn to for additional precedents.⁴⁷ It was the humanists that had first uncovered and reintroduced many of these ancient caricatures, and two centuries later, some of the great thinkers of the enlightenment still turned to these ancient accounts to spotlight the timelessness of many of the characteristics of their own people.⁴⁸ For those discussing British or English exceptionalism, these hoary antecedents and the history of the peoples of the island served as a means of establishing English national character as a mixture of indigenous and foreign elements, including – quite crucially – French and German. For the officer class of Britain's army, these same ancient texts were very much a part of their military repertoire, to be read alongside military manuals and drill books – from foreign and domestic sources.⁴⁹ This blending of philosophical works and military tracts manifested itself in the discussion of martial character, whereby soldiers from each nation were seen to display certain characteristics unique to their land of origin.

The martial character of a people would, according to eighteenth century theorists, be very much a part of their national character, and often times they were one in the same. In many ways the nation represented the army, and the army was representative of the nation. Soldiers were well aware that their actions would be

⁴⁷ F.K. Stanzel, 'National Character as Literary Stereotype. An Analysis of the Image of the German in English Literature before 1800', in C.V. Bock (ed.), *London German Studies I* (1980), pp. 101-105. Hafsa Fania Oz-Salzbunger, 'Exploring the Germanic Body – Eighteenth Century British Images of Germany', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 26 (1997), p. 17.

⁴⁸ F.K. Stanzel, 'National Character as Literary Stereotype', pp. 101-105.

⁴⁹ J.A. Houlding, *Fit For Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp. 168-9.

seen to reflect their 'national character & that of the army', and British soldiers took pride in fighting for their 'nation', whether that meant Britain, or more commonly, for their respective homelands: England, Scotland, or Ireland.⁵⁰ This direct link was felt by many within the army, growing stronger as the century progressed, and can be seen in the remarks of the Duke of York in 1793 who fretted that the misdeeds of a small number of his soldiers would 'cast the most injurious stigma on the national character in general.'⁵¹ By the end of the century, British troops were expected to be on their best behaviour and to reflect positively on the nation they fought for – a feat that they did not always successfully achieve. Throughout the long eighteenth century, there was a close relationship with national character and the image of the army, though not as strong in Britain as for highly militarized states such as Hesse-Kassel or Prussia.

****Origins of National Character****

There were numerous theories as to the origins and nature of national character. Montesquieu, in his *Spirit of Laws*, wrote of a 'general spirit of nations' forged by the climate, religion, laws, governments and customs of a nation, to which others added geography, terrain and wealth.⁵² The preeminent portrayals of various peoples usually incorporated a combination of several of these factors. The most common influence on national character was climate.⁵³ The customs and culture of a people were not only drawn from the type of terrain, but their latitude and geographical location. In some cases, it was believed that the climate or type of weather impacted the demeanour of the inhabitants enough to make them behave in a manner exceptional to that particular region. Those peoples from warm climates were

⁵⁰ SNA GD 51/1/605 fol. 2, J. H. Craig [?] to Henry Dundas, St. Amand, April 10th 1794.

⁵¹ Quoted in: Lieut-Colonel Alfred H. Burne. *The Noble Duke of York: The Military Life of Frederick Duke of York and Albany* (London: Staplehurst, 1949), p. 120.

⁵² Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, Book XIX, 4.

⁵³ This was the aspect of national character Hume argued the most adamantly against, in response to popular discourse, and perhaps an earlier treatise by Montesquieu. Hume, *Essays*, pp. 17-8.; Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit*, pp. 165-171.

purported to be vivacious, lively, and impassioned, and strong sexual desires and quick tempers were also indicative of those inhabiting such regions. To this end, the French, living in a warmer country than the British, were seen as the embodiment all of these characteristics. This was a point of contrast repeatedly recounted throughout the century, and yet it was to be equally contrasted with the nature of the German people, who came from the colder 'North'. Those coming from Europe's northern regions were seen as dour, dull, given to strong drink, and brutish, if not militant.⁵⁴ This was the quintessential stereotype of Germanic demeanour, even when people from even less hospitable realms, such as Muscovites or Cossacks were believed to display these traits to a greater degree. Nevertheless, Germans became the other extreme, and a contrast and antithesis of French character. In the middle, of course, was the Englishman, from a 'mild' climate, embodying all the positive traits of each of these peoples and – perhaps not surprisingly – none of their flaws. As will be discussed later, this is why examinations of Englishness require not only contrasts with the French, but Germans as well. The English considered themselves somewhere between the aggressive and the passive, the lively and the torpid, revealing that the English were as busy defining themselves in relation to other peoples as they were trying to find those unique traits peculiar to them alone.

Climate also had a physical impact, which was a recurring theme in the British public sphere. One 'topographic dictionary' summarized Germans as physically 'pretty large, and... very strong and robust', but lacking a 'quicksilver in their composition.'⁵⁵ While most stereotypes dwelt little on the stature and pace of the people of various nations, as will be discussed in later chapters, these were concepts of particular interest to soldier-authors. The effects of climate, according to these theories, went beyond merely pace and demeanour. Peoples from northern climates were also reportedly given to strong drink, which was recounted in a variety of elaborations on German national character. The stereotypes regarding

⁵⁴ For more extensive discussion, see Geyken, *Gentlemen auf Reisen*, ch. 4; Geyken, "'The German Language is Spoken in Saxony with the Greatest Purity': or English images and perceptions of Germany in the Eighteenth Century", p. 50.

⁵⁵ Andrew Brice, *The grand gazetteer, or topographic dictionary, both general and special, and antient as well as modern, &c...* (Exeter: 1759), p. 621.

drinking emerged with classical authors, and remained a popular meme in the eighteenth century. In attempting to slander the Europhilic Secretary of State George Carteret, one Jacobitical pamphlet declared that he 'drank like a German,' a term that was used quite often for those who were given to drinking in excess.⁵⁶ A coffee-house patron's declaration that all 'Germans were drunken sots, and beastly gluttons' prompted Oliver Goldsmith to compose his essay to dissuade his fellow citizens of such inane stereotypes, though he could do little to curtail such assertions.⁵⁷ Despite his entreaties, the 'Tacitean Model' remained intact.

Tied into these theories pertaining to climate, were discussions of the impact of geography. The natural features of a region were considered to impart a variety of characteristics on the people that dwelt there, and would dictate to some degree their behaviours and their martial ability. Life in rugged terrains lead to gruff demeanours, and a temperate region was said to manifest itself in the disposition of its people as well. A vivid example of this can be found during the upsurge in hostility towards Hanoverian auxiliary troops, where attacks on the Electorate (and the Elector) often mentioned the physical characteristics of northern Germany. Being a relatively featureless region lacking many natural resources, the dull terrain supposedly lent these qualities to its people. In one such print, *An Actual Survey of the Electorate, or the Face of the Country whereupon Hanover Stands* (1743) the region was depicted as the dreary and unkempt landscape of George II's homeland, within which his profile was cleverly placed: the features of the land being reflected in its people, and in this particular instance, its ruler.⁵⁸ Given that the terrain of a region dictated much of the lifestyle of its inhabitants, this would be considered one of the primary means through which a division between English and Highland Scots would be portrayed as well.

The impact was equally strong in impressions of martial character. Here however, more favourable climes for living were seen as hindrances to the making

⁵⁶ Anon., *A True Dialogue between Thomas Jones, a Trooper, Lately Returned from Germany* (1743), p. 8.

⁵⁷ Oliver Goldsmith, 'Essay XII [National Prejudices]', p. 128.

⁵⁸ Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner*, pp. 144-5.; Harris, *A Patriot Press*, p. 157.

of a strong martial populace. Henry Lloyd, the famous and well-travelled soldier and author of *The History of the Late War in Germany*, prefaced his account of the Seven Years War with a discussion of – amongst other things – the national character displayed in several western European armies, and indicated the effects of climate, terrain, and government on their martial character. Geography, according to Lloyd, played a key role.

Those who inhabit the plains, and rich countries, are generally effeminate and bad soldiers, impatient under the least fatigue, are soon sick, require too much food, and are less active than those of the mountains, and in every respect inferior to them. What did not the poor Highlanders do? What did they not suffer? They will live where an Englishman, though animated with equal courage, and love of glory, will perish; merely from the difference of their situations before they became soldiers.⁵⁹

Implicit in Lloyd's comments (aside from Jacobitical sympathies) is a direct connection between desolate regions and martial ability and masculinity – the latter a universally admired trait in eighteenth century discourse, and a by-product of an upbringing in a harsh environment.⁶⁰

A nation's government was also a prime indicator of the character of its people, where the form of government would be an indication of their intelligence, creativity, vigour, and morality. Contrasting the government of Britain and the many states in Germany was the focus for countless pamphlets and philippics in the middle of the eighteenth century, and here the divide between these polities seemed greatest, owing to their clear differences in political structures and liberties. Britons praised themselves as freedom-loving subjects of a balanced constitutional monarchy, while describing the Germans within the various states of the Empire as peasants ('boors') resigned to a life of thralldom under the absolutist rule of petty

⁵⁹ Henry Lloyd, *The History of the Late War in Germany* (London: 1766), p. xxxi.

⁶⁰ As Matthew McCormack has shown, the depictions of Hanoverian forces in England in 1756-7 portrayed them as effeminate, particularly in contrast to Englishmen, linking them with imagery usually associated with depictions of the French, in part due to the purported Francophilia common among German states. Matthew MacCormack, 'Citizenship, Nationhood, and Masculinity in the Affair of the Hanoverian Soldier, 1756', *Historical Journal*, 49, 4 (2006), pp. 980, 991.

princes – a truth that was often lost in rhetoric.⁶¹ This glaring divide had a particular impact on the views of the Electorate of Hanover, and the ‘Dynastic Union’ with this absolutist state being pronounced as a direct threat to the liberties of the British people.⁶² Opposition authors – Tories, disgruntled Whigs and Jacobites in particular – would use the Electorate as means of indirectly condemning the Hanoverian monarchs or as a protest of current foreign policy, infusing their arguments with many of the negative stereotypes of Hanover, her soldiery, and Germans in general. This phenomenon, dubbed ‘anti-Hanoverianism’, was a strong part of eighteenth century political discourse, and those critical of assisting the Electorate, or opponents of the dynasty itself, would leave Hanover as a by-word for all things negative regarding German national character. With the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty until the dissolution of the Dynastic Union 121 years later, the Electorate, manifested in the form of its standing army, would remain throughout a perceived threat to English liberties. To a disproportionately perturbed minority, this threat from Hanover rivalled France in all its monarchical, republican and imperial forms. Yet these denunciations are vital to this subject, not merely because they helped in the characterization of Germanness in the eighteenth century, but because they played a key role in developing a sense of Britishness through contrasts with their Hanoverian and German allies, not just with their French enemies. Brendan Simms in examining the partisan politics emerging from political debates over the support of Electoral troops, has suggested it was Hanover during certain periods throughout the century that stood as *the* antithesis in the construction of British or English identities, not France alone.⁶³ As will be discussed throughout this chapter

⁶¹ James Boswell’s account of the absolutists Prince of Zerbst and his army of several dozen soldiers, is an iconic example of the type of German ruler the British so often derided. Frauke Geyken, *Gentlemen auf Reisen*, p. 121.

⁶² This line of argumentation was first propounded vigorously by John Toland shortly after the Act of Settlement, where he declared that this foreign Prince might bring his Hanoverian troops into England, ‘which may prove as fatal to our liberty, as the German invasion did formerly to our ancestors.’ John Toland, *Limitations for the Next Foreign Successor, or, New Saxon Race* (London: 1701), p. 10.; Nicholas Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire, 1700-1837* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 18-19, 48, 112

⁶³ Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), pp. 324-5.; Brendan Simms, ‘Hanover: the Missing Dimension’, in *The Hanoverian Dimension*, p. 9.

and others, it was not just this one Electorate, but Germany as a whole that stood as a point of contrast with France, from which grew a greater sense of a national cohesion.

The political situations within France and Germany stood as antitheses of Britain's government, yet they could also be contrasted with one another, thereby defining alternative forms of absolutism, distinguished from one another, in part, through national character. As one Jacobitical tract by the Rev. William Harper declared,

I love no arbitrary government; but... I would prefer the French to the German yoke. For the first has frankness and generosity to temper, to qualify and soften it: but a German despotism, being grafted on a stock of a sullen, sour, morose, bitter nature congenial to the nation, is by far the more dangerous and dreadful of the two.⁶⁴

In what will be a recurring theme, this Scottish clergyman describes a nation's characteristics in contrast to an 'other', and though this was more often France, images of German despotism were never far out of the picture. This is a theme which will repeat itself in many of the other aspects of national character, where defining Englishness, or in the case of Linda Colley's thesis, 'Britishness', should not only incorporate contrasts with France but with Germany as well.⁶⁵ In fact, as Paul Langford has shown, it was the Englishman Alan Taylor, a man with particular interest in German culture and romanticism, who would first coin the term 'Englishness' in its present usage.⁶⁶

In a military context, the fulcrum for this sense of difference or otherness changed, where rather than being an extreme, Britons placed themselves directly between the methods and manners of Germans and Frenchmen. Colonel John Burgoyne's advice regarding the drilling of British troops is indicative of such sentiments: 'There are two systems, which generally speaking, divide the

⁶⁴ Rev. William Harper, *The Advice of a Friend, to the Army and People of Scotland* (Edinburgh: 1745), p. 21.

⁶⁵ For British identity in contrast to France, see: Linda Colley, *Britons: The Forging of a Nation* (London: Vintage, 1992).

⁶⁶ Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manner and Character 1650-1850* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. 1-2.

disciplinarians', the German model of 'training men like spaniels, by the stick', and the other being the French model of appealing to the honour of soldiers. 'The Germans are best, the French, by the avowal of their own officers, the worst disciplined troops in Europe', to which Burgoyne conjectured, 'I apprehend a just medium between the two extremes to be the surest means to bring English soldiers to perfection.'⁶⁷ Burgoyne and many of his fellow officers believed that British soldiers were naturally unable to endure the 'German system' because of the sense of liberty known to them since childhood – a direct impact of government on a peoples' national character.⁶⁸ This was not so in German armies, where Henry Lloyd stated that their upbringing within absolutist states gave them a tractability beneficial to the military profession, given that they were 'from their birth taught obedience, and subordination, two essential qualities to form a good soldier.'⁶⁹ Other theorists would find that German soldiers were more readily trained, and that although lacking the innate courage of English soldiers, could be sturdier in combat due to a seemingly natural stubbornness in battle.⁷⁰ British soldiers for their part were widely praised by outsiders and insiders, a reputation made from a variety of military successes and owing in great part to their relationship with their government, whereby they were 'animated by the enthusiastick fire of liberty'.⁷¹ The government of a people was considered to permeate all facets of national character, for good or ill, and could be seen in descriptions of soldiers' dispositions in battle and on campaign. This was an important distinction between concepts of British and German martial ability, as it was seen as more complimentary to Britons that theirs was not something due to their race, but more owing to the benefits of their liberal government.

⁶⁷ Edward Barrington de Fonblanque, *Political and Military Episodes in the Latter Half of the Eighteenth Century Derived from the Correspondence of the Right Hon. John Burgoyne, General, Statesman, Dramatist* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1876), p. 17

⁶⁸ Campbell Dalrymple, *A military essay. Containing reflections on the raising, arming, cloathing, and discipline of the British infantry and cavalry; with proposals...* (London: 1761), pp. 44-5.

⁶⁹ Lloyd, *History of the Late War in Germany*, p. 34

⁷⁰ Friedrich von der Decken, *Versuch über den englischen National-Character* (Hanover: 1802), p. 34.

⁷¹ Lloyd, 'Preface', *History*, p. 33

The wealth and abundance of Great Britain (particularly, if we are to leave out Ireland), was considered a by-product of a free society, and also contributed to the capabilities of her soldiers. A prosperous homeland was a boon to English martial character in part, according to the Anglo-Hanoverian officer, Johann Friedrich von der Decken, in providing them with a hardy diet, a concept very much synonymous with the British self-image as a productive and well-fed nation.⁷² This 'national diet', which included a great deal of meat, was ultimately seen as something that fortified British soldiery and implied a fair treatment of British soldiers compared to their continental counterparts, exemplified in the image of emaciated French soldiers found in William Hogarth's painting *The Gates of Calais, or the Roast Beef of Old England*.⁷³ This theme was not only reserved for the French soldier, but Germans as well. Some of the most scathing critiques of Germanic soldiery, especially the Hanoverian and Hessian mercenaries, showed them stealing provisions or iconic foodstuffs from their British counterparts or the local inhabitants they were hired to protect.⁷⁴ In condemning the Electorate of Hanover during the Seven Years War, their capital was given the title 'Turnipolis', and turnips remained a vegetable associated with Hanover and Germany, to be contrasted with Britain's roast beef.⁷⁵ Food would remain throughout this period full of symbolism, and while used as a divisive tool in the public sphere, it might also serve as a unifier in the more private associations of individual soldiers.⁷⁶ Governments, however, merely stood as a point of contrast, as the manner in which a nation was ruled was purportedly exemplified in its soldiery: impacting their outlook, determining how they should be drilled and disciplined, and informing whether they would become rotund patriots or emaciated mercenaries.

⁷² Decken, *Versüch*, p. 35

⁷³ William Hogarth, *The Gates of Calais, or the Roast Beef of Old England* (London: 1748).

⁷⁴ Duffy, *Englishman and the Foreigner*, pp. 176-7, 190-91. Anon. *Law for the Out-Laws* (London: 1756).

⁷⁵ Anon. *The Terror of France* (London: 1757).

⁷⁶ For stereotypes and symbolism in foreign food, see: Jeremy Black, 'A Stereotyped Response? The Grand Tour and Continental Cuisine', *Durham University Journal*, 83 (1991), esp. p. 151.

Like governments, religion went hand in hand with discussions of national character, and the beliefs and methods of devotion would ingrain themselves in the behaviours of the faithful. Vitriolic depictions of Catholic priests, so much a part of eighteenth century British caricatures of France and French people, were the manifestation of perceptions of the backwardness of their civilization, owing a great deal to the dominant religion within the monarchy. However, a single German characterization was much harder to fabricate, owing primarily to the religiously heterogeneous nature of the Empire. As Andrew Thompson has recently highlighted, there were strong connections between Britain and northern Germany on behalf of the 'Protestant Interest', yet 'Germany' and 'Protestant' never became synonyms, even though few could ignore that Germany was where the Reformation began.⁷⁷ Even after Frederick II 'the Great' of Prussia was given the mantle of Protestant hero by the British press, this depiction did not last much longer than the Seven Years War – when the stars aligned briefly to divide Europe on a seemingly religious axis.⁷⁸ His legacy in Britain would overwhelmingly be that of a military innovator, not as a defender of the faith, and those good opinions of him were not extended to his subjects. In the end, British characterizations of the religious nature of Germany were confined to particular states or territories, and the noticeable differences from region to region commented upon by travellers and soldiers.⁷⁹ Throughout the following chapters, the issue of German religious character is only glimpsed at, as the soldiers themselves rarely commented upon the practices of

⁷⁷ Andrew Thompson, 'the Confessional Dimension', in Simms and Riotte, *the Hanoverian Dimension*, pp. 164-166.

⁷⁸ In a rather unfavourable biography of the Prussian Monarch – unsurprising for 1919 – Norwood Young wrote that 'In England he was, in the early part of the war, acclaimed a "Protestant Hero", though he was neither Protestant, nor a Hero.' Norwood Young, *The Life of Frederick the Great* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1919), p. 347.

⁷⁹ Mutual Protestantism was not always a source of unity, and some soldiers found their time past more pleasantly in Catholic regions, for one, due to the promiscuity of the local womenfolk. 'In these damned Protestant villages' wrote the British officer Major Richard Davenport, 'there is a kind of regularity of morals and a fear of their pastor among the young women, that is a great check to intrigue. They are never clear of the consequences of their sins. In Catholic villages, and especially in towns, they are "smoaky" and know that they can settle accounts once a month or so. They dread the time a little as it approaches, but after Confession the heart is as light as feathers.' Major Richard Davenport, *'To Mr Davenport' being Letters of Major Richard Davenport (1719-1760) to his brother during service in the 4th Troop of Horse Guards and 10th Dragoons, 1742-1760* (London: Society for Army Historical Research, 1968), p. 78.; Geyken, *Gentlemen auf Reisen*, pp. 206-7.

their confederates, save for a few who admired their religiosity and expressions of devotion. Furthermore, stereotypes based in large part on their religious nature are almost completely absent from their discussions.

Government and religion were seen as important determinants of the spirit of the people, but for many, race was equally crucial, especially for those who drew from classical authors to reinforce their arguments. Once again, this placed Britain in between France and Germany, as the history of the people of the British Isles were a blending of Saxon, Norman, and indigenous Britons, each with its own effects on British national character. Tracing bloodlines back to ancient Saxon ancestors was an important part of the consolidation of an English identity as well as establishing ancient connections with the peoples of northern and central Germany. Throughout the previous two centuries, the ancient Saxons were looked upon as both blessings and curses. For many, the Saxons became a canvass to project those traits that the English wanted to identify themselves by: their sense of order, courage, independent thinking, belief in fairness and law, and of course, military abilities. Norman, and by implication French, institutions and legacies were often subjects of condemnation and by the mid-century there was a particularly strong preference for England's Saxon connections.⁸⁰ 'Tis *our original Country*', journal and gazetteer author Andrew Brice wrote of Germany,

whence came *our Ancestors*, whose language, customs, laws, we in good measure still retain, together with what constitutes the chief glory and happiness of the British Island, viz. their form of Government. On these Accounts no Englishman can call this Country foreign, nor its Natives foreigners to him.⁸¹

The Hanoverian General Ilten, who fought alongside the British Army in Germany and Flanders in the 1740's, responded to the anti-Hanoverian rhetoric in the British Press with his own pamphlet, where he reminded the reading public that they owed

⁸⁰ Jeremy Black, 'Ideology, History, Xenophobia and the World of Print in the Eighteenth Century' in Jeremy Black (ed.), *Knights Errant and True Englishmen*, p. 187.

⁸¹ Andrew Brice, *The grand gazetteer, or topographic dictionary, both general and special, and antient as well as modern, &c...* (Exeter: 1759), p. 619.

'the best of their customs and laws and their very constitution to their Saxon ancestors – that is to us [Hanoverians], who are the same people with the Saxons.'⁸²

There were negative connotations to a Saxon legacy, however, particularly from those who felt that this denied them their true identities as Britons.⁸³ Furthermore, the history of the Saxon invasions could be used against military associations with German states, as was seen in anti-Hanoverian and anti-Hessian discourse at the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756. The quasi-mythological Saxon chieftains Hengist and Horsa were refashioned as representations of two other 'H. & H.s' – namely the Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliaries who were summoned in 1756 as a means of protecting England from the threat of a French invasion.⁸⁴ Here, wary pamphleteers recounted the story of these Dark-Age Saxon mercenaries seizing control of the country, paralleling it with contemporaneous events to serve as a warning that Britain's German auxiliaries stood as an existential threat to English liberty. Much of German national character in the minds of Britain's thinkers became integrated with these themes from their own past, where the ancient Saxons – 'generous barbarians' in the words of Hume – played a crucial role in British history.⁸⁵ This resulted in many characterizations handed down from classical sources being refashioned or perpetuated, particularly in descriptions portraying Germans as a warlike people.⁸⁶

Despite this wide array of characterizations and attributions of national character, a monolithic stereotype of Germans was by no means in place, and there

⁸² [Ilten], *Popular Prejudice*, pp. 13-14.; Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire*, p. 142.

⁸³ This was another division between Briton and German, the former being an admitted mixture of various races, which Hume proclaimed made it harder to ascertain their national character. Meanwhile, it was often repeated that the Germans had very little intermixing with other ethnicities, which was at the time recounted as a point of fact more than a point of pride. Quoting Tacitus's from his work, *On the Origin and Geography of Germany*, he proclaimed, 'I accept the view that the peoples of Germany have never been tainted by intermarriage with other peoples and stand out as a nation peculiar, pure and unique of its kind.' Hume, *Three Essays*, pp. 16-7.; Hugh MacDoughall, *Racial Myth in English History: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982), p. 43

⁸⁴ *Hengist & Horsa* (London: Edwards & Darly, 1756).

⁸⁵ David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution of 1688*, 6 vols. (London: 1757), vol. I, p. 141.

⁸⁶ R.J. Smith, *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688-1863* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), esp. chaps. 3-4.

were certainly grey areas that did not have parallels in depictions of the French. Firstly, in the writings of British soldiers, the concept of Germany had changed (as discussed in the introductory chapter) from one that largely signified Habsburg possessions within the Empire to a definition that was virtually anything but. Furthermore, the linguistic and cultural definitions were equally hazy, especially in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when caricatures of German immigrants arriving in England in 1709 used symbols normally synonymous with the Dutch to deride these new arrivals to the kingdom.⁸⁷ The association with the Dutch would remain throughout the century, where ‘Dutch Dogs’ or ‘Dutch Bugger’ were insults directed at German soldiers.⁸⁸ This confusion in outlining a German character is perhaps unsurprising given the fact that Germany did not exist as it does in its present form and the linguistic divide was not as apparent as it is today, given the prevalence of *Plattdeutsch* speakers in the northern lowlands. Nevertheless, Germany and Germans were still strongly defined concepts in the minds of eighteenth century Britons, even if the peripheries of this definition remained hazy. By the time of the wars against Napoleon however, Germany had largely defined itself, and was clearly defined to outsiders as well.

Though there was no cohesive characterization, there was however an image of Germans and German soldiers common among the pamphlets, engravings and other ephemera in eighteenth century Britain – and a direct association with armies and warfare was at the cornerstone of these depictions. That Germany lacked a single government or dominant religion resulted in a greater emphasis being placed on this martial quality, and states, such as Hessen-Kassel, Hanover, Brunswick, and in particular, Prussia, became very much synonymous with their militaries, especially owing to the frequent hiring or subsidizing of their soldiery. This would result in Germanic soldiers being seen not only as a threat to British liberty, but a roadblock to British martial self-reliance. This was a criticism that in particular affected Hanoverians and Hessians, where in one print from the Seven Years War,

⁸⁷ Anon. *The Palatines Catechism, or, A True Description of their Camps at Black-Heath and Camberwell. In a Pleasant Dialogue Between an English Tradesman and a High-Dutchman* (London: 1709), p.1.

⁸⁸ For the former insult, see: *Law for the Out-laws* (London: 1756), for the latter, see Chapter IV.

The Two H. & H.s, they are shown discussing the good 'Rosh Peef' and beer of Britain, while her own soldiers lay in chains, destitute, and prevented from contributing to their nation's defence, and relegated to merely launching empty threats at these German mercenaries.⁸⁹ Four years later, another print depicted a cabal of Germans in British pay confessing to protracting the war on the continent in order to collect as much honour and British money as possible, to which the British Commander the Marquis of Granby is depicted, fretting, 'I find these Leeches are sucking the blood and brains of my countrymen' – a statement at odds with the Marquis' own writings.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, it was the soldiers themselves, so susceptible to these characterizations, which opponents of a Eurocentric foreign policy could harness to drive home their arguments, and these authors and artists could further dramatize the issue by pitting British and German soldiers against one another. Opponents of subsidizing German auxiliaries found this infighting among soldiers an effective tool in persuading the public against such agreements, and pamphlets like *A Trooper lately returned from Germany* (1743) recounted two disgruntled British soldiers denouncing the actions of their Hanoverian allies, with one declaring 'there's no bearing this from such a parcel of scrubs' – a statement with deliberate aims at gaining support for the termination of subsidies to Hanover.⁹¹ There was an equally vociferous faction within British public discourse arguing on behalf of their German auxiliaries, yet most arguments in pamphlets, prints and speeches, couched their support as one of reluctant necessity rather than countering their opponents with praise for the good character and ability of the German troops. Therefore, the debate helped define popular impressions of German national character, especially

⁸⁹ Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner*, pp. 176-7.; McCormack, 'Citizenship, nationhood, and masculinity', pp. 985, 987, 989-991.

⁹⁰ 'Old Time's Advice to Britannia: Or English Reflections on G[er]m[a]n Connections', in Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner*, pp. 190-1. In fact, the German allies and auxiliaries had little to do with the expenses 'beyond all comprehension' incurred by the Seven Years War, and those that stood to profit were in fact the Dutch Republic and the Free Cities in northern Germany, such as Bremen and Hamburg, although there was price-gouging on the part of Hanoverian merchants as well. However, as Ferdinand of Brunswick continued to campaign through the winter of 1760, Granby confided to Newcastle, 'I don't see how the mines of Peru can defray the charges of this winters work' BL Newcastle Papers MS Add. 32915, esp. fol. 341.

⁹¹ Anon., *A True Dialogue between Thomas Jones, a Trooper, Lately Returned from Germany* (1743), p. 6.

in contributing to a perception of Germans as militant and mercenary. As Michael Duffy has shown in his collection of eighteenth century British satirical prints, the German princes and their subjects were almost universally portrayed in military uniforms and often stealing money from their allies, which became synonymous with Germany in the same way that a pipe was ever-present in visual representations of the Dutch.⁹² Such descriptions among British sources were reinforced with each successive conflict in the eighteenth century, when the British government called upon tens of thousands of German soldiers to augment British armies. The result was that German soldiers, as potential enemies or current allies, were depicted in much the same manner – cohesiveness in what was altogether an unclear picture of Germanic national character.

The search for a *British* national character in the eighteenth century was an equally difficult task, and regardless of its existence or the degree to which it was perceived, such discussions were overwhelmed by a more prominent focus on the character of the English, Highland-Scottish, and Catholic Irish. Of all the British peoples, characterizations of the English were by far the most common and their characteristics most closely reflected the culture of the institution that was the British Army. Furthermore, Englishness was the point of reference from which the ‘otherness’ of German national and martial character was most often articulated within British public discourse. Though Englishness itself was far more tangible, it was nevertheless filled with contradictions, especially to British authors who could discern more differences with their own peoples than they could within other cultures.⁹³ Yet while Britishness may be harder to fathom, clearly there were a wide variety of traits that were seen as inherently English, as outlined in Paul Langford’s meticulous study of the perspectives of foreigners and visitors to England.⁹⁴ The key stereotypes of the English: their xenophobia and mistrust of foreigners, their wealth and sense of superiority above other nations, their candour and fair dealings,

⁹² Duffy, *Englishman and the Foreigner*, p. 15.

⁹³ Hume, a Scotsman wrote that ‘the English, of any People in the Universe, have the least of a national character; unless this very singularity be made their national character.’ Hume, ‘On National Character’, p. 124.

⁹⁴ Langford, *Englishness Identified*.

their liberality, informality, openness, and industriousness – all are traits that were recognized from English and foreign commentators. And as we have seen, it is crucial to understand how the English, or the British defined themselves in contrast to not only France, but their allies as well. Subsequent chapters will elaborate on the variety of ways in which a sense of difference was defined through associations with Germanic soldiery, but so too will they reveal how there was a great deal of commonality between the soldiers of these respective polities.

****Professional Solidarities and Homogeneity****

Despite the emphasis on national character, there were a number of commonalities between British and German armies, far more so than their populations in general, and these bonds were largely shared with most fighting forces in central and western Europe. Being a soldier was, in fact, a strong bond with those who shared much in the way of traditions, practices and experiences. Though in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution professionalism was a divisive issue between the inexperienced but ambitious Britons and the foreign veteran officers in William's service, this was a brief exception, owing a great deal to the political climate following the accession of a foreign prince to the throne.⁹⁵ In most cases, however, a professional attachment was often as strong as (and occasionally stronger than) other identities, such as nationality, ethnicity, or a gentlemanly culture.⁹⁶

Structural, organizational and philosophical similarities would create senses of homogeneity and professional solidarity, meanwhile widely accepted theories regarding the traits of an ideal soldier would create standards within these armies that were concurrent within those of neighbouring states. The notion of a model soldier was not particularly new, but was nevertheless a point of emphasis as a 'scientific' approach to militaries became more common throughout Europe.

⁹⁵ Childs, *British Army of William III*, pp. 42-3.

⁹⁶ Sometime, solidarities were formed not from association with the army as a whole, but among soldiers of a certain campaign, or theatre. One example, being the 'American Army' in the Seven Years War. Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats : the British soldier and war in the Americas, 1755-1763* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. chap. 9 and Conclusions.

Though there were some differences in the manner of fighting and tactics of armies, most theoreticians or professional soldiers would find obedience, bravery, good stamina, discipline, and proficiency in manoeuvres, marching and fighting, to be the chief priorities – and notions of these traits were largely equivalent. Furthermore, the technological similarities, and the parity in these advances among European states, became a homogenizing force as each nation sought parity with one another by adopting their innovations. One of the ways in which this concept of a ‘good soldier’ was disseminated, was through various military manuals and traditions within armies. Generally, most training manuals would be printed in several languages, and were read or taught by officers throughout Europe. The majority of manuals would merely recount the proper methods of drill and manoeuvre, especially in loading and firing weapons and marching, and though there were nevertheless some differences, most of these manuals covered the same fundamentals, and in some cases, merely plagiarized one another.⁹⁷ In a broader context, innovations made by one army would often be quickly adopted by other European forces, and when a military tried to copy the improvements of another, it was done not out of preference for that nation, but in the belief that it was the correct or more advanced procedure. This was particularly true for the military innovations and approaches of Prussia’s methods of drill, manoeuvre and tactics. Following Frederick II’s striking victories in the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years War (1756-1763), most armies quickly clamoured to copy the Prussian way of warfare and the British Army would readily adopt many of Prussia’s techniques and methods, and a quarter century later, this process continued under the Germanophilic sons of George III. This created an era, beginning at the middle of the century and extending to the last decade, in which the British Army (like many others) shared a great deal with this German model, further creating similarity and commonalities between these various armies, just as French

⁹⁷ G. A. Stepler, ‘The Common Soldier in the Reign of George III, 1760-1793’, (DPhil Thesis, Oxford, Unpublished, 1984), esp. Chap. 1.

innovations had impacted Western Europe a century before.⁹⁸ In this sense, these competing armies were geared towards finding the one way to properly conduct warfare, as opposed to each nation finding an individual path or philosophy.⁹⁹ Often times resources, culture, politics or other factors would dictate the approaches one nation took to formulating or fighting a war, but there was a general consensus about the ideal standards.

Adherence to universal military principles would have its critics, especially if they seemed to conflict with real or perceived national propensities. Henry Lloyd, writing in 1766, discussed this conflict between martial and national characteristics and a profession that was requiring greater degrees of uniformity in drill and action, enforced above all by harsh measures in their training and punishment.

From... moral and physical principles are formed national characters, whose influence is seen, more or less, in every army, as it is more or less subject to military discipline. If this is strong, and founded only on principles of Fear, it destroys national characters, and does not substitute any thing that is equivalent to it. Discipline should be founded on national characters, and both are improved by it: but those who have the formation and conduct of armies, seem wholly unacquainted with human nature in general, and with its various modifications, according to the difference of countries and government, they find themselves incapable to form a code of military laws, founded upon national characters; and are therefore forced to destroy these, and establish it, on the weak, uncertain, and slavish principle of Fear; which has rendered our armies much inferior to those of the antients [sic], as appears evident from the history of mankind.¹⁰⁰

Nearly four decades later, the Hanoverian, Johann Friedrich von der Decken echoed these sentiments, while full of praise for the bravery of English troops, he showed some hesitation towards over-training them for fear of losing their 'natural courage', contradicting the increasingly popular idea of *Bildung* often preached by his military

⁹⁸ In the seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries, it was France that was the most influential, for 'during the reign of Lewis the 14th, [France] gave birth to most of the customs and fashions of Europe' and were 'imitated by everybody'. Lloyd, *History of the Late War in Germany*, p. xxiv.

⁹⁹ Lloyd felt that the reforms in France after the Seven Years War would be detrimental, rather than beneficial for these same reasons: 'The present ministry, endeavours to introduce the German discipline among them, without considering the difference there is between their national characters; and I doubt whether it will produce the effects they expect from it: nature must be improved, not annihilated.' Lloyd, *History*, p. xxxvi.

¹⁰⁰ Henry Lloyd, *History of the Late War in Germany*, pp. xxxiv-xxxvi.

colleagues, such as his close friend Gerhard Scharnhorst.¹⁰¹ *Bildung*, the pursuit of learning with an emphasis on reason over superstition, was a large part of the German Enlightenment, and within a military context, sought to do away with antiquated traditions by focusing on, among other things, meritocracy and making learned men out of officers and soldiers. This was in effect to operate against national distinctions in favour of a scientific approach to soldiering, despite the fact that one of the key tenets among these teachers and writers of military science was a call for national armies motivated by patriotic fervour.¹⁰² This would be one of the major philosophical problems for these theorists in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: the 'military sciences' were a homogenizing agent, and yet took hold in an era with a dramatic upsurge in nationalistic sentiments and an attention to national peculiarities. By the beginnings of the nineteenth century, there was a decreasing emphasis on catering to martial character within military treatises, and by the time of Carl von Clausewitz's definitive work on the art of warfare, a discussion of national character is absent, and there is universality in the principles outlined in his famous treatise *On War*.¹⁰³

While the theories behind armies and warfare would unite European (or European-style) armies, there were other factors that enhanced this sense of community. In terms of appearance, the majority of the armies of Western Europe dressed in the same style, and often in similar colours, as seen in the white adorning the soldiers of Spain, Bourbon France and Austria. Regiments sought their own unique identity through alterations to these uniforms, yet, at times, this search for distinction could in fact bring them closer in appearance to their enemies. Though the British soldiers wore the iconic 'Redcoat', they shared this uniform with a variety of other European troops, including the Polish Commonwealth and quite

¹⁰¹ Decken, *Versuch*, pp. 36-7. See also: Gerhard v. Scharnhorst, *Scharnhorst-Briefe an Friedrich von der Decken 1803-1813*, Herausgegeben von J. Niemeyer. (Bonn: Dümmler, 1987)

¹⁰² Charles Edward White, *The Enlightened Soldier: Scharnhorst and the Militarische Gesellschaft in Berlin, 1801-1805* (Mishawaka IN: Better World Books, 1988), esp. chaps. 1, 4.

¹⁰³ Clausewitz moves from the macro to the micro in explaining the martial character of an army: 'An army's military qualities are based on the individual who is steeped in the spirit and essence of this activity; who trains the capacities it demands, rouses them, and makes them his own'. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Oxford: OUP, 1976), III, p. 144.

conveniently their Hanoverian brother-soldiers – both having adopted the colour before the Dynastic Union.¹⁰⁴

Language, particularly French, was another homogenizing agent, drawing professional soldiers away from their native vernacular to a common language spoken, or at least recognizable, to officers throughout Western Europe. The majority of armies in this period were filled with officers who spoke French, as the legacy of French military and political influence at the end of the seventeenth century would lead many officers, especially those in Germany, to favour French, even over their own mother tongue. Within large multi-national armies, this international language would help bridge divides within these polyglot forces, and create a forum in which language was not a direct indicator of nationality or allegiance.

This last point touches upon another key aspect of early-modern armies, a polite and gentlemanly culture that was one of the strongest bonds uniting men from militaries across Europe. Expectations concerning mannerism, bearing, and action, all helped formulate an ideal much like that of the concept of a good soldier, as can be seen in examples of courts-martial where defendants were tried for actions ‘unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman.’¹⁰⁵ The officer and essayist, Campbell Dalrymple, asserted that good relations between officers were easy to foster and maintain due to their ‘easy gentlemanlike familiarity.’¹⁰⁶ Just as effectiveness as a soldier was blind to ethnic origin, so too was the concept of a gentleman.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Campaigning in the Baltic in 1813, members the 73rd Regiment of Foot, the only ‘English’ regiment in the theatre, would pretend to be a Hanoverian Regiment in battle, only unfurling the Union Jack at the last moment, in an effort to surprise their French opponents. The red Hanoverian uniform also disguised the German presence in the most memorable painting of the Siege of Gibraltar of 1783, where the only discernable articles of clothing to separate them from the surrounding Britons were their famous yellow sashes. Thomas Morris, *The Recollections of Sergeant Morris* edited by John Selby with an Introduction by Peter Young (Windrush Press: Gloucestershire, 1998), p. 22.; John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Gibraltar Garrison* (1789).

¹⁰⁵ See Courts-Martial proceedings in, WO 71.

¹⁰⁶ Dalrymple, *A Military Essay*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁷ A gentleman did not necessarily imply a worldliness, especially in the English sense, where the ‘country gentleman’ was seen as very much an indigenous and localized entity.

A gentlemanly fraternity was manifested in a variety of ways, none the least in creating a sense of commonality between allies and enemies, especially among the officer classes. A sense of etiquette – a chivalric and feudal legacy to which these aristocracies still clung – was a part of being a good officer, and was manifested (by law and tradition) in a code of conduct between armed forces. Often times this gentlemanly culture and emphasis on politeness was counterproductive to the interests of the nation as a whole, for example, during the Siege of Gibraltar in 1780, where one Scottish officer wrote in his journal, that whenever the Spanish general was among the trenches, ‘we never fire into the lines, which is a piece of politeness usual I suppose on such occasions.’¹⁰⁸ Reacting to a decree by the Convention of France in 1793 whereby French troops were to give no quarter to British and Hanoverian forces, the Duke of York issued a declaration to their ‘generous’ and ‘brave enemies’, the French, to not ‘forget their characters as soldiers’ and imploring them not to ‘pay any attention to a decree, as injurious to themselves as disgraceful to the persons who passed it.’¹⁰⁹ Fortunately, this was a policy that was largely ignored, and in fact, in subsequent conflicts, French officers were repeatedly complimented by their British enemies, for their gentlemanly behaviour, and generally viewed as more amiable than their German fellow-officers. These are merely two examples of the countless instances of such behaviour, where courtesies or signs of respect were given to enemy forces, even when it might prove costly to their own cause or countrymen. This was in part a consequence of the professional-military and gentlemanly spheres, which were not in perfect alignment with national sympathies or the political motives of these various nations – a transnational aspect to what was otherwise a very nationalized endeavour.

While there existed this transnational element, there was a multinational aspect to these forces as well, as most armies in early modern Europe were composed of men from a variety of nations and ‘ethnicities’ – using the latter expression even in its broadest terms. Though the British Army was relatively

¹⁰⁸ (SAS), Seaford Papers, GD248/466/11 ‘Journal of the Siege of Gibraltar’

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Robert Brown, *Corporal Brown’s Campaigns in the Low Countries: Recollections of a Coldstream Guard in the Early Campaigns Against Revolutionary France* (Leonaur, 2008), pp. 120-1.

heterogeneous compared to its European counterparts, all Western European armies were composed of peoples from a myriad of countries, some more than others. A number of men, such as the famous Scottish Jacobite James Keith, would fight for a variety of different armies, travelling to whatever army best suited their ambitions. This was also the experience of the Welshman Henry Lloyd, whose service in the French, Austrian and Prussian Armies informed his theories of the different martial characters of each European force. Other times, whole regiments or armies themselves could be transferred from a defeated force into the army of the victor – an event not so uncommon in Germany in the long eighteenth century.¹¹⁰ Prisoners could often become recruits, and the British Army would incorporate captured combatants, especially during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, when prisoners of war were often implanted into the ‘Foreign Corps’ that had been created to help fight Republican and Imperial France. Therefore, even in an era of ever-heightening nationalism, where public discourse was featuring more frequent and louder calls for the country’s forces to be composed only of native sons, there remained a strong multi-national element. Therefore, pan-European and transnational trends would combine with the multi-national composition of most early-modern armies to create a set of ‘national’ armies that were by no means as homogeneous as the prevailing discourse suggested. Adding to this was a professional solidarity that would remain a powerful unifying theme throughout the century.

Through shared exertions, and commonalities in lifestyle, experience, and training, early modern soldiers had a great deal in common, despite implications of varying martial characters. Cultures would certainly impact armies, but there was also a belief that there were manners and behaviours especially prominent among soldiers, and which united them while separating themselves from their fellow countrymen. Once again, we look to David Hume:

¹¹⁰ Frederick the Great openly admitted to using this policy, stating that in any major war, Prussia should look to invading Saxony and incorporating its army: ‘Where are the necessary recruits to be found? In Saxony, which will always constitute a theater of war whenever we fight the Austrians, all able-bodied men will be drafted’. Jay Luvaas, *Frederick the Great and the Art of War* (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 76.

The uncertainty of their life makes soldiers lavish and generous as well as brave: Their idleness as well as the large societies, which they form in camps or garrisons, incline them to pleasure and gallantry: by their frequent change of company, they acquire good breeding and an openness of Behavior: Being employ'd only against a public and an open enemy, they become candid, honest, and undesigning: And as they use more the labour of the body than that of the mind, they are commonly thoughtless and ignorant.¹¹¹

While soldiers were grouped together by outside commentators, this thesis will show the variety of ways that soldiers did indeed create a community which involved fellow warriors of differing national origin. Nevertheless, there were certainly factions within these forces, such as competition between regiments, divisions between the branches of service, and the most important of all, the divide between officers and men of the rank & file. Much of this was professional, but there were class-divisions as well.

The bonds of the soldiering profession were best seen with the introduction of a third party, usually one that did not share the same martial traditions or practices as British and German forces.¹¹² Despite any differences, men from all three main branches of the army had derogatory impressions of militias and irregular or colonial forces. This professional solidarity was particularly strong when fighting against (or alongside) colonial rebels and Native Americans, or European irregular forces, such as Hungarian Hussars, or Croatian, Portuguese or Spanish guerrillas. Thomas Morris, an English sergeant serving in Germany in 1813 could point to many differences between his countrymen and their Hanoverian auxiliaries, but these were minimized in reference to the Cossacks within the army, who he deemed 'barbarians, inspiring as much terror in our own ranks as in those of the enemy.'¹¹³ Here any major concepts of difference between regular British and German infantry are marginalized by the greater contrasts with a force not conducting a war in manner recognizable to European forces. Crucially, soldiers

¹¹¹ Hume, *Three Essays*, p. 120

¹¹² For more a detailed discussion of these differences, see Stephen Conway, "The British Army, "Military Europe," and the American War of Independence' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, vol. 67, no. 1 (2010).

¹¹³ Morris, *The Recollections of Sergeant Morris*, p. 22.

writing in such contexts were defining 'barbarian' not by race or ethnicity, but manner of fighting – there was a civilized method understood among 'European' armies and those who did not adhere to it were beyond the pale. Therefore, these 'civilized' armies had a great deal in common with one another: they were trained in a like manner, dressed in similar uniforms with often matching colours, used the same language to communicate and held one another to the same standards, as soldiers and officers and as gentlemen. They were united in a professional fraternity that was surprisingly transnational, given the rigid nationalized nature of early modern militaries.

****Conclusion****

National character and professional solidarities were not universally exclusive concepts within the minds of British, or other European soldiers. As the following chapters will reveal, these two themes would be very much intertwined in their commentaries. Throughout this thesis, there will be a variety of instances in which national character conflicted with these professional solidarities, creating two opposing filters through which British soldiers perceived their German counterparts. While an emphasis on military ability would heighten the focus on these traits desired of soldiers, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter, estimations of German or British soldiery never escaped being contextualized in national or ethnic terms. Rather than critiquing particular individuals, or even regiments, most soldier-authors opted for blanket-terminology, which almost always included phrases such as 'the English', 'the Germans', or if it was more nuanced, would include mentions of particular groups within Britain, or smaller principalities within the Holy Roman Empire: Hanoverians, Hessians, Prussians, and so forth.

The following chapters will each in turn focus on a different relationship, or a particular episode, where these themes of national character and transnational

professionalism will play out within the writings of the participants. The resulting opinions will reveal the degree to which British soldiers were not nearly as focused upon national difference or preconceived stereotypes as the public at-large. Whereas Goldsmith would pine for the days where all men were 'citizens of the world', in reality, he could have turned to the armies of Western Europe, where there was indeed a surprising amount of commonality – an ironic contrast to the reasons for which these armies were created.

CHAPTER II:

BRITAIN'S GERMAN ALLIES

The first Anglo-German partnerships to be examined, pertains to the key military powers within the Holy Roman Empire: Austria and Prussia. Whereas these military collaborations would see the greatest number of British and German soldiers operating in concert, a clear picture of the relations between the soldiers within these grand coalitions is surprisingly elusive, or at least unclear in contrast to those with auxiliaries or integrated forces. The disjointed and often disparate nature of these coalitions would impact relationships, and inform the writings of the soldier-authors who recorded their interactions and opinions. This chapter will discuss some of the features common to all forms of associations, and highlight some of the themes that made the relations between these allies not as harmonious as their name would indicate.

One consistent feature of Britain's military struggles with France within Europe was the presence of one, or several, powerful German allies. While the eighteenth century (from the British perspective) has often been couched as an epoch marked by a prolonged diplomatic and military struggle with France, Britain rarely acted alone. Therefore, defining this century of intermittent warfare as a 'Second Hundred Years War' devolves these conflicts into a duel between two states, whereas in reality these clashes were merely encapsulated within a broader European context in which numerous other states, especially Habsburg Austria, played a prominent if not central role. However, this is not to suggest that Britain's bond with Austria, or any other German state, should be described as a 'Hundred Years Alliance': these were coalitions of necessity, not preference, and the relationship between Britain and her two most common German allies, Austria and Prussia, were certainly imperfect and unstable.¹¹⁴ Yet, there were times in which

¹¹⁴ For Austro-British relations, the two most tumultuous periods (aside from the Seven Years War) were in 1725-8 after the Austro-Spanish treaty of 1725, and the *Fürstenbund* of 1785 when several

the British politicians and the public itself were closer in action and sentiment to the Austrians than the Hanoverians to whom they were dynastically tied, while in the decades following the Seven Years War, Prussia became the most celebrated and admired of the myriad of German states with which British arms were so often united.

England's wars against Louis XIV would prompt numerous governmental, financial and military reforms, and created a new approach to foreign policy that would become prevalent for the next 125 years. This would create what was later termed the 'Old System' – a coalition between Britain, the Dutch Republic and Austrian Habsburgs focusing on the defence of Flanders, which would be a feature of the first three major conflicts with France, and would re-emerge at the end of the eighteenth century with the threat of the French Revolutionary armies. Security of the Flemish port cities was a key issue for the protection of Britain, and one that would make Austria of increasing value as an ally, especially after the passage of the Spanish Netherlands into the hands of Austrian Habsburgs. Yet, for the Hanoverian monarchs, it was not merely the defence of England that was a concern, but that of their Electorate as well. One of the key motives for the first two Georges, especially, was in operating in the capacity as Elector of Hanover to assist in maintaining the legitimacy and security of the Holy Roman Empire, and working within it to increase the power and significance of their own Electorate. In this later case, the Kingdom of Prussia would feature as both a conspicuous threat, and a potential ally, with the most prominent instance of the latter being the Seven Years War, when for the first and last time in this period, Britain and Austria became belligerents, while Prussia took the mantle of Britain's key continental partner.¹¹⁵

German princes combined to prevent Austria from trading territories with the Bavarian Elector. See, T.C.W. Blanning, "That Horrid Electorate" or "Ma Patrie Germanique"? George III, Hanover, and the Fürstenbund of 1785', *The Historical Journal*, 20, 2 (1977), pp. 311-344.; Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat*, esp. chap 7.

¹¹⁵ Of particular utility to understanding these relationships and alliances, see: Jeremy Black, *The Continental commitment: Britain, Hanover, and Interventionism: 1714-1793* (London: Routledge, 2005).; Jeremy Black, *A System of Ambition? British Foreign Policy 1660-1793* (London: Sutton, 2000).; Peter Wilson, *German Armies.*; David French, *The British Way of Warfare 1688-2000* (London: Routledge, 1990).

The long eighteenth century would see repeated coordinated military ventures with one, or multiple, German allies, not just in the Low Countries but in the Holy Roman Empire, France, and even Spain. During these conflicts, British forces would be marching, fighting, living and dying alongside German-born soldiers. Interactions and associations with these forces would be a large part of a warrior's life during a continental war. Crucially, these allied forces would only rarely be coordinated with the British Army, and the contrasts in the motives, functions, and qualities of these armies would greatly impact how they were perceived. The picture was not always rosy, and the opinions of Austrian and Prussian armed forces were not continuously favourable, despite the long-standing histories of close association in opposition to a mutual enemy: France.

****History of Allied Collaborations****

The origins of the long-standing anti-French collaborations with the Austrian Habsburgs originated with the War of the League of Augsburg, better known as the Nine Years War (1689-1697). Here the tandem of England, Austria and Holland was established as a means of curbing Bourbon expansion, and though the results of the long and intensive struggle were inconclusive, an enduring military partnership was formed. A mere five years later, an even greater struggle broke out to determine the fate of the Spanish Habsburg territories in the War of Spanish Succession, and it was here that the golden years of British-Austrian collaboration transpired. British and Imperial forces would fight in Germany, the Low Countries and Spain on behalf of the Austrian Habsburgs and the combination of military genius in the two polities' commanders, the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, created a mutual respect and legacy that would have a lasting impact on British-Austrian relations. In the middle of the eighteenth century, British military and financial support helped maintain the Habsburg territories upon the death of Charles VI, only for the relationship between the two states to break down with the so-called

'Diplomatic Revolution' that brought Austria and France together in a coalition against Britain and her new ally, Prussia. Yet the 'Old System' was reset at the end of the century, when Britain was to play a leading role in the 'First Coalition' in 1793, which included both Austria *and* Prussia, in a failed attempt at putting the humpty-dumpty of *ancien régime* France back together again.

As for Prussia, the relationship was by no means as consistent, or as impactful as that with the Austrian Habsburgs. Initially, while still merely a local power in central Europe, Prussian forces were primarily hired as auxiliaries to the maritime powers or in fulfilling obligations within the Holy Roman Empire. However, the policies and exploits of Frederick II, 'the Great', made Prussia into a major European player, and in three separate occasions, during the Seven Years War (1758-62), the War of the First Coalition (1793-1795), and the last years of the Napoleonic Wars (1813-1815), British and Prussian forces were united in the same cause.¹¹⁶ However, until their humiliation at the hands of Napoleon in 1807, the Prussians were by no means as hostile to France as the Austrians remained throughout this era, which explains in part why the Austrians had remained such important confederates.

Last of the German 'allies' were those smaller states that worked within larger coalitions, either in predominantly independent roles, or as auxiliaries of other major powers. German auxiliary forces subsidized by the Dutch, and smaller armies serving on behalf of the Holy Roman Emperor (including the *Reichsarmee*), would come into contact with British armies, but in most cases their associations were blurred with the nation with which they served, and are harder to detect within the writings of observers. The armies that marched, battled, and camped all across the Low Countries over the course of the century would largely be identified in terms of Dutch, British, Austrian and French, and regardless of the ethnic composition of those forces, more often than not they would be described by those terms. Therefore this chapter will focus predominantly on Britain's partnerships

¹¹⁶ These dates reflect the periods when both armies were operating in the same theatre, not the entire duration of their coalitions. The Prussians were at intervals subsidized by Britain, and therefore in some cases, for example 1794, might be better considered as auxiliaries.

with Austria and Prussia, the two major powers within the Holy Roman Empire, and while referring to these two powers as Britain's only German 'allies' is an oversimplification, their unique nature in contrast to other relationships justifies the exclusion of other forces.

****Structure, Proximity and Integration****

The structure of allied armies had a considerable impact on the relations between soldiers and influenced the frequency and nature of interactions within British-German coalitions. One of the key differences separating Austrian and Prussian armies with the German auxiliaries and integrated corps discussed in later chapters, was that these allied forces operated independently of the British. Though at times these coalition partners would unite under a single commander, usually at critical moments in campaigns and during battles, they would normally operate under their own initiative and might be situated hours, or days apart from one another. The effects of proximity in creating a sense of difference and detachment from their allies would be further underlined by variances in their pay, provisioning, billeting and relations with local inhabitants. These differences would often impact how Britain's fighting men perceived their German fellow soldiers, and therefore throughout this and subsequent chapters, an attention to the means or degree in which armies were integrated will be highlighted.

Allied armies often served at great distance from one another, and interactions with soldiers in an allied force could be erratic or infrequent, thus having a profound impact on relations, if not prohibiting them altogether. The main Prussian Army during the Seven Years War never came into contact with the 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany', the name for the British forces operating there, whose commanders' knowledge of Prussian movements and intentions were often vague, or gleaned from hearsay or informal sources. In the numerous coalitions against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, there was a twenty-year

interval (1795-1815) between combined operations with the Austrians, and the latter being merely in parades after the fall of Paris. Even if they were operating in the same region, during campaigning seasons these armies might be split in order to occupy different strategic locations, and in winter would often be dispersed to different encampments. Even in the Waterloo campaign, where British and Prussian forces were working closely together, the armies themselves rarely encountered one another and were separate from shortly after the battle itself until their entrance into Paris.¹¹⁷

Not all experiences with allied German armies were so disparate, and there were some attempts at creating a more cohesive force. One of the methods was by 'brigading' or 'marrying' certain regiments within allied armies, an attempt at unifying both forces, but also done as a means of ensuring cooperation and keeping an eye on one's allies.¹¹⁸ However, the most common means of creating unity in movement and purpose was to appoint a commander-in-chief in command of all coalition forces. This was simple enough for warrior-kings such as William III and, briefly, George II, men who could demand such a role, yet in other periods there were numerable problems in finding an acceptable leader who would have the authority and ability to please all parties. Therefore this position often devolved to an Austrian or German prince of some form, which often meant a member of the Hanoverian royal family.

In many ways, the network of allies and auxiliaries within Germany impacted the role of the Hanoverian monarchs and their sons throughout the century. It was of course typical for kings and princes to have at least nominal roles in their respective militaries, but the status of the Hanoverian monarchs as princes of the Empire further militarized this dynasty, as a means of providing commanders who could have the authority to lead a coalition of states from within the Empire. Over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, numerous members of the Hanoverian royal family would lead forces in battle on the continent. George II's command of the army in the summer of 1743 (done to with the intent of creating

¹¹⁷ General Cavalie Mercer, *Journal of the Waterloo Campaign* (London: Greenhill Books, 1985), p. 231

¹¹⁸ Burne, *The Noble Duke of York*, pp. 118, 154.

harmony between British and Hanoverian forces) was followed his son, the Duke of Cumberland (1745, 1747-8, 1757), and three children of George III, most notably the Duke of York (1793-4). These members of the royal family were at times the only men with the status, military experience and qualifications needed to command these disparate coalitions, or the British and auxiliary contingents within them. Britain's dominant financial and political roles in these coalitions further necessitated their requiring a place of prominence in the overall command of these coalition armies.

Though there was at the end of the seventeenth century a healthy disdain for having Englishmen subservient to a foreign commander, by the Seven Years War (1756-63), British-sponsored forces were again entrusted to a foreign prince: Ferdinand of Brunswick.¹¹⁹ Borrowed from the Prussian officer corps, Prince Ferdinand's talents assuaged any reluctance among the British commanding officers, to the degree that both he and his son were looked upon to lead British-led coalitions in subsequent conflicts – though they both turned down the offers.¹²⁰ At other times, when allied with Austria and the Netherlands, the task of finding a commander-in-chief was even more difficult, and the overall command was often shared amongst the highest-ranking officers of each respective force, which was often a recipe for infighting.

****Commonality and Difference in Anglo-German Coalitions****

In the wars between 1689 and 1795, more than thirty of these years saw close cooperation with Austrian armies, and more than a dozen with the armies of Prussia. In this time frame, the British forces shared much of the same trials and

¹¹⁹ A caveat should be provided here for the French Huguenot generals who would have a significant presence throughout this period, especially Henri de Massue, Duke of Galway and Jean Louis, First Baron Ligonier. Galway was defeated at the Battle of Almansa in 1707 by the French, led, ironically, by an Englishman. David Francis, *The First Peninsular War 1702-1713* (London: Ernest Benn, 1975), pp. 33, 337.; 'John Ligonier', *ODNB* edited by Sidney Lee, vol. XXXIII (London: Smith & Elder, 1893), p. 242.

¹²⁰ Burne, *Noble Duke of York*, p. 168.

tribulations, and lived remarkably similar to their allies. While each nation's contingent remained for the most part independent, there was in fact a degree of integration and commonalities of experience acting as unifying agents among these diverse and disparate groups.

One of the aspects of a soldier's life that showed a noticeable degree of this integration was in diet and in the supply of food. In most campaigns, especially through to the mid-century, bread was contracted for the coalition army as a whole, and this 'ammunition' bread was given to all forces. This shared diet was certainly a point of commonality, in a century in which diet was becoming more and more ingrained within national character. Yet one problem that arose from this (and would remain as a surprising area of contention in all British-German military partnerships) was the division over the type of bread, especially rye, which the German soldiers loved, and the British despised. This became an iconic divide in these Anglo-German armies. The problem was not unique to these coalitions, and was a recurring theme, even as late as the Peninsular War, with one German commissary in the British Army writing that

The English soldiers, and particularly the officers, pull dreadfully long faces over the rye bread. 'It lies sour on the stomach!' wailed Colonel Hawker. Even the horses could not get on with rye, for it purged them violently. On the other hand, the Germans were as delighted as children with rye bread.¹²¹

This was not nearly a discrepancy in preference, but in fact had tangible effects on armies. Several times throughout the century, adhering to a German diet was seen as a culprit for illness for native Britons.¹²² Lord Ligonier warned against supplying rye bread to British soldiers during the Seven Years War, as he asserted that during the War of Spanish Succession, 'more men were lost by this kind of Bread than by

¹²¹ August Schaumann, *On the Road With Wellington: A Diary of a War Commissary* (London: Greenhill, 1999), p. 158.

¹²² Another Peninsular War veteran wrote during his first weeks in the Iberian Peninsula: 'We never wanted for a single article except wheat-bread, which failed us occasionally, and with a person not accustomed to rye, it does not agree.' Lieut.-Col William Tomkinson, *The Diary of a Cavalry Officer, in the Peninsular and Waterloo Campaigns* (Spellmount: Staplehurst, 1999), p. 9.

the sword of the enemy.’¹²³ Early in the campaign of in 1743, Joseph Yorke, acknowledged,

we shall not find our numbers so compleat as every Englishman c[oul]d wish... for People don’t consider that an English Army is not used to subsist on such Food as Germans, & tho’ they do not grumble or repine at hardships (w[hi]ch must do ‘em justice to say they do not in the least) yet in the end it must be necessarily be destructive to their Constitutions.¹²⁴

Towards the end of the century the divide in diet became more profound, in quality and quantity, with the British being much better fed than their counterparts within German armies. Yet as late as 1793-4, the Quartermasters for the allied armies in Flanders remained Austrian, including Prince Hohenlohe in 1794, a man who showed clear incompetence and led to considerable hardships for all soldiers – British and German.¹²⁵ Dearth was a shared experience in these coalitions – although not a soldiers’ favourite means of establishing unity. As one Hanoverian colonel remarked of the Imperial, Hanoverian and British forces of the ‘First Coalition’, that ‘among these various nations, united by a mighty, just, and honourable cause in common brotherhood in arms, cordial union of exertions, hardships, and alas! Also excesses... there was one feature common to all – viz., fatigue and gnawing hunger.’¹²⁶ Implicit in this commentary, is a sense of cohesion and a unity derived from a common cause and shared experience. Sharing rations was one way of creating a bond between forces, but starving together was another.

Treatment may have been similar, but not all armies were expected to perform the same functions. As homogenized as these early modern-armies were, there were variances in the skills and proficiencies of each army, which would manifest themselves in certain troops being given specific tasks. This was certainly

¹²³ Quoted in Gordon Elder Bannerman, ‘British Army Contracts and Domestic Supply, 1739-1763’ PhD Dissertation, King’s College London (2004), p. 175.

¹²⁴ BL Hardwick Papers Add. MS 35363, fol. 29, Joseph Yorke to Hardwick, April 13th, 1743, ‘not many furlongs from the Rhine’.

¹²⁵ The Duke of York lobbied his father for Hohenlo to be replaced by Karl Mack, whose ‘presence alone would restore confidence to the troops, and instill a degree of spirit’. Burne, *York*, p. 112.

¹²⁶ Christian Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer A Hundred Years Ago: Memoirs of Baron Ompteda, Colonel in the King’s German Legion* Translated by John Hill (London: Grevel & Co, 1892), p. 53. It should be noted that the title of this work is a misnomer, and these represent not his memoirs, as Baron Ompteda died at Waterloo, but his private letters written to his family.

the case for German light infantry and cavalry. Hussars in the Austrian or Prussian service would, from the 1740's onward, act as the outpost and skirmishing forces, which benefited the British Army greatly given their lack of men trained in these matters. Outpost duty – defined as those duties of establishing pickets, screening the army's movements, making raids against enemy positions and gathering intelligence on enemy movements – were usually in the job description of German cavalry formations, and the British Army would be perpetually criticized throughout this extended period as being woefully inept and unpractised in these operations.¹²⁷ The same was found with light infantry units, which were also few in the British Army up until the end of the eighteenth century, and here again, the German *Jäger* or the Croatian *Pandour* in the Austrian service, would most often compensate. At the end of this period, the British rifleman of the Peninsular War received great notoriety for their endeavours, yet they were merely fulfilling a role normally played by Britain's German allies and auxiliaries. German light infantry and cavalry formations did receive the attention and appreciation of the British Army and their exploits are mentioned in British accounts, most notably when the remainder of the army lay quiet.¹²⁸ It was formations such as these that gave rise to some of the stereotypes about German soldiers – not those particularly common to public discourse, but assumptions of natural ability found in the writings of the soldiers themselves.¹²⁹ Yet there were aspects of the British Army that were seen to be superior as well, particularly the courageousness and reliability of the British line infantry.

Beyond the functions within the army, there were also a series of formalities and ceremonial positions that impacted relations between each nations' forces. Throughout these coalitions, it was customary for one contingent to form the 'right wing' of the army, which signified a position of honour, even if these troops were not physically placed on the right side of the force. In these grand confederations this

¹²⁷ Calvert, *The Journals and Correspondence of General Sir Harry Calvert*, p. 366.

¹²⁸ During the relatively uneventful campaign of 1744, especially in the winter months, all eyes were focused on the exploits of the Austrian Hussars, and their daring raids that helped liven the spirits of the coalition army. Davenport, *To Mr. Davenport*, p. 39.

¹²⁹ For more on these discussions, see below, esp. Chapter VI.

was most often given to – or demanded by – the British-sponsored forces.¹³⁰ While merely a formality, the distinction did occasionally cause some resentment within Austrian and Dutch ranks, particularly when it was felt that they were abusing the honour to gain access to better areas for supplies or forage.¹³¹ For their part, British officers saw any break in this tradition on the part of allied commanders as a breach of etiquette: there was anger at the placement of the British soldiers at Steenkirk in 1793, and again on the eve of Fontenoy in 1745, when one officer wrote of the distribution of forces, ‘a great oaf has always put the English upon the left.’¹³² Other breaches in protocol, even slight ones, would create a degree of hostility among the British officers: this fusion of the martial and gentlemanly cultures, so often a unifier, could have detrimental effects on relations.¹³³

Of all the structural aspects of these armies that created or reinforced divisions, one of the more consequential emerged from disagreements among the commanders. In many of these coalitions, command of the army was shared, and even when there was a nominal commander-in-chief, the various contingents tended to act in their own interests. During the Blenheim campaign, which gave the Duke of Marlborough immortal fame, the command of the army was nominally shared with Prince Eugene and Louis of Baden-Baden.¹³⁴ This can be viewed as a successful partnership, but other, less successful coalitions saw frequent conflicts between the high-ranking generals that had a tendency to reflect upon the armies themselves.

This is not to say that relations between British and German armies directly mirrored the rapport between their respective commanders. Major Harry Calvert,

¹³⁰ SNA Dunmore Papers, Rh4/195/2 fol. 9 Harrington to Dunmore, Hanover, May 29th, 1745.

¹³¹ ‘The Dutch & Austr[ians] saying they are starving for want of Forage, complain that we have the advantage of being upon the Right & so eat the forage from them all the way’. BL Hardwick Papers Add MS 36250, Diary of Joseph Yorke fol. 76.

¹³² It’s likely that he was referring to the Hanoverian General Sommerfeld, but it remains unclear. Needless to say this was merely indicative of a common reaction. BL Hardwick Papers Add MS 36250, Diary of Joseph Yorke, fol. 10b.

¹³³ The Austrian General D’Aremberg caused a stir, and enraged Joseph Yorke, when he did not take the proper position when reviewing the British infantry during manoeuvres. BL Add MS 36250 Diary of Joseph York, fol. 45.

¹³⁴ While in Württemberg, ‘the Generals held a Conference, wherein it was resolved... that Prince Lewis and the Duke [of Marlborough] should have each a Day of Command alternatively while they continued together’. John Millner, *A Compendious Journal*, p. 88.

whose journal and letters of the campaigns of 1793-5 became an endless string of criticisms of the Austrian ministers and government, never seemed to reflect poorly upon their soldiers, stating to his friend Hew Dalrymple, 'I am willing to believe that the Austrian army have been... dupes of the infernal cabal'.¹³⁵ In periods in which debates among commanders lead to inactivity or defeat, the soldiers themselves would hold their allies accountable, and in these particular circumstances, there was a great deal of symmetry between the writings of soldiers and of popular discourse, with many of the grievances being aired publicly in the respecting nations' press.¹³⁶

Not all shared commands were recipes for disaster, and the partnership of Eugene and Marlborough ('the two greatest Men in the Age') in the War of Spanish Succession was incredibly successful.¹³⁷ Yet this was a tough act to follow, and subsequent commanders – especially among the Austrians – failed to live up to Eugene's legacy, and likewise Britain provided few commanders of inspiration for another century. The effects of poor leadership hindered relations between the armies, and are particularly prominent in the coalitions of the 1740's and 1790's. Recalling his experiences in the War of Austrian Succession, Andrew Robertson, a surgeon in the 42nd Highland Regiment, had little to say of the Austrians he encountered, and spent much of his journal denouncing the commander of the Imperial forces, the Duke Léopold Phillipe d'Aremberg.

[His] behaviour does merrit some remark on this ocasion he who owed his reputation at court, and his command in the army, to the contunance and recommendation of the generous minded L[or]d Stairs [sic], now used the sneeking cunning of his country, with the sinking credit of his generous benefactor, as a step to rise unto his master's favour. This view (to his shame it be said) dissolved all former obligation, broke that bond that should [exist between] the Gen[e]r[al]s of one aleyed army, and now manifested itself publickly by his refusing at first to joyn his Austrian troops with the British...¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Calvert, *Journals and Correspondence*, p. 267.

¹³⁶ Perhaps the most famous of these being Lord Stair's published resignation. For a list of grievances due to inactivity or quarrelling among army commanders in 1744, see: BL Hardwick Papers Add MS 36250, Diary of Joseph Yorke, esp. fols. 40-1, 45, 53, 54. For similar grievances in the First Coalition, see: Calvert, *Journal and Correspondence*, pp. 184, 217, 246-7.

¹³⁷ John Millner, *A Compendious Journal*, p. 87.

¹³⁸ NAM 6807-426 'Andrew Roberson Journal', pp. 10-12.

Needless to say, the perception that allied commanders were actively working against one another, had a detrimental impact on relations, and in this particular instance, explains the continued anti-d'Arenberg diatribe throughout the remainder of Robertson's journal. Often such writers try to ascertain the key scapegoats for failed campaigns, or defeats in battle, and Austrian generals were good (and often deserving) candidates. This was a problem that would arise again and again, and is notable in critiques of German auxiliaries in the American War in particular. Other distasteful commanders would emerge, such as the Austrian Marshal Clerfeyt who in 1794 was accused by both British and Hessian forces to be sacrificing their forces unnecessarily, and using them in order to spare his own Austrian contingents – an odious, but surprisingly rare, circumstance.¹³⁹ In any case, these were problems owing to the behaviour of specific individuals, and not national fault-lines. Nevertheless, such conflicts did give soldier-authors a deeper appreciation of their status as Britons, for example, during the nadir of relations with Habsburg forces in 1794, even the Austrophilic Calvert wrote: 'I daily thank God I am an Englishman, and pray that the time may arrive when it may no longer be necessary for us to have connection with the fools and villains who are playing the principle parts on the Continent of Europe.'¹⁴⁰ Ironically, these statements made in reaction to the Austrian government's withdrawing from the war in Flanders to deal with pressing matters in Poland, mirrored Britain's abrupt withdrawal from the War of Spanish Succession eighty years earlier, leaving the Austrians in a similar circumstance.¹⁴¹ Outside of accounts of battles and marches, discussions of infighting and intrigue between commanding officers are some of the most common topics for soldier-authors, revealing that for all the commonality between these militaries, one of the primary causes for any poor relations or bitter resentments started with the failure to integrate among the highest-ranking men in British and German armies.

¹³⁹ Burne, *Duke of York*, p. 50

¹⁴⁰ Calvert, *Journals and Correspondence*, p. 303.

¹⁴¹ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, vol. I, p. 552.

****Inhibitors and Instances of British-German Interaction****

Over the last few pages, we have focused on how the structure of the armies and the workings of a coalition could harm or help relations between fellow soldiers. Here, we will focus on the interactions of officers and soldiers to highlight the areas of contention and cordiality. Each subsequent chapter will include a discussion of some of the ways in which British and German soldiers related with one another in these various multinational formations. Some were unique to their own setting or particular conflict, and therefore need some elaboration within their own context, yet there are some forms of association that were common to all, and particularly pronounced in Anglo-German allied armies. Before discussing some of these means and instances of interaction, there should be some mention of the issues that prevented British soldiers from frequently encountering or mingling with their German counterparts.

Throughout this era of recurrent Anglo-German armies, language would remain the key inhibitor of interaction between the fighting men of each nation. The linguistic divide would hinder professional relationships, but also hamper frequent conversation and other forms of social connection. The importance of sharing the same language was not only a necessity for military or social functions, but also for dealings with civilians, and the camp followers that accompanied these armies. The knowledge of English among German officers was rare, and in most cases where the officers knew English, it was from past experiences working alongside the British Army. The same was true for British officers. Yet in this, there was some change over time. Early in the eighteenth century, precious few British officers could speak German, yet by the end of the century, and owing in a large part to the mystique of Frederick the Great and other German militaries, knowledge of the language was not as uncommon, and even some soldiers had made efforts to learn it.¹⁴² In most cases, this was familiarity, not fluency. Though learning German became a pastime for some British fighting men, for others all that was required

¹⁴² William Todd, *The Journal of Corporal Todd, 1745-1762* edited by Andrew Cormack and Alan Jones (London: Sutton Publishing, 2001), pp. 257.

were a few words pertinent to day-to-day living.¹⁴³ For Britain's German allies, the need to learn English was not as important as it was for auxiliary forces serving under predominantly English speakers. These differing circumstances would mean that the linguistic divide remained more pronounced in associations with the more independent German allies, than the auxiliaries who would have attained a greater mastery of the language owing to more frequent encounters.

The linguistic barrier had serious consequences for soldiers in the field. Miscommunications or misinterpreted orders were always a concern, especially when the commanding officers and their lieutenants were of differing nationalities. There was perhaps no greater example of this than the case of General George Sackville, whose failure to act on Ferdinand of Brunswick's orders (intentionally or otherwise), prevented the victory at the Battle of Minden in 1759 from becoming a complete rout. Sackville's court martial, which he requested in order to vindicate himself, was an event unique in the history of Anglo-German coalitions, in that so little blame was placed on the German commanders, who had received more scrutiny in previous conflicts.¹⁴⁴ Though his case was certainly a high profile affair, little was done subsequently to prevent similar episodes, and in later wars officers from differing nations still received orders in languages they could not understand.

The language divide was a cause of frustration, but would also spurn a number of comical passages in the writings of soldiers-authors. This was equally true of those who had attempted – with varying degrees of success – to master their allies' language. Strange accents, misapplied words, and the futility of communication with local civilians, would all be a part of the memoirs and diaries of the participants. Artillery officer Cavalie Mercer's account of the Waterloo campaign contains a number of passages where he pokes fun of the German accents of his

¹⁴³ One English officer wrote to his brother from his garrison in Sicily, 'A Battalion of the German Legion is quartered here and one of the officers has very kindly undertaken to instruct my Captain & myself in the Language, the Study of which I have commenced with great Resolution and Diligence; but under a great disadvantage having neither Grammar [book] or Dictionary.' BL Dansley Papers Add MS 41,580, fols. 55-56, CC Dansley to George Henry Dansley, July 21st, 1808.

¹⁴⁴ For more on his trial, see: WO 71/134.; for secondary works, see especially, Piers Mackesy, *The Coward of Minden: the Affair of Lord George Sackville* (Allen Lane: London, 1979).

allies and their comical pronunciations of his native tongue, not even sparing the commander of the Prussian forces, Marshal Gebhard von Blücher.¹⁴⁵ As comical as they might have seemed to some, attempts at communicating in their allies' native language was something that was more often appreciated, and could create instantaneous good-will.

In the end, the most common solution was to speak *en Français*. As discussed in the introductory chapter, French was the universal language of early modern militaries, and ironically, the national vernacular of their common enemy became the language with which British and German soldiers communicated with one another. Due to the gentlemanly education of many officers, French was prevalent as a second language throughout Western Europe, as it was the language of courtly culture. The majority of diplomatic and official military correspondence between these allies would remain in French throughout the century, and was particularly useful in situations where there were allies other than those of British or German origin.

French, however, was by no means a perfect solution for communicating among these allies, as the armies were comprised primarily of monoglots. At the Battle of Steenkirk in 1693, an English colonel recalled the confusion created when 'orders were sent to me in French, a language which, I profess, neither I nor any of my officers understood.'¹⁴⁶ Little over a decade later, Sergeant Peter Drake, an Irishman who had spent several years in the French Army, found himself quite popular upon entering a British regiment, on account of his fluency with French and utility as a translator for British officers who only knew English or 'a broad Scotch'.¹⁴⁷ Mastery of both French and German was an ongoing issue for British officers, and which remained so through the period in question. As late as the 1790's prominent British officers were having the same communication problems their predecessors had one hundred years before, and when Harry Calvert was

¹⁴⁵ Cavalie Mercer, 'With the Guns at Waterloo' in B.A. Fitchett (ed.), *Wellington's Men, Some Soldier Autobiographies* (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1900), p. 312.

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in Childs, *The Army of William III*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁷ S.A. Burrell, (ed.), *Amiable Renegade: The Memoirs of Captain Peter Drake 1671-1753* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 190-4.

asked if he had any advice for his nephew, soon to be entering the army, he wrote to his brother:

give the young hero as much French as he can possibly take, while he is in England. Languages are the *sine qua non* to an officer who wishes to rise above the common routine of regimental duty; and I have myself felt very severely the misfortune of not understanding German.¹⁴⁸

Indeed, despite the utility of French, learning German became a common solution, especially when it was the one means of communicating with German-speaking locals or men in the rank and file. In 1805 when the British Army made a brief expedition to northern Germany, the commanding general, Sir William Gomm, wrote, 'I assure you I am obliged to put my German to the proof in my own defence. It is very seldom that I find French of use to me here.'¹⁴⁹

This linguistic divide should not be seen as something particular to Anglo-German confederations. Most armies had to deal with such difficulties, especially as continental European armies tended to incorporate far more foreigners than the British. At the same time, the British Army by itself was no stranger to this issue within its own ranks, as it was likewise a polyglot force, with Irish and Scots Gaelic speakers in abundance, not to mention the large percentage of Huguenots within the army in the first half of the century.¹⁵⁰ As British recruiting efforts in the Highlands increased after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, several regiments from northern Scotland were raised, and it became advisable that their officers be able to 'speak the Highland Language'.¹⁵¹ As late as the Napoleonic Wars, Highland Regiments (let alone the now increasingly common Irish formations) were still comprised of men who only knew their ancestral tongue, with one officer remarking of several battalions raised in the spring of 1808, 'two thirds of them can scarce speak a word of English.'¹⁵² Another officer, Alex McDonald, writing home from America in 1776,

¹⁴⁸ Calvert, *Journals*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁴⁹ Sir William Maynard Gomm, *Letters and Journals of Field-Marshal Sir William Maynard Gomm, G.C.B. Commander in Chief of India, Constable of the Tower of London... From 1799 to Waterloo, 1815*. Edited by Francis Culling Carr-Gomm (London: John Murray, 1881), p. 72.

¹⁵⁰ John Brewer, *Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990) pp. 55-6.

¹⁵¹ National Library of Scotland (NLS) Fletcher of Saltoun Papers, 16319, fol. 25. January 6th 1757.

¹⁵² SNA GD1/736/86 J Cameron to Owen Cameron, 3rd May, 1808.

inquired from his wife the languages spoken by his two sons: 'Pray does my Jack speack any Gaellich[?] I wish he did & Donald likewise; They will both have commissions soon.' As for his daughter: 'alas... English & French will do.'¹⁵³ From the perspective of this Scotsman, French, the international language of early-modern militaries, was not as important for those who had to cope with a language divide within their own regiments.

As with the language, distance could prohibit interaction. For the variety of reasons highlighted above, these allied armies could operate some distance from one another, but during periods of convergence there still might be restrictions prevented the comingling of soldiers from the respective armies, as often times this would lead to desertion, theft, or quarrels. Already there were few war diarists and memoirists from earlier in the century, especially those who focused on day-to-day activities, and the infrequency with which the soldiers encountered one another has diluted our knowledge even further. There will be a significant contrast with the relations with auxiliaries and an even clearer distinction with integrated corps, particularly during the Peninsular War, when British and German troops were living day-to-day along side one another.

Even during battles, distance remained an issue, and numerous authors attested to not knowing the fate of their allies amidst the smoke and confusion, and remained in ignorance even several days after the events. Therefore, their estimations of their allies abilities in combat were also built on what they had heard from those around them, not always witnessing events for themselves. This would pave the way for rumours to be placed where facts could not be discerned. Often times, soldiers participating in battles had little knowledge of what their allies had done, and relied on either word of mouth or the British press, which often times were one and the same.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ NLS MS 3945 fols. 56-7. Alex MacDonald to his wife, 1776 .

¹⁵⁴ Major Davenport was one officer particularly cognisant that his letters might become published, and therefore limited the details of battles in his letters to his brother. Davenport, *To Mr. Davenport*, pp. 13-14, 71.

Such were the variety of restrictions that prohibited interactions between British and German soldiers in these allied armies. Later chapters will detail other ways, or display how these inhibitors changed with time, or within a specific context, yet each would remain a problem in all British-German armies. In spite of such restrictions, there were ample meetings and associations between the British army and their German allied forces, ranging from observations made from military parades, battles, campaign marches, and more personal and personable settings, such as formal and informal social gatherings.

The first of these forms of interaction, were those indicative of the quotidian activities of professional soldiers. Given the mundane nature of many of these activities, such as foraging, picqueting, or marching, few of these interactions spurred comments within journals or memoirs.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the novelty of being surrounded by foreign soldiery did inspire some commentary. During the opening months of the French Revolutionary Wars, Harry Calvert wrote to his sister, 'It is a very great amusement to me to inspect and examine the manners and dress of the different corps we are acting with – the drawings which Captain Cook brought from the South Seas are nothing to some of our friends.'¹⁵⁶

There were some other professional functions that inspired a greater amount of commentary. Some of the most memorable features of soldiering in these grand coalitions were the military parades, reviews and other formal celebrations, where princes and commanding generals would both observe their own and their allies' forces. Parades were an important part of conveying the ability of a nation's soldiers outside of the battlefield, and were where men from other nations could admire the training, discipline and appearance of each respective army. It was a matter of professional and national pride, and for many British soldiers, their best

¹⁵⁵ For Sergeant Anthony Hamilton and Benjamin Wheatley, their first interactions with Prussians (in 1814 and 1815 respectively) were when they had escaped capture from the French. Hamilton was greatly appreciative of the local Prussian commander who looked after him, and made sure that he was well fed and provided with 'a bottle of the best wine.' Sergeant Anthony Hamilton, *Hamilton's Campaign with Moore and Wellington During the Peninsular War* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1998), pp. 147-8.; Christopher Hibbert (ed.). *The Wheatley Diary: A Journal and Sketch-book kept during the Peninsular War and the Waterloo Campaign* 2nd ed. (Windrush Press: Gloucestershire, 1997), p. 84.

¹⁵⁶ Calvert, *Journals*, p. 80.

opportunity of observing their German allies. The impressions made, and what the soldiers themselves recorded, were usually geared towards the appearance, discipline and physical features after these events. Whether in grandiose parades, or more modest activities, British and German allied soldiers would encounter one another, and while not the instigator of the form of commentary that social interactions would inspire, we do have some indications of the impact on British soldier-authors. Writing from Flanders in 1794, one English officer wrote to his family, 'I am now so used to do[ing] duty with & see[ing] some of the finest troops in the world that on my return [to England] how shall I relish your provincials – four Battalions of Austrians are attached to us, some of them are almost giants'.¹⁵⁷

Not all encounters with German soldiers were passive observations made in battles, on the march, or during military parades. When not brigaded together, some Britons made the effort to visit their allies. There was a touristic side to many soldiers, which led to forays into allied camps merely to observe the pageantry and uniqueness of these armies, creating yet another instance of interaction. Calvert, so fascinated as he was by the Austrian Army, rode with his friend Hew Dalrymple to the Austrian camp 'on purpose to see two regiments of hussars... which arrived two days ago'.¹⁵⁸ The cavalry officer Captain William Tomkinson found himself on a similar expedition two decades later, when the armies were gathering on the eve of the Waterloo campaign:

My brother Henry, who had come out from England about a week [ago]... was impatient with the idle life we were leading [in] our quarters, and was anxious to go and see the country in our front, and visit some of the towns occupied by the Prussians, for the purpose of seeing their troops and the towns they occupied¹⁵⁹

It was common for Britons to visit the camps of their allies, to barter for food or other goods, but such actions, combined with similar trips to see places of interest, reveal the presence of a 'grand tour' element within the army, perhaps unsurprising given the aristocratic culture that existed within the officer corps.

¹⁵⁷ HRO MS 1M44/110 fol. 100 Wallingford to his mother, St Amand, April 8th, 1794.

¹⁵⁸ Calvert, *Journals*, pp. 89-90.

¹⁵⁹ Tomkinson, *Diary of a Cavalry Officer*, p. 278

There were a variety of day-to-day encounters in which these soldiers met and interacted, as well as formal and informal social events. Balls, parties and dinners were especially prevalent for officers, and it was here that this gentlemanly and aristocratic culture was most prevalent. In every campaign, there were social events of note, and in these grand alliances, the attendants could be corporals, or Kings. There were frequent events [for] the high-ranking officers of each respective nation, with the most elaborate being attended only by men with rank higher than colonel, or lieutenant colonel.¹⁶⁰ For the aristocratic-minded officers within the British Army, a coalition with the forces of the Habsburg Emperors included the incentive of being involved in a refined society, and would be a point of contrast for many who would later serve with some of the smaller German states within the Empire. This was attested to by many officers who during years of peace visited the many courts of the *Reich* for official business, military reviews, or to ingratiate themselves in the courts of foreign princes – and their admiration for the Austrian court and army always seemed to match their disappointment and boredom with many of the lesser states, such as Hessen-Kassel, Brunswick, and even Hanover.¹⁶¹ Sir James Murray enjoyed his trip to Berlin, but not so much in other capitals: ‘you have know idea of the deplorable time I have passed at Brunswick’, he wrote to his family, though he did attend ‘two very brilliant masquerades.’¹⁶² Sir James Campbell, whose memoir is as much a travel diary as it is a recollection of his experiences in the Seven Years War, described this contrast, where the lesser courts of German princes were ‘dissolute and loose; being for the most part filled with military men, who in times of peace are often driven to gaming and intrigue’. These visits were sharply contrasted with the ‘brilliancy and splendour of the court of Maria Theresa’ where there were ‘*fetes*, which were uniformly sumptuous, ceremonious and dull’ – and only boring because he was more interested in

¹⁶⁰ MS Add 69382, fol. 74. Lt. Col. Russell to wife, Aschaffen, June 12th, 1743.

¹⁶¹ Sir Martin Hunter, *The Journal of General Sir Martin Hunter* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Press, 1894), pp. 183-4, 188-9.; George Hanger, *Life Adventures and Opinions of Col. George Hanger* (London: 1801), pp. 28-34.

¹⁶² Robson, Eric (ed.). *Letters From America, 1773 to 1780* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p. 9.

discussing military matters than eating.¹⁶³ While such parties were the purview of the most high-ranking officers, lower ranking officers and common soldiers could find themselves in social events of a multinational nature as well, but usually confined to towns near to their encampments.¹⁶⁴

During campaigns, social functions with Austrian commanders may have been for a large part a matter of formality. While some British officers took the opportunity to visit old friends, or even a number of Britons, including Jacobites serving within the Habsburg forces, for the most part there were few ties between the officer classes. High profile dinners were often mere formalities, and not an indication of friendship (or even cordiality) among officer corps.¹⁶⁵ In 1744, Marshal Wade's aide-de-camp, Joseph York, wrote in his diary his relief that he would not be accompanying 'the Marl' to a dinner with allied commanders: 'what a fine mess o[f] politicks he'll have. For my own part [I will] dine with my old mess in camp.'¹⁶⁶ Indeed, most of the accounts we have of meetings between Britons and Austrians in the 1740's or 1790's usually refer to meetings of the more formal kind, where there would be discussions, or 'warm disputes', over policy and strategy.¹⁶⁷ There were some indications that Britons and Irish officers would seek out compatriots within their allied armies, but it appears that most, like Joseph Yorke, preferred the company of fellow Britons.¹⁶⁸

While social interactions may have been more formality than friendliness, similarly, conflicts were not necessarily owing to any deep-seated aversion to their German allies. One of the key features of these grand alliances is that the most high

¹⁶³ James Campbell, *Memoirs of Sir James Campbell of Arkinglas* 2 vols. (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1832), pp. 156-7.

¹⁶⁴ BL Chequers Papers, MS Add 69382 fols. 10-2.

¹⁶⁵ It should be noted the one exception to this being the Scots-Brigade in the Dutch Army, yet, through the course of the century it became progressively less 'Scots'. For the diary of one Scotsman in the Austrian service, see: NAS Papers of the Hope family of Craighall GD377/265.; GD377/267.

¹⁶⁶ BL Hardwicke Papers Add MS 36250 Diary of Joseph Yorke, fol. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 9.

¹⁶⁸ Not all British officers refrained from associating with foreign officers, such as Peter Drake who as an Irishman, and a former French officer, found himself isolated from his colleagues in the British Army: 'It was always my ambition to keep company with my betters, but my station prevented my doing this with the officers of the army, so I sought out company among foreigners.' His situation was interesting in that, though a subject, he was often described, and somewhat felt, like a foreigner within the army, especially at a time where Englishness was so emphasized, as was the case in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Burrell, *Amiable Renegade*, p. 215.

profile episodes of violence between British and German soldiers emerged not from everyday quarrels, but friendly fire and mistaken identities on the battlefield or during campaign. Similarities in appearance, especially in uniforms, and the confusion ubiquitous in warfare of this nature, often led to unintentional infighting between these confederates. Equally common was the mistaking of enemies for friends. In some ways, this was a problem especially prevalent in the large allied armies in Germany and the Low Countries.¹⁶⁹ The instances are innumerable, but a notable passage can be found in the writings of Cavalie Mercer at the Battle of Waterloo, which is off-putting in its light hearted approach to one such debacle. Mercer, who seemingly relished in satirizing German accents, recalled in his memoir the moment a Prussian battery having just entered the battlefield, amidst all the confusion, began to fire at his men. The British fired back:

We had scarcely fired many rounds... when a tall man in a black Brunswick uniform came galloping up to me from the rear, exclaiming, "Ah! Mine Gott! – mine Gott!; wil you no stop, sare? ... De English kills dere friends de Proosiens!..." and so he went on raving like one demented. I observed that if these were our friends the Prussians, they were treating us very uncivilly...

Interestingly, Mercer apparently showed no hard feelings for the numerous deaths inflicted upon his battery, spending much of that evening amongst these same Prussians, and remarkably, throughout his memoirs held them in far greater respect than his other allies among the Flemish and Dutch forces – a common sentiment throughout the army.¹⁷⁰ In the end, such instances did little to lessen the opinions of their fellow coalition members, allowing Mercer to recall the event with surprising levity, rather than bitterness.

Outside the confines of the battlefield, there were other instances of conflict and infighting between British and German soldiers, although given the comparatively few first-hand accounts of these quarrels, it is difficult to discern any trends in this respect. Subsequent chapters will extrapolate on some of causes for infighting between British and German soldiery, but the overall theme is that such

¹⁶⁹ Hibbert, *The Wheatley Diary*, p. 84.; BL Chequers Papers Add MS 69383 fol. 129 Russell to wife, July 17th 1743.

¹⁷⁰ Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 179-80.

occurrences were not of vast difference to fights within the British or German armies, and reveal no deep-seated antipathy. There were orders given by commanding officers to prohibit quarrels, yet fights and duels elude most of the sources for these armies, and furthermore there remained no singular event that stood out as remarkably different to the type of infighting that went on within any given army. In fact, with all the hostility and finger pointing during the campaigns of 1743-4, the most notable conflict seems to have been a 'national' quarrel within the British Army, between the English and Irish.¹⁷¹

One of the main instigators of any conflict between British and German soldiers was periods of dearth and hardship, when soldiers lacking food or forage would steal from fellow soldiers. The first months of 1743 and the latter of 1744 were prime examples, but so was the inaugural campaign of the 'First Coalition' fifty years later, when lack of supplies and rampant illness put strains on the allied forces. Mistrust was a common theme, especially for the British soldiers who were struck by the poor discipline of their Austrian allies and Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliaries. As one British officer confided: 'My good mother imagination cannot paint to you how badly we poor English are off, as to procuring any one thing we wish for among Austrians, Hessians &e – who w[oul]d steal the fresh water & black bread from us'.¹⁷² This passage was written at a time of considerable hardship, but there were others who attested to a disdainful attitude of the Austrians throughout

¹⁷¹ This was a quarrel mentioned in several accounts, and was a fight between the British in the 'Blues' (The Royal Horse Guards) and the Irish cavalymen of the 7th, known here as 'Ligonier's'. According to George Sackville, who was raised in Ireland: 'The Blues have shown their desire of fighting this campaign [having failed to attack at Dettingen] by picking a quarrel with Ligonier's regiment. It began with boxing but ended in drawing their broadswords, and four or five of the blues were so hurt that I am afraid they will be able to give no further marks of their courage this year. Unlucky for them the quarrel was national, and they engaged too far before they reflected that their regiment had been lately completed by draughts from Nevil's, who to a man prefer'd the honour of their native country [Ireland] to that of a regiment they have so newly been incorporated into, that they all turn'd on Ligonier's side, and used the Blues in such a manner as will teach them for the future not to put themselves in competition with their superiors. It is really very lucky it ended in the disabling of only four of five men... The truth I believe is that the Blues reflected a little too severely on our country, and that Ligonier's had not temper to bear it and so return'd blows instead of words.' Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville*, 2 vols. (London: HM Stationery Office, 1904), p. 289.

¹⁷² Hampshire Record Office 1M44/110 fol. 37a, Lord Wallingford to his mother, Dunkirk, Aug 20th, 1793.

these campaigns, and tensions certainly mounted in periods when one army had ceased fighting due to diplomatic reasons, and the other remained at war.¹⁷³ Indeed any period of inaction caused by disagreements between the commanding officers, was usually marked with increasing friction between the ranks. Once again, the campaign against Revolutionary France in 1793-4 was an archetype for such resentments, where the struggles between British, Austrian, Hanoverian and Hessians commanders became the poster-child for such dysfunction. Writing to his father, George III, the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief of British forces, complained of the 'very shameful and insolent manner which the Austrians behave to all the troops of whatever nation that are in Your Majesty's pay, which has so exasperated them that it is very much to be wished that we might form a separate army without being in the least mixed with the Austrians.' He added further,

I have done everything in my power to smooth and to keep everything quiet, but really the behaviour of the Austrians is such that it is my duty to represent it. They despise everything which is not their own, they are continually throwing every blame upon Your Majesty's Troops and accusing them of slackness when God knows they are infinitely braver than they are, and at the same time wantonly exposing them upon every occasion. Wherever I am they do not dare to do it, but I have received the strongest complaints on that account from the British, the Hanoverians and the Darmstadtters...¹⁷⁴

The Duke certainly had his own axe to grind with the Austrians, whose leaders had marginalized his own command, yet his sentiments were echoed by others and were noticeable even to their enemies.¹⁷⁵ Interestingly, the complaints of the Austrians came from both British and German auxiliary forces, and this divide would be a common theme, as it was in the inaugural year of the War of Austrian Succession, fifty years earlier. At times, relations between the British and Austrians were closer than with other member-states of the Holy Roman Empire. Such variances reveal the complexity and difficulty in trying to make German or Germany a monolithic

¹⁷³ Violence nearly broke out in 1714 with the British departing; 1762, when Again Britain made peace without Prussia; and more drawn out resentments can be seen when Austria withdrew from, essentially ceding it to France in 1794-5. See, respectively: Fortescue, *History*, vol. I, p. 552.; James Campbell, *Memoirs*, pp. 152-3.; Calvert, *Journals*, pp. 246-371.

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Burne, *The Noble Duke of York*, p. 153

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 149-53

term, as there were certainly innumerable divisions within the Empire, both in states and in identities. Just as the British Army was an often inharmonious entity, so too were the collective German armies with which these Britons were so often surrounded.

Taken collectively, the relations between British forces and their German allies were the most distant and dispassionate of all the forms of British-German military collaboration. While unified by a shared cause and common struggles, there was little in their interactions that suggested any fondness outside of professional solidarities. In later chapters, this picture will change, as British and German soldiers operating in closer proximity were more united in their cause, and not separated by great distance or by divisions among their commanders. Yet with this increased closeness, a greater sense of the points of friction between soldiers will also emerge. This closer proximity would also be evident in the writings of the soldiers themselves, for the increased frequency of encounters between soldiers attributed led to clearer and more concise descriptions of their allied soldiers. The picture we have of Britain's Germanic allies, as we shall see, does not differ much from those disseminated in popular discourse.

****Perceptions****

This thesis began with several excerpts from the private letters of Lord Wallingford, writing about his interactions with Flemish civilians and German soldiers. Indeed, Wallingford described several meetings with Austrian soldiery, all the while making comparisons to his own men in the Coldstream Guards, and British forces in general. Whereas soldier-authors in the first three quarters of the eighteenth century mostly dealt with military matters and in recounting events as they saw them, more and more of these men turned to evaluations of their fellow allied soldiers, and their own men as well. By the close of the eighteenth century, the confluence of a greater emphasis on professionalism and a stronger sense of nationalism within these

armies, would spark an increase in descriptions of fellow soldiers abilities, and an evaluation of attributes and behaviours indicative of 'English', 'French' or 'German' soldiery, or their methods of warfare. These evaluations would not always be clear-cut, especially when dealing with Britain's German allies, where perceptions more often reflected the state, and not the men composing their armies.

While 'German' is an adjective used throughout this thesis to echo the writings of the soldiers themselves, this was not always the case with Austria and Prussia, which were clearly defined and divided in the minds of British writers beginning in the 1740's, if not earlier. Indeed some military treatises of the era juxtaposed the two, much in the same way that the British were contrasted with the French or German models of warfare. In an unpublished tract by John Burgoyne, a rapidly rising star in the British Army before his infamous defeat at Saratoga in 1777, he declared that 'The Emperor's army shows all the natural advantages the Prussians want', in terms of wealth, manpower, and most importantly for Burgoyne, 'liberality' and 'national spirit'.¹⁷⁶ These latter two elements were the foundations for most criticisms of the Prussians, an ethnically heterogeneous force, especially among those who believed that armies were best when they reflected the national character of their nation. Comparisons and recollections of each army were impacted further in that these two rivalling states each had their respective admirers within the British military. Past experiences or predispositions, such as those for political, religious, or personal reasons, meant that certain Britons would be biased or inclined towards one or the other. George Henry Lennox, in writing to his friend the Earl of Dunmore during the Seven Years War, revealed that his associate's opinions did not necessarily match the political situation in Europe: 'I must congratulate you upon the secret joy I am sure you felt at receiving the news of the advantage gained by The Austrians' he wrote, 'but I shall say no more on that subject as you know we differ generally when we talk of Prussians & Austrians.'¹⁷⁷ Those British military men who had the luxury of appearing at both courts tended to favour their time at one more than the other – and in doing so revealed the rivalling

¹⁷⁶ Fonblanque, *Political and Military Episodes... of the Right Hon. John Burgoyne*, pp. 65, 69.

¹⁷⁷ NAS Rh4/195/3 fol. 5 George Henry Lennox to Dunmore, Hameln, July 20th, 1757.

solidarities between soldiers and aristocrats. Most, however, viewed these forces through the filter of the military profession to which they all belonged. In the early spring of 1793, Major Harry Calvert, although trying to give an unbiased analysis to his friends and family, still nevertheless took sides in the matter.

The conduct of the Austrians deserves every encomium, and affords a striking contrast to that of the Prussians. Is it not wonderful that a monarch, who derives his power and consequence solely from the reputation of his arms (for without a superiority of military character the kingdom of Prussia instantly degenerates into the marquisate of Brandenburg), can permit his great and natural rival so far to outstrip him in the career of military fame?¹⁷⁸

Indeed, Calvert would repeatedly contrast one with the other, and whereas the 'Austrian allies' were 'the finest infantry in Europe' and 'the very best troops' he had ever seen, his comments regarding the Prussians were largely absent of praise.¹⁷⁹

Without contrasting one state with another, there were certainly favourites among British officers. In 1807, one group of Welsh and English officers were 'deservedly in the dumps' and inconsolable after the news of Prussia's defeat at Jena, despite Prussia's unpopularity due to their recent occupation of Hanover.¹⁸⁰ Nevertheless, while the Austrians may have been more popular in the hearts of British military men, rare were discussions of Austrian military treatises, whereas studies of Frederick the Great were ubiquitous among British officers a quarter century after his death.¹⁸¹ Indeed, the victories of the Frederick II inspired many British military men, though few Britons would serve under his command, or alongside his armies. Indeed, rare are the discussions of Prussians emerging from interactions with the British Army, unlike with the Habsburg forces, though here too, appraisals of Austrians are not as plentiful as we could wish.

For a deeper insight into perceptions of these German allies, recounting descriptions of the Dutch forces may be of some use. In many ways, the relations

¹⁷⁸ Calvert, *Journals*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 83, 88, 142.

¹⁸⁰ Gareth Glover, (ed.). *From Corunna to Waterloo: the Letters and Journals of Two Napoleonic Hussars* (London: Greenhill, 2007), p. 38.

¹⁸¹ As late as 1812, one English cavalry officer, Charles Cocks, wrote to his Nephew that the campaigns of Frederick the Great should be the cornerstone of his military education. Page, *Intelligence Officer*, p. 154.

with the army of the United Provinces can act as a means of contrasting perceptions of troops from German states. The Dutch were active participants in the majority of Britain's struggles with France between 1689 and 1815, especially in the first half of this period, up until the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, when Holland began to adhere to a policy favouring neutrality. In the wars against Louis XIV, the British and Dutch were cosponsors of numerous German auxiliary forces, and their shared cause and common Protestantism should have put them in good standing with their British confederates. Yet, the relations between British and Dutch forces were far poorer in contrast to those with Austria, Prussia, or any of the German states within these coalitions. Certainly, much of the earlier disdain and poor opinions of Dutch armies extended from the wars of the late seventeenth century, and later, the role that William III's Dutch forces played in marginalizing English soldiers and commanders, yet these sentiments were consistent throughout the eighteenth century.¹⁸²

In the minds of many soldiers, be it in the War of Austrian Succession, or the Waterloo campaign, the Dutch were a by-word for poor soldiering and untrustworthiness. Discussing the campaign in 1745, the 'Prime Minister' Henry Pelham complained that the British were 'ill supported' by their Dutch allies, and recounted reports from the Army in Flanders that, 'all agree in the general good behaviour of the English, and the shamefull [sic] one of the Dutch'.¹⁸³ 'Our good friends the Dutch have again behaved with their usual cowardice' complained the Duke of York in 1793, to which his aide-de-camp Major Calvert concurred: 'I think it high time the Meinheers should return to their bogs' – a statement that would have made the London pamphleteers proud. 'From such friends and allies', Calvert continued, 'may the Lord deliver us', adding by way of contrast to his beloved Austrians, that only a handful of their battalions and Hussar squadrons could 'drive them out of the country.'¹⁸⁴ A dozen years later, once again in Flanders, one Scottish officer described the Dutchmen serving within British regiments as 'cowardly

¹⁸² John Childs, *The Army of William III*, pp. 43, 64, 73-4, 95, 115-6,

¹⁸³ NAS Rh4/195/2 fol. 10 Henry Pelham to Earl of Dunmore, [June] 9th, 1745.

¹⁸⁴ Calvert, *Journals*, p. 80.

rascals who boast a lot', revealing that opinions of Holland's military men during this period did not end on a high note.¹⁸⁵ In fact, in 1815 their recently reformed army was an object of near universal disdain among Peninsular War veterans during the final campaign against Napoleon. Remarking upon their character after having witnessed Dutch soldiers ('barbarians') burn down a Catholic Church, Cavalie Mercer concluded: 'Our allies are by no means an amiable set, nor very cordial with us... They are a brutal set. The Dutch appear the best. They are all uncommonly insolent to us.'¹⁸⁶

That British-Dutch relations were poor in the early nineteenth century should come to no surprise, given the recurrent wars and conflicts that had transpired since Britain's declaration of war on the United Provinces in 1780, and the intervening hostilities in the following quarter-century. But the tone of this relationship was a constant for the majority of this 125-year period. The only variable was the causes of such resentment: at the end of the seventeenth century, British hostility was owed primarily to the preferment enjoyed under William III owing to their superiority in professional ability. Therefore, although the reasons for such animus had changed, the sentiment remained the same. This was not the case for the evolving perceptions of Prussia and Austria, and quite different from the more constant, and generally more favourable estimations of allies and auxiliaries from the lesser German states.

The almost universally negative descriptions of the Dutch, and the accounts of relations with Dutch soldiers, provide a useful contrast and a means of comparing Britons' relationships with Austrian and Prussian armies. While relations with Austrian or Prussian forces may not have always been very good, the Dutch seemed to be perennially the most dejected of Britain's coalition partners, save perhaps for the Hanoverians who for the year of 1743 took sole claim of this distinction. Furthermore, by virtue of their being so few accusations of cowardice or treacherous behaviour regarding German forces, we can infer that these German

¹⁸⁵ C.T. Atkinson, 'Gleanings from the Cathcart MSS: Part 4: the Netherlands, 1794-1795 *JSAHR* Vol. XXIX, No. 120, (Winter 1951), p. 22.

¹⁸⁶ Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 242-3

allies, even though they might have similar ethnic compositions as some Dutch contingents, were viewed far better than those men fighting on behalf of the United Provinces.

Contrasts with Dutch forces also provide another piece of insight into the commentaries of Britons, in that the Austrian and Prussian armies were both, like the Dutch, heterogeneous collections of various nationalities. Though the Dutch army contained a significant number of German soldiers, within their ranks and as auxiliaries, throughout the century they were always referred to as 'the Dutch'. This was not always the case for the Austrians and Prussians. The diversity in the Habsburg forces challenged those who wished to place the 'Austrian' into one catch-all generalization, although they were united by a 'national spirit', or so it was claimed.¹⁸⁷ 'The Austrian army comprises a great variety of troops', ran one Peninsular War veteran's first impressions during the occupation of Paris in 1815, all of them 'differing in personal appearance, uniform, language, and character.' Rather than discussing the troops (usually the target for sweeping generalization) he instead looked to their officers, who he claimed were all 'theorists' of outdated tactics, who were quick to flee in battle.¹⁸⁸ As for the soldiers, the artilleryman Cavalie Mercer mustered a more coherent, if somewhat negative, description: 'they are a heavy people altogether, these Austrians', he said, finding their uniforms outdated and 'not a little ridiculous.' While previously describing them as 'tall, heavy built, boorish-looking fellows,' his remarks on their behaviour were far more favourable: a 'good, quiet people' and 'good-natured and orderly.'¹⁸⁹ Sir Martin Hunter also focused on height, stating of the Emperor's Guard that they were 'fine, soldier-like-looking fellows', whom to him appeared 'as if they had been all cast in the same mould – so uniform, all of so equal height, and so like one another in the[ir] countenance.'¹⁹⁰ Six years earlier, Harry Calvert, one of the Imperial Army's 'most

¹⁸⁷ Many of the 'Austrians' that Britain fought with were in fact Flemings, especially in the War of Austrian Succession, Reed Browning, *The War of Austrian Succession* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 101.; Fonblanque, *John Burgoyne*, p. 69.

¹⁸⁸ Harry Ross-Lewin. *With 'The Thirty Second' In the Peninsular and other Campaigns* edited by John Wardell (London: Sompkin, Marshall & Co, 1904), p. 314.

¹⁸⁹ Mercer, *Journal*, p. 327.

¹⁹⁰ Hunter, *Journal of General Sir Martin Hunter*, p. 189.

enthusiastic admirers', wrote of his impressions of a more varied collection of Habsburg troops: 'Their dress is fully extraordinary, and their countenances, by continued exposure to the elements, have the true Indian dye; but they are the bravest, hardiest soldiers I ever saw.'¹⁹¹ Ultimately, descriptions of Austrians were less frequent compared with other armies in the latter half of the eighteenth century, given that only one of the coalitions against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France featured an army composing British and Austrian troops side-by-side. This allowed for few opportunities to posit depictions of national character from first-hand experience.

The few British descriptions of Austrian soldiers (aside from comments on their performance in battle) geared towards their height and stature, which compared favourably with their other allies, and especially the British. There were few divisions in views of Austrian and Prussian appearance apart from their uniforms and the most negative remarks on this topic seemed to be reserved for the Hungarian and Croatian irregulars and light cavalry in the Austrian service. One Hanoverian officer of the First Coalition recalled that the wild-looking Hungarian Regiment Sztaray, 'made a striking contrast to the elegance of the English guards', the latter feeling much the same way.¹⁹² One British officer remarked that the faces of the men within these foreign units were 'at once unnatural and pitiless.'¹⁹³ Even when opinions of the rank & file Austrian soldiers were less than favourable to British commentators, the presence of these irregular soldiers from the fringes of the Habsburg dominions made a point of contrast, in appearance and in action, that ultimately favoured the soldiers from within the *Reich*. Describing the actions of these Hungarians and Croats, one officer in the 1740's wrote: 'they are a terrible people that never give or take quarter, neither they nor the hussars have any pay, but are always on free quarters everywhere, which they take care to make good, sometimes with great cruelty'.¹⁹⁴ As discussed in the preceding chapter, the role of military professionalism was a large factor in these negative impressions, as their

¹⁹¹ Calvert, *Journals*, p. 80.

¹⁹² Ompteda, *Memoirs of Ompteda*, p. 53.

¹⁹³ Moyle Sherer, *Recollections of the Peninsula* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1996), p. 103.

¹⁹⁴ Davenport, *To Mr. Davenport*, p. 40.

irregular appearance, fighting style, and mannerisms, created a contrast not too dissimilar to interpretations of other soldiers fighting in a style clearly different from the prevailing norms of Western Europe, and exemplified in forces such as Cossacks, Turkish warriors, Native Americans, and even American colonists. Therefore, the Austrians are something of a problem when trying to fit them into a discussion of perceptions of Germans, in part due to the shifting definition of 'German' away from its Imperial-Austrian origins in the accounts of Britons in the early eighteenth-century, and secondly, due to the sheer diversity within the Habsburg forces, which would remain a theme through to the First World War. Yet this diversity in itself was a point of contrast for the British Army, whose uniform red coats would have been a contrast in itself to the variegated forces of the Habsburgs.

Much was the same for views of the Prussian armies, but there were some areas of contrast. Firstly, the perception of Prussia's forces fluctuated significantly through the mid-eighteenth to early-nineteenth centuries. From unremarkable origins, the image of Prussia's military became inextricably linked with the celebrity of Frederick II, who ruled Prussia between 1740 and 1786. The repeated successes of the armies of Frederick 'the Great', would lead to a perception of Prussian soldiers as being highly disciplined and effective in battle – and so they were. The methods in which they were trained and disciplined became worthy of emulation and the tactics of the Prussians were of special interest to Britons, particularly after Frederick's overwhelming victory at Rossbach in 1757, given that he had achieved a complete rout of the French Army, a feat which eluded British commanders since Marlborough's victory at Blenheim fifty-three years earlier. It was obvious then, that he should be a popular figure in the minds of British officers, such as George Hanger, who diligently studied the works of 'the great Frederick; while adoring his immortal fame'.¹⁹⁵ For the next half-century, there would be a conflict within the British Army about the adoption of this Prussian way of dress, enforcing discipline, and conducting wars. Those who respected this 'German' means of warfare would

¹⁹⁵ Hanger, *Life Adventures and Opinions*, p. 29.

look most favourably on the armies of other German states who modelled themselves on the Prussian army, as seen in the praise for the highly disciplined forces of Hessen-Kassel, Brunswick and Ansbach, who often served with Britain, when the Prussians did not. Many aspiring military men wished to further their career and their knowledge of the profession by serving in the Prussian Army, something only few managed to do, with the exiled James Keith being the most famous. James Campbell wrote of a fellow British officer, who upon the cessation of hostilities between Britain and France in 1762 immediately joined the Prussian Army currently occupying a nearby city.¹⁹⁶ Yet this enthusiasm for all things Prussian slowly faded and towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a feeling that the Prussian Army was, as indeed it was proved to be, an antiquated force, with the only legacies of the days of Frederick II being its outdated manoeuvres and drill, and excessively harsh discipline.¹⁹⁷ Calvert, in 1793, contrasted the Prussians with the rapidly improving Austrian army, and claimed that 'the Prussians have a great deal of lee-way to make up, to regain the military character they established under [Frederick the Great]', who had died some 7 years before.¹⁹⁸ The opinions of the Prussian soldiers were steadily poorer, thanks in part to their defeat at the hands of Napoleon, and later during the Waterloo campaign they remained both respected for their appearance and abilities in battle, but were more and more the embodiment of the crueller aspects of German soldiery.¹⁹⁹

The cosmopolitan nature of the Prussian Army – with a composition that was nearly half foreign until the 1770's – earned some derogatory comments from British military men, in the same manner as for the Austrians. Indeed, while few British soldiers would interact with the Prussians throughout the century, their influence made them a frequent topic in many manuals, drill-books, and military

¹⁹⁶ Campbell, *Memoirs*, pp. 151-2.

¹⁹⁷ Even by the 1780's, there were still fans of the Prussian Army, including George III's son Frederick, who idolized his name-sake, and after watching a review of the Prussian Army, proclaimed, that the Prussian cavalry was the 'infinitely superior to anything I ever saw'. Burne, *The Noble Duke of York*, p. 25.

¹⁹⁸ Calvert, *Journals*, p. 88.

¹⁹⁹ 'The Prussian Soldiers, owing to rigid discipline and a too frequent use of the cane, are mere machines; but they are fine men, and look well on parade'. Ross-Lewin, *With 'The Thirty Second'*, p. 313.

histories. John Burgoyne derided the Prussian Army as a collection of ‘strangers, deserters, prisoners and enemies of various countries, languages and religions’ who could not ‘be actuated by any of the great moving principles which usually cause extraordinary superiority in armies,’ and most damningly, lacking a ‘national spirit’, which was believed to be the source of his own countries excellence in warfare.²⁰⁰ Indeed, those who celebrated national character feared the Prussian system that sought to eradicate these singularities in order to achieve uniformity in an army that was intrinsically multinational.

In the end, the infrequency of interactions led to a perpetuation of stereotypes, and in the few encounters with the Prussian armies their appearances and actions and only reinforced them. During the Seven Years War, only the Prussian cavalry, primarily Hussars, were serving with ‘His Britannic Majesty’s Army in Germany’, and these men, living and operating in a manner similar to the Hungarian cavalry which the British were so disdainful of, could do little to alter any opinions from the characterizations built up in the public sphere. One officer upon first observing these hard-living Prussian cavalrymen, described them as, ‘a nasty looking set of rascals, the picture you have in the shops in London is very like them though it does not represent their rags and dirt... They drink more brandy than water and eat I believe more tobacco than bread’.²⁰¹

While only encountering one another for brief periods while on campaign, descriptions made of Prussians were often from officers witnessing formal reviews and parades of Prussian soldiery, where they would awe spectators with

²⁰⁰ Quoted in Silvia R. Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of a Military Life in the Revolutionary Period* (Austin: University of Texas, 1981), p. 111.

²⁰¹ These observations were made after the hussars had long been in the field, compared to the recently arrived British observer. This phenomenon was common, and effected Moyle Sherer, a British officer, when during the Peninsular War he first encountered the highly reputable British cavalry, who had been campaigning for several years: ‘As we passed out of town we saw several officers, men and horses of the heavy brigade of British cavalry... [who] looked sickly. Both officers and privates were very ill dressed, and their brown and shapeless hats had a most unmilitary appearance. Whoever had seen these regiments in England; in pale, sallow-looking men, and skeleton horses, would hardly have recognized the third Dragoon Guards and fourth Dragoons, two corps enjoying, deservedly, a well-earned name. Thus, oftentimes, on actual service, vanishes all that brilliancy which has won the heart and fixed the choice of so many a youth, and which appeared so gay and attractive on crowded esplanades at home.’ Mackesy *The Coward of Minden*, p. 28.; Sherer, *Recollections*, p. 70.

manoeuvres and movements. In such formal settings, where these men were observed at a distance, most remarks were discussing their uniforms. In the 1760's Burgoyne scorned the 'many absurdities' in the 'dress and outward appearance of Prussian troops', where they had adopted 'fopperies as essentials'.²⁰² Yet such opinions were shed as quickly as the ornate coats and hats so loathed by those who found them grandiloquent accessories. By the time of the Waterloo campaign, Cavalie Mercer was greatly impressed by a squadron of Prussian lancers: 'whose simple and serviceable costume pleased me much... [having] not a particle of ornament, nor superfluous article about their appointments. I think they are the most soldier-like fellows I have ever seen.'²⁰³ It is regrettable that the few comments we have of Prussian soldiery deal mostly with the superficial – particularly as outward appearances were so susceptible to change.

Apart from discussions of the appearance and mannerisms of the Austrians and Prussians, the commentaries from British sources deal primarily with the assessments of their abilities as soldiers. In making these appraisals, these discussions were particularly focused on their competence in a variety of tasks usually associated with an iconic conception of good soldiering. In later chapters, we will examine many of the ways in which divisions between British soldiers and their German counterparts would help define a national or martial character of these groups. With each conflict or setting, there were particular issues that came to the fore, and those indicative of Anglo-German coalitions will be addressed here.

Billeting and treatment of civilians was one such area of contrast particularly common when British soldier-authors turned to discussions of their German allies. British forces, starting from the mid-century, made great efforts to try and pay for their supplies from locals and were less heavy-handed in demanding provisions and billets from the local populations.²⁰⁴ Lieutenant Thomas Powell, having failed to

²⁰² Fonblanque, *Burgoyne*, p. 64.

²⁰³ Mercer, *Journal*, p. 231.

²⁰⁴ As a less professional army at the end of the seventeenth century, even English towns would have preferred to be billeted by foreign, rather than native, soldiers. Childs, *British Army of William III*, p. 95.

purchase supplies from a local French civilian in 1793, recounted the distinct difference in the approach of his allies: ‘The Austrians came after us and were not quite so civil, they took away everything the man had’, then burnt down his house, where Powell later found the man’s remains.²⁰⁵ Though the British were no strangers to the cruelties of war, such gratuitous violence revealed a stark difference with their own forces, or at least how they imagined them. The result of these differences, particularly towards the turn of the nineteenth century, was that there emerged distinct means of conducting wars, not so much in tactics or strategies, but in the procurement of supplies and relations with civilian populations, and where a distinctly ‘English’ manner was to be delineated between French and German approaches, which included, in part, harsh impositions on local citizenry:

Hessians & Austrians always seize [a] Private Property as their own [where]as the English request, & study their Manners [whereby] we are by far more acceptable [to the local citizenry] – We in England should not like to have an officer either with your leave, or by your leave, come into our House & blunder up stairs²⁰⁶

This focus on winning hearts and minds manifested itself at the conclusion of the Siege of Valenciennes several days later, when the French wished to offer their surrender to the British, who remained in the good graces of the local citizens while the Austrians were unanimously loathed.²⁰⁷ It is quite telling that even after a century of war, the attitudes of the French towards the British were palpably better than their estimations of the Habsburg armies. The admirable conduct of the British was no doubt responsible, although after the fall of Paris cavalryman Tomkinson jested, ‘nothing enrages the French more than the good conduct of our army, thereby removing all plea for abuse from them of us.’²⁰⁸

Perhaps the most prominent of the professional differences noticed by British commentators was in the role of plundering and marauding, something all armies did, but are particularly prevalent in the writings of British soldiers and officers, and where they drew the clearest divides between foreign forces and their

²⁰⁵ NAM 7607-45 Diary of Lieutenant Thomas Powell, 14th Regiment of Foot 1793-1795, fol. 10.

²⁰⁶ HRO 1M44/110 fol. 15 Lord Wallingford to his mother, Camp near Valenciennes, May 18th, 1793

²⁰⁷ Ompteda, *Hanoverian-Englische Officer*, p. 65.

²⁰⁸ Tomkinson, *Diary*, p. 326.

own men.²⁰⁹ As Corporal Brown wrote in his journal: 'The Foreign troops plundered wherever they came, without hindrance, and generally destroyed what they could not take away: but the British were always forbidden to plunder.'²¹⁰ Marauding was a common theme for all armies, but the seemingly systematic manner in which these actions were carried out created a rift between the armies.

Every house was plundered in the most unfeeling manner, by the Austrians and others of the foreign troops; whose hardened hearts, neither the entreaties of old age, the tears of beauty, the cries of children, nor all the moving scenes of the most accumulated distress, can touch with pity; nor do they content themselves with taking whatever may be useful to them, but destroy whatever they cannot carry away.²¹¹

These same commentaries were encountered again during the Waterloo campaign of 1815, where there were only short periods in which British and Prussian forces acted in concert, and rarely met between the evening after the great battle, and the capturing of Paris, nearly three weeks later. The famous meeting and handshake between Wellington and Blücher at *La Belle Alliance*, figuratively repeated through the ranks that evening, was the closest these armies would be for the majority of the campaign.²¹² Instead, the British followed in the wake of the advancing Prussian Army, following in the swathe of destruction they left in their punitive march to the French capital.²¹³ And in this duration, the witnessing of depravities, which the British Army was so intent on preventing by their own men,

²⁰⁹ This was not a major point of difference in the mid-century wars in Europe, where all sides were culpable. From the comments of Joseph Yorke: 'the country [is] pillaged [with] no possibility of restraining our Army, every body [has] taken notice of it, & complains that our army must starve & yet nobody begins to execute & make examples, [although] strict orders [were] given out.' BL Add MS Hardwicke Papers, 36250 Diary of Joseph Yorke, 1744-5, fols. 40-1.

²¹⁰ Robert Brown, *Corporal Brown's Campaigns*, p. 34.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 37.

²¹² Tomkinson, *Diary of a Cavalry Officer*, p. 315.

²¹³ 'We had got on the route of the Prussian army, which was everywhere marked by havoc and desolation.' At Loures, 'A corps of Prussians halted there last night, and, excepting the walls of the houses, have utterly destroyed it.' Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 231-2. Sir Alexander Gordon, *At Wellington's Right Hand, The Letters of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Gordon 1808-1815* Edited by Rory Muir (Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2003), pp. 401-2.

reinforced a sense of professional, and national, difference.²¹⁴ As one officer recalled of this journey: ‘for the last three days we have followed the route of the Prussians; they plunder every village.’²¹⁵ With so few other means of contact, this was the main impression left in the minds of many British soldiers. Whereas plundering and exacting *Kontribution* were part of the soldiering profession in the seventeenth century, it was a practice that was frowned upon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, yet British commentators felt that they were a part of the only army making a concerted effort to curtail such offenses.²¹⁶

Despite this contribution to the popular association with plundering, it was, within these coalitions, an equally strong condemnation of their discipline and their allies’ effectiveness as soldiers, to be taken in consideration with other factors, such as drill, appearance, and ability in combat. Yet there remained some nationalistic underpinnings to criticisms of German plundering, as such actions were often overlooked or downplayed by Britons when they themselves were culpable. This was a feature of warfare that all sides participated in, even if one group or another found it particularly egregious, and many saw it as a sad necessity of war. During a spring of scarcities in 1793, Wallingford wrote home that ‘we are almost strangers to meat, except we plunder’, and though he helped rescue a local family from ‘the fury of the Austrians’, he reflected on the many crimes committed, by both British and Austrian soldiers. During the opening stages of the Siege of Valenciennes, 1793, he wrote, ‘shocking scenes I have been witness [to] since coming here. But when the Austrian trumpet sounds, & our English Grenadiers march beats, I forget all & am a soldier.’²¹⁷

Treatment of non-combatants was one area of difference spotted by Britons, but the support for fellow soldiers was yet another. During this same siege, Lt.

²¹⁴ This distinction was even apparent in marching music, where the British were the only ones to refrain from playing tunes, such as ‘The Downfall of Paris’ that would not further agitate their defeated opponents. Tomkinson, *Diary*, p. 326.

²¹⁵ Tomkinson, *Diary*, p. 322.

²¹⁶ Fritz Redlich, *The German Military Enterpriser and his Workforce: A Study in European Economic and Social History* 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: Fanz Steiner Verlag, 1965), vol. II. pp. 60-1.; See also, Fritz Redlich, ‘Contributions in the Thirty Years War’, *Economic History Review* XII (1959-60), pp. 247-254.

²¹⁷ HRE 1M44/110 fol. 15 Lord Wallingford to his mother, Camp near Valenciennes, May 18th, 1793

Thomas Powell, was particularly disturbed by the lack of care for wounded Austrians.

The Austrians are the worst people in the world for assisting each other when badly wounded and it is a rule in the Austrian Service, that if a man is so badly wounded as there is no likely hood of his being able to serve any more, the Surgeons never give him any assistance but leave him to die.²¹⁸

The lack of empathy for wounded soldiers was, according to Powell, due to the costs of supporting invalids, which the Emperor could ill-afford, 'particularly as he is always at war'.²¹⁹ That the Austrian surgeons would leave their wounded to die shocked Powell's sensibilities and he regarded this as 'barbarous treatment', to be contrasted with the 'very human' actions of British surgeons who did far more to keep the wounded alive.²²⁰ Such differences (highlighted by weighted terminology and rhetoric) reinforced a sense of 'otherness' between the British forces and German armies, and further established the humanity of the British Army as a common theme.²²¹ In what will be a recurring trend throughout the following chapters, a critique of the practices of specific soldiers or armies would quickly turn to a discussion of their British or German national character. To Powell, the Austrian soldiers knew if they were wounded badly, they would likely die, and that 'the Emperors Troops are imbued with a good idea for this purpose, as they are born Soldiers, for every man is obliged to be one, and if they die in the field of Action, or in consequence of an Action, they are sure[ly] to be rewarded [in the] hereafter.'²²²

That the Austrians were viewed as good or 'born' soldiers was nothing new. Back in the days of the Pragmatic Army, respect for the Austrians prowess in battle was common. One London-born footboy of Major Phillip Honeywood wrote that the 'Oysterenns', as he called them, 'dip [their heads] and look about them for they

²¹⁸ NAM 7607-45 Diary of Lieutenant Thomas Powell, 14th Regiment of Foot 1793-1795, fol. 4

²¹⁹ This phrase was, ironically, used by Germans to describe Britain. See below, Chapter V.

²²⁰ In his journal, Powell recounted rescuing a 'Tirrolian' who was left for dead by his own surgeons. NAM 7607-45 Diary of Lieutenant Thomas Powell, 14th Regiment of Foot 1793-1795, fol. 5.

²²¹ Sadly, the Surgeon for the 42nd Regt., MacDonald, writing in the 1740's does not mention the practices of the Austrians in these respects.

²²² NAM 7607-45 Diary of Lieutenant Thomas Powell, 14th Regiment of Foot 1793-1795, fol. 5.

do[d]ge the [musket] balls as a cock does a stick, they are so used to them.’²²³ After Dettingen, there were even rumours among soldiers back in England that the victory was owed primarily to ‘the very particular hand of providence & the Austrians’, which, when repeated to Lt. Colonel John Russell by his wife, was flatly denied. Russell, having witnessed the events first-hand, nevertheless acknowledged that ‘the Austrians behaved well’, and had done their part.²²⁴ In battle at least, the Habsburg forces were rarely criticized for their abilities or behaviour, and when problems arose, it was usually blamed on their commanders. Therefore, the Germans within the Austrian forces retained a character of being men raised for soldiering, in the manner articulated by Lt. Powell, and very much in line with descriptions of other German states, as discussed in subsequent chapters. Whereas other aspects of the Austrian Army might lead to derogatory comments, rare were poor appraisals of their abilities in battle, and in this manner, Habsburg forces would earn compliments, where other aspects of their abilities as soldiers garnered disparaging remarks, particularly in tendency to plunder and their treatment of foreign civilians and their own wounded. This was matched with perceptions of Prussia, where their lauded military status was depreciated by their ruthless means through which they attained their martial capabilities. Collectively, these differences, real or perceived, added to a sense of difference between British forces and the forces of Germany’s two most powerful states, and did little to overturn popular impressions.

****Conclusion****

Relations between Britain and her German allies were not always good, and indeed, some of the strongest sources of resentment between the soldiers of these polities stemmed from disagreements between the governments or commanding officers of each respective power. While there were attempts at creating unity through a single commander, more often, the shortcomings of specific individuals and the

²²³ Sam Davies, ‘Letter regarding the ‘Battle of Dettingen’’, *JSAHR* Vol. 3 (1924), p. 37.

²²⁴ BL Chequers Add MS 69383 fols. 1-2, Mrs. Russell to Lt Colonel Russell, 25th July, 1743.; Add MS 69383 fols. 16-17, Lt. Col. Russell to wife, Bebrick, August 7th, 1743.

disagreements between the armies' leaders furthered the rift between forces rather than bringing them together. Furthermore, those aspects in the lives of soldiers that would foster a sense of commonality and community, such as shared experiences, similar food-stuffs, and equal treatment, did not completely bridge the divides created by differences in the performance of various military tasks, nor overcome the more tangible inhibitors such as the language barrier, and the distance at which these armies often operated.

Britain's relations with these two preeminent powers did not represent the archetype for interactions between British and German soldiers, as the distinctiveness of both Prussia and Austria meant that though at times they were seen as inherently German, they were just as often considered separate entities. This disparity was further highlighted by their status as armies operating independently alongside British forces, as opposed to the auxiliaries who would more often act in concert with or within the British Army. Therefore, due to the disjointed nature of many Anglo-German alliances, and the perceived differences between the armies of Austria and Prussia and the 'Lesser German States', to gain a better appreciation of how these polities interacted within these military spheres, we must turn to other forms of Anglo-German armies.

CHAPTER III:

GERMAN AUXILIARIES

Throughout the long eighteenth century, the German auxiliary was the most common and most recurrent form of Anglo-German military association, and the one that had the greatest impact on perceptions and relations. The hiring of German soldiers during military conflicts would become one of the more consistent aspects of British military strategy during the eighteenth century, and in the process would create one of the great fault lines in British politics. So consistent was this policy that in every major European war German 'mercenaries' would make up a significant proportion of the armies fighting on behalf of the Hanoverian monarchs. This chapter will survey some of the key relationships, to examine trends in their integration and relations with British soldiers, and will include a brief examination of Anglo-German relations in the 1740's.

The term 'auxiliary' in this thesis signifies a formation of soldiers, or even an entire army, whose mobilization, upkeep and subsistence was paid for, in part or in full, by a foreign state, thereby serving in a subordinate position to the sponsor's government. The main difference in this thesis between 'auxiliaries', and 'allies' receiving subsidies, was that auxiliary forces would have to swear an oath of allegiance to the British Monarch at the commencement of their service, thereby serving with the British Army at the behest of the King and his government. This definition is not without its flaws, as the rather vague or frequently changing relationships between states and armies in many of these eighteenth century wars complicated the terminology within contemporary discourse. For example, although the British were granting subsidies to Maria Theresa throughout the War of Austrian Succession, the first actions of the British Army were in the capacity of auxiliaries of the Austrians, during which time the Battle of Dettingen (1743) was

fought – all before Britain was technically at war with France.²²⁵ Likewise, in the Peninsular War, some Britons described themselves as auxiliaries of the Spanish, although once again, Britain received no money from the Spanish Junta.²²⁶ Furthermore, in times of war, Britain's Hanoverian auxiliaries were not always financed directly by the British government, for example, in the 1740's when payments for Hanoverian troops were cynically made by the Habsburg monarch Maria Theresa with English money.²²⁷

The scale and terms for the participation of these forces alternated greatly from one treaty to another. An auxiliary force could be at times as small as one battalion, or comprise some 15,000 men or more, from one state alone. Their duration of service was usually set for the entirety of a conflict, but other times was set annually, while their recruitment and training were the responsibilities of the contingent's sovereign. Troops hired as auxiliaries would be made to swear an oath of allegiance to the British monarch, which, though for a formality, was something that motivated auxiliary soldiers, especially during the American Revolutionary War, when few other incentives were available. While in service of a foreign crown, auxiliary forces maintained their own command structure, uniforms, military codes and methods of maintaining discipline, and in large coalitions would act as an army within an army. This would be a dividing characteristic between subsidy-troops and the 'foreign corps' that would become a feature of Britain's conflicts at the turn of the nineteenth century.

The financial toll for subsidizing foreign troops was often fluctuating, and although many contracts would use previous templates, the costs could change due to prevailing circumstances. Uniformity in 'pay and emoluments' between native and foreign soldiers was uncommon, and usually occurred only during service in British territories, and in most cases money was granted to the Prince, who was not compelled to extend these wages to his forces. Yet even when serving under such terms, the British Government might save money by utilizing foreign auxiliaries,

²²⁵ Browning, *War of Austrian Succession*, p. 138.

²²⁶ Schaumann, *On the Road With Wellington*, pp. 40-1.

²²⁷ Uriel Dann *Hanover and Great Britain, 1740-1760: Diplomacy and Survival* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), pp. 61-2;

especially when their relative costs while remaining in Europe remained lower than for British troops. This could also be dictated by the nature of the formation being hired. Though Hanoverian soldiers in Gibraltar in the 1780's were to be 'upon the same footing as his Majesty's English troops', the relatively few officers in these battalions lowered costs appreciably.²²⁸ Whether their wages were high or low, the troops themselves had little choice in the matter, and all they could ask was to be paid regularly.

Though referred to in contemporary discourse as 'mercenaries', a term still commonly used in today's scholarship, these subsidy troops had very little in common with soldiers of fortune, and differed greatly in motive and circumstance to the armies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Certainly there were fortune seekers in German auxiliary forces, as there were in all armies in the period pre-dating the rise of citizen-soldiers. Yet the most 'mercenary' men of all, were those army recruiters who aimed at making considerable profit, not by hiring themselves out for money, but by recruiting or impressing men into service.²²⁹ There was certainly no shortage of mercenary behaviour in the British Army, especially among an officer corps obsessed with promotion and advancement. As one Scottish officer confided to his brother, 'rank is the main thing I push for tho'... [for] I am damn'd tired of being upon a captains pay.'²³⁰ This was by no means a unique sentiment, either in the British Army, or in other armies across Europe. Throughout this era, and even in to the seemingly patriotic struggles against Napoleonic France, the desire for higher pay and promotion outweighed other considerations.²³¹

²²⁸ WO 1/823 fol. 433, No addressee, London, August the 12th 1775

²²⁹ See below, Chapter VI

²³⁰ NAS GD 206/2/495 fol. 10a, Robert Hall to brother, John Hall, Peterhagen, 24th July, 1759.

²³¹ One look at the writings of John Mostyn, cavalry officer and briefly commander of 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany' in the Seven Years War, should confirm the presence of men motivated by principles other than love of country or sense of duty. His complaints to his friend the Duke of Newcastle of his time in 'so healthy an establishment' with little chance of a 'colonel dropping or ailing out of my way' is one such example of his priorities. Women were a close second, duties as a soldier, perhaps a distant third. Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 170. BL Ms Newcastle Papers Add 32733 f. 137, John Mostyn to the Duke of Newcastle, August 13th 1750; Add 32737 fol. 282 Mostyn to Newcastle, May 1752; Piers Mackesy, *The Coward of Minden: The Affair of Lord George Sackville*, pp. 44-5.

For the various Princes of the Holy Roman Empire, their lending of armies should not be considered to be motivated solely, or even primarily, for profit. As Peter Wilson has shown, the terms 'mercenary' and 'soldier-trade' (*Soldatenhandel*) are misnomers that have oversimplified and distorted the complex and varied reasons for which German armies were hired-out to foreign Princes, and why their soldiers served.²³² In many usages, 'mercenary' is merely a harmless expression, used for clarification, for lack of a better term, or merely misapplied – something that was common even at the time.²³³ The broader usages of this expression have given the impression that these arrangements were based solely on fattening the purses of the various Dukes, Landgraves and Electors of the Empire, when in reality their intentions were far more complex.

****Motivations****

The motivations for German princes were in fact many and had far more to do with political aspirations than financial gain. Self-defence figured prominently, especially for Rhineland states during the wars against Louis XIV, or any region where war was not an option, but an imposition. For the Electorate of Hanover, the hiring out soldiers (after the Dynastic Union of 1714 almost exclusively to Britain) was a matter of survival, and seemingly inevitable once war between Britain and France erupted.²³⁴ However, financial gain or profit should not be wholly removed from their motivations.

In this manner the hiring out of forces became a way of increasing a Prince's prestige and status, as well as a means of actively engaging in the great political

²³² Peter Wilson, 'The German 'Soldier Trade' of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Reassessment', *The International History Review*, vol. XVIII, No. 4 (November, 1996), pp. 757-792.

²³³ One well-informed English officer wrote in his diary of the situation in the Peninsula had been saved by 'an army of 30,000 English mercenaries'. Julia V. Page, *Intelligence Officer in the Peninsula: Letters and Diaries of Major the Hon Edward Charles Cocks 1786-1812* (Hippocrene: New York, 1986), p. 126.

²³⁴ Hanoverians were mobilized briefly during the Polish Succession crisis, and were under the employ of Maria Theresa in the latter years of the War of Austrian Succession, though the British in fact provided the money. Dann, *Hanover and Great Britain*, pp. 62,3.

struggles of the era. Throughout the century, even for states such as Austria and Prussia, subsidies from western European states were often required in order to remain militarily active, and the need for external sources of revenue remained a constant concern.²³⁵ To this end, it was Britain, the United Provinces and France that were the primary means of helping these princes maintain armies disproportionate to the size of their respective states.²³⁶

In some cases, political fault lines emerged, where certain princes dealt regularly (though by no means exclusively) with or against one particular state. Yet there were some instances, such as Hessen-Kassel in the War of Austrian Succession, where forces were hired out at the same time to allies *and* opponents of Maria Theresa – though they never met on the battlefield.²³⁷ Certainly the soldiers had their own thoughts on the matter. Jeffrey Amherst, sent to escort the Hessians to England at the outbreak of the Seven Years War, assured British ministers that the required oath of allegiance ‘had all the appearance of being taken with a general and hearty good will.’ He continued: ‘I am assured, the one took before the Bavarian campaign’, fourteen years earlier when they were hired out to opposing sides, ‘had a very different Reception; when the Oath was tendered to them, it met with almost a general negative & had like to have been attended with very bad consequences in the Corps.’²³⁸ Nevertheless, the opinions of the soldiers did not hold much sway, and for good or ill, they served where their princes directed them.

The British motivations for hiring auxiliaries from these absolutist German states were many. The most prominent (and obvious) reason was to address the deficiency in manpower in fighting large continental wars with an army repeatedly depleted at the cessation of hostilities, and incapable of replenishing or maintaining an adequate number of men to effectively oppose the threat posed by France. Just as the money for hiring soldiers permitted German princes to become militarily

²³⁵ Wilson, *German Armies*, pp. 33-4.

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 3, 22.

²³⁷ Lowell, *German Auxiliaries in the American War*, p. 2.

²³⁸ Reginald Savory, ‘Jeffery Amherst conducts the Hessians to England, 1756’. *JSAHR*, 49 (1971), p. 158.

active in central Europe, so too did it allow Britain the same ability, facilitating British involvement in Germany and the Low Countries within coalition armies at times reaching 60-80,000 men, with their own forces representing merely a fraction of the total. Furthermore, hiring German soldiers was cheaper given their lower wages (at least for those fighting on the European continent) and that these men were commonly well disciplined forces added to their appeal, particularly for those troops from Hessen and Brunswick. Apart from these causes, there were smaller more incidental reasons, such as permitting access to magazines or passage through certain territories, or as in the case of the Hessians in the 1730's, keeping a force mobilized as a deterrent.²³⁹ This latter case also highlights one of the primary objectives in hiring auxiliary forces, in that they were often times the only means of protecting Hanover, and without the Dynastic Union, it is certain that Britain would not have been so committed to this practice.

****History of German Auxiliaries in the British Army****

For the history of Britain's German auxiliaries in the long eighteenth century, we can only be too brief, as this relationship itself deserves its own monograph, and works by Uriel Dann and Rodney Atwood show that even a twenty years period or one conflict are topics deserving their own treatise.²⁴⁰ Yet an overview is certainly needed here, especially in the case of the Hanoverian, Hessian and Brunswick forces, which will be recurring actors in this history.

British utilization of German auxiliaries was a phenomenon that transpired primarily between 1689 and 1816, with merely a few outliers. The origins of Britain's subsidizing of German states can be traced back to 1665 and a treaty with the Prince-Bishop of Münster during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which came to

²³⁹ One subsidy treaty with the Prince-bishop of Trier had more to do with access though the Rhine and Mosel valleys than access to his armed forces. Peter Wilson, *War, State and Society in Württemberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 86; Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 14.

²⁴⁰ See: Rodney Atwood, *The Hessians: mercenaries From Hessen-Kassel* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1980); Dann, *Hanover and Great Britain*.

little effect militarily, and the Bishop was left holding the bill.²⁴¹ It would be another quarter century before the first significant and sustained subsidization of German soldiery, with the Dutch Stadholder and subsequent English Monarch, William III. Though German auxiliaries (represented here by a small collection of Holsteiners in the Danish contingent) played a minor role in the Dutch invasion force of 1688-9, the more significant impact of this policy was in the hiring of some 12,000 soldiers from German princes to occupy Dutch border-forts during the absence of Holland's most veteran soldiers.²⁴² In other words, the Glorious Revolution is owed in some small part to this 'soldier trade' – a strange prospect. It was through the influence of a Dutch King and a Dutch foreign policy that England would become more actively engaged in subsidizing foreign contingents, to the extent that by the outbreak of the rebellion in America, some eighty years later, it was Great Britain's turn to hire German soldiers to hold *their* forts (at Gibraltar and Minorca) to free up soldiers to fight in another revolution.

In the Nine Years War (1689-1697), which began in the wake of William's accession to the English throne, the hiring of German auxiliaries to oppose the armies of Louis XIV became a joint English and Dutch effort, with most subsidies being split evenly between the two states. The policy would be sustained through Queen Anne's reign, primarily by the Duke of Marlborough and would culminate in the sharing the costs of supporting nearly 100,000 German auxiliaries (not including Danish forces) towards the end of the War of Spanish Succession.²⁴³ During the first decade of the eighteenth century, England was engaged in twelve treaties with other European states, covering a part, or the entirety, of a wide variety of expenses: for troops, supplies and 'extraordinary costs', and dealing with Hessen-Kassel, Treves, Saxony, Prussia, Brunswick-Lüneberg, the Palatinate and several smaller

²⁴¹ Wilson, *German Armies*, p. 34

²⁴² This policy would be used again in 1716, whereby George I paid for Gotha, Münster and Wolfenbüttel troops to cover the Dutch border fortresses, thus permitting them to send 6,000 Dutch soldiers to help turn the tide in the first Jacobite Rebellion in Scotland. Jonathan Israel, 'The Dutch Role in the Glorious Revolution' in Jonathan Israel (ed.), *The Anglo-Dutch Moment Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), pp. 106-8.; Wilson, *German Armies*, p. 205.

²⁴³ Wilson, *German Armies*, p. 116.

principalities.²⁴⁴ These forces usually numbered between three and ten thousand men, and were not always meant for service in conjunction with British or Dutch forces, as with the Hessian and Prussian contingents that served in the Italian theatre.²⁴⁵ This use of subsidy troops paid dividends for the Maritime Powers, and despite the unpopularity of such policies, the hiring of German ‘mercenaries’ would become a permanent part of Britain’s continental strategies, both in peace and war.

Through the War of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years War (referred to here as the ‘mid-century wars’) as well as the American War of Independence, the German auxiliary soldier became more and more of a feature in the British-led armies and coalitions, both in Europe and beyond. While the Seven Years War (1756-1763) was the high-point in terms of scale, expense and scope (where upwards of 60,000 Germans would remain continuously in British-pay until the war’s conclusion), the role of hired German manpower expanded its breadth to include the British Isles and the American Colonies. In each conflict, the political backlash for paying foreign soldiers to fight on behalf of Britain was considerably unpopular, and in the case of Lord Carteret in 1744, could help doom a ministry. Yet it is a testament to their utility, and the relative success of the policy, that this practice would continue unimpeded to the end of the century, merely slowing as of a consequence of French occupation of German territories at the end of the century, and only ending with the period of prolonged peace in the decades following the Congress of Vienna. Therefore, the political discourse which impacted perceptions of German soldiery and national character in the minds of the British public, did not effectively create an equal distaste for the practice in the eyes of British ministers, and even won several converts, the most notable being William Pitt the Elder who, regarding the policy of hiring or subsidizing German forces, went from the chief voice of condemnation to its staunchest adherent.

²⁴⁴ Once again, this is excluding the Holstein troops within the Danish auxiliaries. John Hattendorf, *England in the War of Spanish Succession* (New York: Garland, 1987), p. 132; For Holstein troops, see: WO 26/12, fol. 356.; WO 30/89 fol. 393.

²⁴⁵ Hattendorf, *England in the War of Spanish Succession*, p. 278.

****Specific States****

Of the numerous German territories involved in the so-called 'soldier trade', there are a few states that had a long-standing and valuable relationship with Great Britain. The most recurrent partners in this era were the Landgraves of Hessen-Kassel, who would supply forces in every major British-French conflict from the Nine Years War to the First Coalition in 1793-4. The second, were the Princes of Braunschweig, or Brunswick, a family closely tied to the Hanoverian Dynasty who served as a supplier of troops for British Armies, but also a contributor of Generals as well, where several branches of the Brunswick dynasty would provide commanders of prominence in British-led coalitions. Lastly, and perhaps most important of all, are the Electors of Hanover, who are no-doubt better known by their more prominent position as Kings of Great Britain.

The auxiliaries from Hessen-Kassel were stalwarts in Britain's coalition armies for nearly one hundred years. Exceptional to other relationships, the Hessians were subsidized even in times of peace, as in the 1730's, when they were controversially mobilized in order to protect the Electorate of Hanover. In a pamphlet in defence of the policy, and as a mark of their value in previous conflicts, Horatio Walpole declared the Hessians were of 'the utmost use... upon all Occasions' and that they were 'the Triarii of Great Britain; her last Resort in all Cases, both in Peace and War; both Home and Abroad; however ally'd, or whosoever distres'd!'²⁴⁶ Though best known for their role in the American Revolutionary War, the Hessians played important roles in the Spanish and Austrian Succession wars and the Seven Years War. Hessian troops would be sent to Scotland to help in the suppression of Scottish Rebels in 1746 and would return to Britain again in 1756 in order to protect southern England in case of an invasion by the French.²⁴⁷ In the majority of such conflicts, the initial Hessian contribution would be above 6,000 men, but in the

²⁴⁶ Horatio Walpole, *The Case of the Hessian Forces, in the Pay of Great-Britain, impartially and freely examin'd* (London: 1731), pp. 30, 33.

²⁴⁷ Though Irish songs and traditions would recall there being Hessians in Ireland in 1798, these were primarily Hanoverians serving in various foreign corps. See: Eva Ó Cathaoir, 'German Mercenaries in Ireland, 1798-1807', pp. 406-426.

American War, an initial 11,000 soldiers were sent in 1776, and during the Seven Years War this number surpassed 20,000.²⁴⁸

Another prominent supplier of soldiers was the House of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel.²⁴⁹ Like the Hessians, Brunswickers were a common sight in British-German coalition forces, though by no means matching the scale of the Hessen-Kassel contingents. There was a large Brunswick contingent in the Seven Years War, and Brunswickers were sent to America in 1776-83, participating – so it would seem – under the pseudonym: ‘Hessians.’ In 1815, Brunswick (-Öls) soldiers would also serve as auxiliaries in the Waterloo campaign, donning the trademark black uniforms that they wore while serving as a ‘Foreign Corps’ in the British Army from 1807-1814.²⁵⁰

The most notable of all the subsidy troops under British direction were from the Electorate of Hanover. The forces of the Electorate shared in some of Britain’s most glorious triumphs of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but are also known among scholars of this period for being the whipping-boy of anti-Hanoverian publications, due to their ties to the monarch. In the seventeenth century soldiers from this region (there being no Hanoverian Electorate yet) had fought on behalf of the Dutch and Venetian Republics, and in the eighteenth century Hanoverian soldiers would literally stand side by side with British regiments in Germany and the Low Countries, and fought with the British Army in Gibraltar and Minorca, and even with the East India Company on the Subcontinent in the 1780’s.²⁵¹ In British-funded armies with little or no British presence, the Hanoverian contingents would often become the heart of the army, as they were in the armies of the Duke of Cumberland and Ferdinand of Brunswick between 1755 and 1758.²⁵²

There are certainly a few reasons why these Hanoverians were unique among all of the German auxiliaries. In many ways they were acting as allies and as

²⁴⁸ Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 18.; Burne, *The Noble Duke of York*, p. 46.

²⁴⁹ The Brunswick-Lüneburg branch became the Electors of Hanover, and shortly thereafter the Kings of Britain.

²⁵⁰ For more on these so-called ‘Black Brunswickers’ see below, esp. chapter 7.

²⁵¹ For Hanoverians in these services, see: Wilson, *German Armies*, pp. 34, 77-9, 162.

²⁵² Piers Mackesy, *Coward of Minden*, p. 23.

subjects of the same monarch, not specifically as hired guns. Yet their inclusion in this chapter stems from three reasons. Firstly, they served at the pleasure of the Hanoverian monarchs, and therefore shared a connection with the other auxiliary forces, although the latter did so for contractual reasons. Secondly, Britain's status as the primary sponsor or sole supplier of the costs for their mobilization, maintenance and support, meant that they were very much treated and supported in the same manner as other auxiliaries, such as the Hessians. Lastly, and in part due to this similarity, they were perceived by British politicians and the public as similar, or the same, as other German contingents, as can be seen with the discourse revolving around the Hessian and Hanoverian regiments sent to defend England in 1756.

While there were some commonalities between Hanoverians and other German auxiliaries, there were certainly some elements that set them apart. The Hanoverians themselves were considered to be more loyal and a better option when Britain required additional manpower, largely due to their shared sovereign. After the outbreak of hostilities in colonial America in 1775, it was proposed by many, including Lord George Germaine (formerly Sackville) and his colleague the Marquis of Granby, that Hanoverians, not Hessians, would be the ideal candidates for fighting in America, and in virtually every other conflict this opinion was echoed, even in preference to states such as Prussia, an army held in high esteem by many Englishmen.²⁵³ Yet the differences between these German territories was not merely in perception, as economic considerations often played a role, as did the aspirations of the various German princes.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ NLS Fletcher of Saltoun MS 16518, Henry Fletcher to his father, 1756.

²⁵⁴ British ministers were always searching for bargains and means of reducing costs, which lead to preferences for certain states or princes, as even when soldiers were given the same wages, this was not always reflected in many subsidy treaties, and furthermore, the army structures were often different, and some extra expenses could be saved hiring armies containing fewer officers. While most subsidy-agreements were created from political or military necessity, in some instances (such as 1759 and again in 1775-7) cost considerations certainly created favourites from among the pool of possible German states. Barrington to Holderness, 10th December 1759 in: Tony Hayter (ed.) *An Eighteenth-Century Secretary at War, The papers of William, Viscount Barrington* (London: Army Records Society, 1988), pp. 137-8.

****Incorporation and Integration****

Incorporating a foreign contingent with different means of drill, discipline, and most of all communication, certainly had its challenges, yet relations with German auxiliaries were much better than with independent Austrian, German or Dutch forces. Nevertheless, fitting auxiliaries within the British Army was not always a seamless or smooth process, in part due to the contractual nature of their affiliation. Payment and maintenance of these forces created numerous problems, and the system was not without its drawbacks.²⁵⁵ British officers and officials had to accompany each contingent, as in an attempt to prevent corruption it became a policy that only Britons could serve in the capacity of paymaster, and were quite often commissaries as well.²⁵⁶ Many times such officers were the only Britons accompanying these forces, and strangely, knowledge in German was not a prerequisite, making communication problems a severe difficulty, especially when provisioning German regiments within the *Reich*.²⁵⁷ While the Seven Years War was the gold standard for expense and complication, moving auxiliary forces around the Holy Roman Empire created a bureaucratic nightmare in every conflict. In 1776 Colonel Joseph Yorke, for decades a man deeply involved in military and diplomatic matters in Germany and the Netherlands, complained to an associate that he was 'as much occupied with getting a single Regiment down the Rhine and Meuse as if it was an Army on account of the different Territories, especially the Prussian[']s, as they love to finger all fine men they see, & the [Hessen] Hanau reg[imen]t is a fine one.'²⁵⁸ Often times these difficulties would be overcome by relying upon German (especially Hanoverian) officers to aid in the mustering, maintenance and

²⁵⁵ For supply problems in the Seven Year War in Germany, see: Bannerman, 'British Army Contracts', pp. 68-71.

²⁵⁶ Reed Browning, 'The Duke of Newcastle and the Financial Management of the Seven years War in Germany', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 31, no. 2 (1971), pp. 24-5.

²⁵⁷ An excellent letter book of one such commissary, Colonel Robert Boyd can be found in the National Army Museum. See: NAM 7908-34.

²⁵⁸ Amherst was not stranger to such duties, having been involved in the preceding two wars in orchestrating the movements of auxiliary forces. CKS C41/70, Joseph Yorke to Jeffrey Amherst, April 1776.

transportation of these regiments to their desired locations.²⁵⁹ As in the case with the Prussians, agents from German states were not only an aid to manoeuvring these soldiers, but they could also be a menace. Yet this was also an advantage of subsidizing forces, as it was the responsibility of the German princes to find recruits for and maintain these armies, which saved the British the hazards of recruiting in the Empire – something few Britons managed to do successfully.²⁶⁰

Payment of auxiliaries created other problems as well, as this could create jealousies among the various armies within a coalition force. The main focus were the British soldiers themselves, whose comparable wealth, and the hostility it created, was a theme recurrent throughout the century. While it was less common, this was also an area of contention between Hanoverian and other German forces. In the Seven Years War it was seen that they were given a privileged status, and according to Piers Mackesy, ‘there was a strong reciprocal dislike between the Hessian officers and the better-paid and thriftier Hanoverians.’²⁶¹ The long history of close association created by the Dynastic Union would lead to the Hanoverian

²⁵⁹ A Hanoverian General was given the task of orchestrating the Hessian auxiliaries’ march through central Germany, and in the American War a decade later, Georg von Scheiter, a Hanoverian Colonel and Army recruiter, (who will be discussed in detail in Chapter V) spent a great deal of time working on the arrangements safe passage for Hessian and Ansbach regiments through the *Reich*. Reginald Savory, ‘Jeffrey Amherst conducts the Hessians’, p. 156.; HSTAH Hann 47 II nr. 115.

²⁶⁰ British responsibilities in the capacity as paymaster were not only relegated to the support and sustainment of various German regiments, but in one instance in Germany during the Seven Years War, British regiments participated in impressing local men into new formations, described in the letters of Major Richard Davenport, to his brother. This is an interesting but somewhat overlooked part of life in the British Army, and therefore deserves a lengthy quotation here. From Bramsche Germany, 6th April 1760, Davenport wrote: ‘I have had one employment, which was a horrid torment to me for three days... viz. that of pressing 40 men, in the cantonments of the Regiment, to be sent to the new corps which are raising in our part of Germany. As the thing required caution and secrecy, I could not speak of it but ordered the Regiment to exercise on foot and as soon as they were assembled, immediately dispersed the men and officers in parties, to bring in all they could lay hold of. Before night they brought in 120 of all sorts, horribly frightened and expecting to be sent to the King of Prussia. I discharged all that looked old directly and locked up the rest that night. All the following day and the third morning I had no peace for the crying of women and the squalling of children, who were surrounding me and begging me on their knees to spare their fathers and husbands and pursuing to their entreaties by eights and tens at a time, without at all regarding my not understanding their language. If they had been English married women, I believe I would have made my conditions, but the married ones here have no signs of women but the marks of the sex, which is indeed in capitals. Out of pure tenderness of heart, I dismissed all the married men and sent forty stout lads to Osnabruck. The other British regiments had the same order and each sent hither 40 good recruits.’ Davenport, ‘*To Mr. Davenport*’, p. 78.

²⁶¹ Mackesy, *Coward of Minden*, p. 23.

soldiers expecting equal care and compensation for their services, which led to a mutiny among the Hanoverian Grenadiers near Brussels in 1793, who, having been 'promised English pay, [declared] that they would not march a step further till they had received it'.²⁶² Though the Duke of York managed to successfully mediate these matters, it showed that there was nevertheless an expectation to be treated as equals with the British they were brigaded with, while also hinting at a deep-rooted suspicion of financial misdealing and neglect: common occurrences when dealing with subsidized soldiery.²⁶³ Perceptions of preferential treatment could be a point of division as well, which, as will be discussed in examining the British Army in the 1740's, was quite damaging to relations.

****Treatment of Auxiliaries****

Despite the presence of mistrust and mistreatment in these relationships, the German auxiliaries fighting alongside the British were by no means purely cannon fodder. James Wolfe, the celebrated victor of the Battle of Quebec, had famously stated of employing the often-maligned Scottish Highlanders, that they 'might be of use' given that they 'are hardy, intrepid, accustomed to a rough country, and no grate mischief if they fall.'²⁶⁴ For all the public sentiment over the century that deplored any circumstance where the auxiliaries were spared the brunt of the fighting, in both sentiment of the officers, and the actions of the army, there is no indication that auxiliaries conducted the worst or costliest operations. Certainly the Hanoverians in the First Coalition of 1793-4 suffered woefully disproportionate casualties, but this was far more to do with circumstance and illness, although they

²⁶² Burne. *The Noble Duke of York*, pp. 43-4.; Gebhard von. Scharnhorst, *G. v. Scharnhorsts Briefe. Bd. 1 Privatbriefe*, Hrsg. K. Linnebach (München und Leipzig: Georg Müller, 1914), p. 213.

²⁶³ In a similar incident During the Waterloo Campaign, Cavalie Mercer broke up a quarrel among Britons and Hanoverians, which began when the Hanoverian cavalrymen were upset at being given bread 'not even fit for common soldiers'. Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 264-5.

²⁶⁴ Wilson Beckles, *The Life and Letters of James Wolfe* (London: William Heinemann, 1909), p. 141.

were engaged more often than the British.²⁶⁵ For most cases, auxiliaries were treated as equals, and did not suffer unduly on account of being hired soldiers. In fact, some auxiliary regiments would be spared the worst of the action, intentionally or unintentionally, thereby suffering a mere fraction of the casualties of British Regiments operating in the same theatre.²⁶⁶

There were, nevertheless, a few episodes when the treatment of German auxiliaries matched public sentiment, and for the purposes of this chapter, we will focus on one particular example: the Hessians in Winchester in 1756-7. The intention for the arrival of these auxiliaries was to defend Britain in case of a French invasion, while native regiments were brought up to strength and trained. Yet their employment and arrival were marked with political dissent and public hostility, and a general lack of support for the maintenance of some 7,323 men.²⁶⁷ On the transports sailing to England, Jeffrey Amherst, whose duty it was to escort the Hessians to England, stated that they 'every moment complained of wants of every thing' and once disembarked, the equipment and supplies provided for these soldiers was indeed quite inferior, leading to a strong sense of resentment.²⁶⁸ For these auxiliary regiments, forage was shipped to England from northern Germany, and one visitor to the Hessian camps in July of 1756 wrote to his wife of the sickness of their horses due to 'extremely bad' corn and hay.²⁶⁹ While bakers were imported from Germany to help bake their beloved rye bread, some quantities food for the soldiers was also shipped in, contrary to the opposition pamphlets that depicted German soldiers enjoying victuals intended for the British fighting men.²⁷⁰ Ironically, faced with a shortages of proper supplies, it was local Englishmen who

²⁶⁵ Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 59.; British Officer, *The present state of the British army in Flanders; with an authentic account of their retreat before Dunkirk...* (London: 1793), p. 4.

²⁶⁶ Though Hardenberg's Hanoverian Regiment had fought alongside the 73rd Regiment of Foot during the siege of Gibraltar, by 1780, the former had lost 7 killed, and the latter 114. By September of 1781, another 21 Hanoverians and 77 Britons from these two regiments were listed as casualties. NAS Seafeld Papers GD248/466/11

²⁶⁷ Savory, Reginald. 'Jeffery Amherst conducts the Hessians to England, 1756'. *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 49 (1971), p. 170.

²⁶⁸ CKS, Amherst Papers U1350 01/6.

²⁶⁹ HRO 44M69/F7/3, fol. 3, R.J. to Wife Anne, Britford, July 13th 1756

²⁷⁰ For supplies for the Hessians and Hanoverians in 1756-7, see: Bannerman, 'British Army Contracts and Domestic Supply', pp. 141, 148-9, 160, 165. An indicative print of Germans taking food from British soldiers can be seen from *The Two H.&H.s* (1756).

filled the void, occupying the area adjacent to the Hessian camp near Winchester, and the empty streets nearby became 'very populous & gay' from the presence of sutlers and merchants – and a number of curious locals.²⁷¹ Yet there were still shortages of equipment and supplies needed by these auxiliaries, such as medical equipment and the materials needed in creating camps and hospitals.²⁷² To make matters worse, the Hessians had clothing insufficient for the cold weather, and though the Hanoverians who arrived in England at the same time had been provided with wool clothing, the Hessian contingent had none (which did not go unnoticed), leading them to petition the Duke of Cumberland for blankets to help them survive the winter.²⁷³ Such was the treatment of the soldiers at Winchester, a pamphlet was published and several public appeals made for their support and better treatment.²⁷⁴ Their suffering was alleviated somewhat by an Act of Parliament providing quarters for the 'foreign troops' on the same terms as British soldiers – but in many ways it was too little and too late.²⁷⁵ By then the damage had been done, and furthermore, the political tenor of the nation was in such a state that the stealing of a handkerchief by a Hanoverian soldier – referred to as the 'Maidstone Affair' – would set off another volley of derogatory pamphlets.²⁷⁶

Not all episodes were so mishandled. The Hanoverians serving in the East India Company in the 1780's fared better in treatment and than some of the British regiments, and for the battalions in garrisons such as Gibraltar and Minorca, there

²⁷¹ HRO 44M69/F7/3, fol. 5, 'R.J. to Wife', Britford, 22nd July 1756

²⁷² The expenses accrued for the Hessian hospital had to wait until the negotiations for a subsidy agreement in 1776 to be remitted by Lord North's ministry. For the expenses of the Hanoverian Hospital, see: HSTAH, Hann 47 Abt. II nr. 57.

²⁷³ Hessische Staatsarchiv Marburg (HStAM), 4h nr. 3073 fol. 98 Copy of letter addressed to the Duke of Cumberland, October 30th, 1756.

²⁷⁴ One newspaper entry regretted the treatment of the Hessian soldiers: "Tis greatly to be lamented, that a people whose arrival our nation waited with so much impatience, who came with such willingness to our assistance, who have remarkably behaved with the greatest veneration to our King, and with a becoming respect, order and decency, wherever they have been quartered, should now be deprived the common comforts of life, by a nation ever remarkable [sic] for humanity and generous dispositions even towards our enemies.' HStAM 4h nr. 3073 fol. 113.

²⁷⁵ Dann, *Hanover and Great Britain*, p. 97.

²⁷⁶ For more on the public reaction to these German Auxiliaries and the Maidstone Affair, see Matthew McCormack 'Citizenship, Nationhood, and Masculinity', pp. 971-993.; primary documents can be found in HSTAH Hann. 41 XXIII Nr. 48; BL Egerton Add. MS 3440.

would have been no discernable differences.²⁷⁷ Two decades after their unhappy stint in the English countryside, the Hessians would be again in British territory – in the colony of New York – and would there receive superior treatment from their British sponsors. The proper care provided for auxiliary soldiers could certainly foster a sense of professional solidarity, and reinforce the premise that these were valued allies, not mercenaries. There were few things that could do more to affect perceptions than preferential treatment or acts of negligence.

To keep these auxiliaries in good faith, proclamations from the army's senior officers were often essential. Full of florid praise and excessive flattery, these were important psychological tools, and a means of creating a rhetorical counterpoint to overly negative popular discourse. A declaration from the Gibraltar Governor and Garrison commander George Elliot in 1783 is a clear example of combining genuine appreciation with exaggerated adulation. Of the Hanoverians in the garrison after the 'Great Siege', he nearly ran out of adjectives in his praise:

Their conduct has always been most exemplary, but since the Enemy sat down before the place, their patience, subordination, discipline, vigilance, fortitude, zeal, vigour, and courage has scarce ever been equaled, but I will venture to affirm has never been exceeded.²⁷⁸

Such declarations were often formalities, and therefore cannot always accurately gauge the value of auxiliaries or subsidy troops, but they were an effective means of maintaining morale, and indeed, had an impact among the soldiers. During the American Revolution, one Hessian officer, Johann Ewald was infuriated whenever the efforts of his Jäger battalion went unmentioned in the declarations of the British commanding generals, yet they had received their fare-share of praise, and his memoir is brimming with pride when he recalls the many times in which his soldiers were lauded for their efforts and abilities.²⁷⁹

The incorporation of these auxiliary forces was not always an easy task, and the wide spectrum of how these soldiers were orchestrated and situated with and

²⁷⁷ HSTAH Hann. 38 C nr. 34 Arthur Campbell to Colonel Reinbold, 1st October, 1786

²⁷⁸ HSTAH Hann. 38 A nr. 23 fol. 6 'Declaration 21st June 1783', from George Elliot, Gibraltar.

²⁷⁹ Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal Translated and Edited by Joseph P. Tustin* (Yale: New Haven, 1979), pp. 55, 78, 110, 121.

within the British Army at-large would impact relations. Adding to other factors, such as political persuasion, pre-conceived ideas and individual experience, the care these soldiers were given and the tasks to which they were charged would inform interactions with – and opinions of – their fellow soldiers.

****Interactions****

Interactions between British soldiers and German subsidy troops were frequent, especially when compared to the relations with Britain's allies. Auxiliaries would often share encampments and act jointly in day-to-day activities necessary for the army's maintenance, unlike the infrequent encounters with, for example, the Austrian armies in the Low Countries. During campaigns, the British contingents (usually numbering between 10 and 30 thousand men) would often remain close to their Hanoverian or Hessian auxiliaries, and due to the nature of the armies, various tasks, such as foraging, 'pioneering', garrisoning, or picqueting, would be carried out by equal numbers of men from the British and German forces.²⁸⁰ While campaigning in the *Reich*, British armies would not only be flanked by auxiliary forces, but would contain an ever-increasing number of German-born men, as higher-ranking officers would often be assigned aides or hire translators from among the auxiliary forces. This practice, combined with the variety of sutlers and camp assistants, meant that an army composed of British and German forces, be it in central Europe, or the middle colonies, would be a highly heterogeneous and polyglot force.

The Hessians and British forces in the American War of Independence were unique given that they were continuously interwoven for several years, yet there

²⁸⁰ While they were often in close proximity, there were occasions when the British and German auxiliaries operated some distance from one another, as shown by the correspondence of John Mostyn, who complained to the Duke of Newcastle that his commanding officer, Ferdinand of Brunswick, and much of their German forces were some sixty miles from his own position: 'what is ye worst of it, is that it is all in the writing & reading way, two things I never had patience to bear'. BL Add MS 32902 fols. 416-7, Mostyn to Newcastle, Osnabruck, Feb. 26th, 1760.

were other episodes in which the British were closely attached to their hired allies. During campaigns and battles on the European continent, the warriors of these respective polities would usually be integrated at a regimental level, especially the Hanoverians, who throughout the mid-century wars would form part of the 'Right Wing' alongside British forces, as they were at prominent battles, such as Fontenoy and Minden. During the War of Austrian Succession, the British and Hanoverian troops were almost always billeted in the same areas, and when the armies needed to disperse in order to forage and gain supplies more readily, these groups would stay close to one another, when the Dutch or Austrian forces might be miles away. Perhaps the best instance of this close integration was among the garrison of Gibraltar, between 1779 and 1783, where three under-strength Hanoverian Regiments would endure unimaginable hardships along with their fellow British defenders. In such circumstances, the professionalism of both forces, but especially notable among the Hanoverians, permitted a close cooperation and was celebrated by ministers and generals alike.²⁸¹

The importance of this close proximity is that frequent interaction would help challenge the stereotypes and preconceived ideas the soldiers had of one another, and rumours could be more easily confirmed or challenged. Often times, the first prolonged interaction at camp, or on the march, would spark commentaries about these soldiers' martial or national character.²⁸² A young James Wolfe understood the value of English soldiers coming into contact with other armies, so that there would be more familiarity, and less fear or antipathy, when encountering foreign troops in battle. In the last stages of the War of Austrian Succession, he watched a parade given by six Wolfenbüttel Regiments, and later penned his desires that more British soldiers should attend these events.

²⁸¹ Good relations were no doubt encouraged in that two regiments in the garrison (Hardenberg's and the 12th Regiment of Foot) had a shared history, and had fought alongside one another two decades before at the battle of Minden. McGuffie, *The Siege of Gibraltar*, pp. 45, 54.; John Drinkwater, *A History of the Siege of Gibraltar, 1779-1783* (London: 1863), p. 96.

²⁸² This was especially the case of the Hessians arriving in New York in 1776. For an example from the Seven Years War, see: Friederich von der Decken 'Tagebuch des herzoglich braunschweigschen Majors und Kriegsraths von Unger, geführt währen siebenjährigen Krieges' in *Vaterländisches Archiv des Historischen Vereins für Niedersachsen* (1837), p. 340.

It is really surprising that in the multitude of the idle and curious, it does not enter into any of the heads [of English officers and soldiers] to be for once spectators at a military show, and muse themselves some little time with a view of the variety of troops that compose the three separate bodies in the country. The English should accustom themselves to such sights, that they may be less at a loss, and act like men when anything new or extravagant presents itself, and that a plaid, whiskers, or a ruff cap may not be esteemed by them altogether terrible and invincible.²⁸³

Parades and military reviews gave officers and soldiers alike a chance of observing their comrades in their splendour and full regalia, which never ceased to be a feature in the writings of the soldiers witnessing them. The focus was on their skill in manoeuvres, but physical attributes once again received the most comments. During the Seven Years War one officer bragged to his brother that the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick was so impressed by the British regiments after reviewing them, that he 'could not sleep ye nights for thinking of them.' As for himself, he professed, 'I never saw finer troops than ye Hanoverians, Hessians and especially the Brunswickers', and once again there was an obsession with height: 'their Reg[imen]t. of Foot Guards are as tall as our blew [sic] Guards' – Britain's elite cavalry.²⁸⁴ One Brunswick officer noticed this disparity after watching the exercises of a British regiment, stating that 'these people are not so tall, but they are well-drilled.'²⁸⁵

Social collaborations do not receive very much attention, but there are frequent accounts of soldiers comingling with native inhabitants, especially in Germany, where officers would often entertain or attend local dances or balls (three a week for one officer in the Seven Year War).²⁸⁶ Festivities between British and German soldiery were often a matter of politeness and etiquette, yet many officers were treated as celebrities upon arriving in foreign lands, and were often bombarded with invitations to attend social functions with the local civilians.

²⁸³ Beckles, *Life and Letters of James Wolfe*, p. 85.

²⁸⁴ NAS GD206/2/495 fol. 8a, Robert Hall to his brother, Münster, September 13th, 1758.

²⁸⁵ Decken, 'Tagebuch des herzoglich braunschweigschen Majors', p. 341.

²⁸⁶ Davenport, 'To Mr. Davenport', p. 40.

Interactions and familiarity with a region's populace were an important aspect of soldiers' lives, and would help add nuance to conceptions of 'Germanness' or 'Englishness.' While the highly negative interactions with Flemish, Portuguese and Spanish civilians would further decrease British estimations of their soldiers, the generally more positive interactions with German civilians – especially amidst allied territories – could have a positive effect. For corporal Robert Brown, who had spent much of 1793-5 among hostile civilians in Flanders and the Netherlands, the treatment he and his fellow soldiers received in the city of Bremen bordered on the surreal: 'the behaviour of the people to us was remarkably kind and polite. It is something like a dream or fairy vision, and we could hardly give credit to our senses'. His recollections of time spent in Holland provided a considerable contrast, given that,

when we asked for any thing to refresh ourselves, with the money in our hands... [they] answered only with a shrug up of the shoulders, nix nix, nix bread, nix butter, nix beer, nix brandwyn for the Englishman... [whereas in Bremen] it seemed like some sudden enchantment, but it proved real, for they used us like part of their own family, or children which had long been absent, and now returned, and omitted nothing that could contribute either to our ease or pleasure.²⁸⁷

While some were treated like family, others literally became relations. A number of British soldiers took German wives during the campaigns in the Seven Years War, and the Hessians in the American War found plenty of brides among the colonial population.²⁸⁸ Corporal Todd, a soldier in 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany' wrote, 'We live well here' and that 'Several of our men gets Married here as the Younkers thinks it a great Honour to Marry with an English Soldier, their wages being so very small here.'²⁸⁹ The significance of this was attested to in a later journal entry, where the good relations and numerous marriages with local townfolk 'made them United with us as though we had been of their own Country.'²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Brown, *Corporal Brown's Campaigns*, p. 173.

²⁸⁸ John W. Jackson. *With the British army in Philadelphia*. (London: Presidio Press, 1979), p. 83.

²⁸⁹ Todd, *The Journal of Corporal Todd*, p. 131.

²⁹⁰ *ibid.* p. 131.

Throughout these periods of prolonged association and interaction, the relations between the soldiers, were generally positive. In the War of Austrian Succession, British and Hanoverian soldiers were forbidden from visiting other camps past nightfall, but this was a provision to prevent theft or desertion, not merely to limit conflict.²⁹¹ Shortly after the arrival of the British in the Seven Years War, Prince Ferdinand gave an order prohibiting duelling within the army, especially between men from different nations, and during the American War repeated attempts were made to improve the relations between British forces and German auxiliaries in Canada.²⁹² Unfamiliarity was a chief cause for conflicts, and particularly in the mid-century wars, where the worst problems were found during the first years' campaign. Within two years of their arrival in Germany during the Seven Years War, the British seemed to be well settled, with the English commander, the beloved Marquis of Granby, reassuring the Duke of Newcastle that he and his Hanoverian counterpart General Sporcken 'live like brothers'. He added,

I most sincerely honor, and love that brave, and honest, and good General: I can assure your Grace, that there is the greatest harmony amongst the Troops: I have heard of no Complaints; if any have arisen, the officers of the respective Corps have settled them; shou'd they have come to our ears, Sporcken and Myself certainly cou'd and wou'd have immediately put an end to them.²⁹³

Even in the failed campaigns against Revolutionary France in 1793-4 relations with auxiliaries maintained a positive tone, in spite of the contempt and disputes among the armies' senior commanders. 'Particularly satisfactory' wrote the Hanoverian colonel Christian Ompteda, 'is the harmony which prevails between all these different troops under the Duke [of York]'s command, Imperial, English, and Hanoverian. It is only between the Prussians and the Imperial forces that traces of the old animosity may be still detected.'²⁹⁴ Just as a history of conflict lingered

²⁹¹ BL Hardwicke Papers Add MS 36252 fol. 77, June 5th, 1743.

²⁹² Wood, *'By Dint of Labour and Perseverance'*, p. 51.

²⁹³ BL Newcastle Papers, Add Ms 32911 fol. 423-4 Letter from Granby to Newcastle, Geismar, Sept 20th, 1760.

²⁹⁴ Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 36.

between Austrian and Prussian, so did a shared history of partnership help foster greater camaraderie between Briton and Hanoverian, and other forces that were frequent auxiliaries of the British Army.

****Relations and Perceptions in the Pragmatic Army****

In order to highlight some of the key issues indicative of the relationship between British soldiers and their German auxiliaries, and to further underscore some of the key differences with regards to their German allies, a short study of the 'Pragmatic Army' will be of assistance.²⁹⁵ In 1742-3, British forces in Flanders under the Command of the Earl of Stair were combined with an Austrian army and Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliary forces, with the primary objective of preventing the French from overrunning Flanders and the Rhineland while most of the Habsburg forces were engaged elsewhere. This coalition army was referred to as the 'Pragmatic Army', in honour of its chief aim, upholding the Pragmatic Sanction. This was an agreement that stipulated that Maria Theresa would inherit all Habsburg dominions from her father, Charles VI, an agreement that was quickly broken by Frederick II of Prussia, and subsequently Louis XV of France. At first the British, as indicated before, were acting as auxiliaries of the Empress, and the force of some 16,000 Britons (later, 21,000) would work closely with these other German militaries, particularly in the campaign of 1743, where the Pragmatic Army marched into central Germany and where George II took command shortly before the Battle of Dettingen on the 27th of June.

Back in Britain, the cause for Maria Theresa, the beleaguered young monarch, was popular, and numerous British pamphlets fashioned her into the penultimate damsel in distress, while those who seemed hesitant to come to her aid, including

²⁹⁵ For an extensive study of the Pragmatic Army, and its composition, movements and political consequences, see: Wolfgang Handrick, *Die Pragmatische Armee 1741 bis 1743: Eine alliierte Armee im Kalkül des Österreichischen Erfolgkrieges* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1991).

the long-time Prime Minister Robert Walpole, were denounced and condemned. While the cause may have been fashionable, of extreme distaste to many in the British public was the formidable subsidy given to Hanover in order to raise a strong contingent for the Pragmatic Army, during which time the Electorate itself remained nominally neutral. While soldiers gathering in Flanders in 1742 and 1743 awaited for the arrival of these Hanoverian troops (the Hessians would arrive several months later), already there was a fierce opposition to these auxiliaries back in London, whereby 'pamphlets against the Hanover[ian] & Hess[ian] troops come out daily in a most malicious & invidious manner'.²⁹⁶

The campaign of 1743 would make things much worse. The first interactions between British and Hanoverian forces would incite a great deal of jealousy, which was exponentially compounded once George II took the reigns of the Pragmatic Army.²⁹⁷ Indeed, it was assumed that he had taken charge because of the infighting between Hanoverian and British generals, hostility he only exacerbated by surrounding himself by the former, to the agitation of the latter.²⁹⁸ The jealousy of this favouritism – from preferring Hanoverian grooms and assistants, to confiding only with Hanoverian generals, to suspicions that his Germans subjects were receiving better provisions – all furthered the hatred of Britons (especially among the officer corps) to these auxiliaries.²⁹⁹

The zenith of these poor relations was also the climax of the campaign that year, when a divided French force attacked the Pragmatic Army near Aschaffenburg, in a battle that would be known in Britain as Dettingen. The inactivity of much of the army during the battle, and the placement of the Hanoverians in an area where they did little the entire day, was a *cause celeb* for British pamphleteers, who

²⁹⁶ NAS Morton Papers GD150/3485, fol. 41, Unknown author to the Earl of Morton, London, December 7th, 1742.

²⁹⁷ Handrick claims that there was relations were more favourable on account of previous history, but few references to the War of Spanish Succession were found, save for those complimenting George II for a bravery that matched his endeavours as a young German prince. Handrick, *Die Pragmatische Armee*, pp. 116-7.

²⁹⁸ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont Diary of the First Earl of Egmont* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1923) vol. III, pp. 275.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 274.; BL Add MS Chequers Papers 69382 fol. 101, Lt. Colonel Russell to wife, Hanau June 28th, 1743.

dubbed the commander of their cavalry, General Ilten, the 'Confectioner General' given that many of the Hanoverians were closer to the supply train than they were to the enemy.³⁰⁰ The Austrians that were involved were praised (so too were the Hanoverian artillery, which was largely overlooked), and though victories normally produced a sentiment of camaraderie and unity, this was undermined once again by the tactless behaviour of the king, who during the battle showed a bravery that was laudable to all, but a fashion sense surprisingly offensive to his British subjects. The German-born monarch, tried to relive his glory days by wearing a yellow sash in honour of the Electorate (as he did at the Battle of Oudenaarde in 1708) to the horror of the British who interpreted this as a sign of his true loyalties and his preference for his German dominions and subjects.³⁰¹ Of course when news reached London of these events, a new round of anti-Hanoverian pamphlets ensued, supplied with fresh ammunition, exacerbated further by the Earl of Stair's very public resignation. Perhaps the most famous of these tracts was *A True Dialogue of... A Trooper Lately returned From Germany*, a Jacobitical publication that both denounced the Electorate and the Elector with equal vitriol.³⁰² The various responses and reactions to such tracts led to a pamphlet war carried out with more diligence and fervour than the antagonists back on the European continent. Indeed, for the remainder of the campaign, little action was taken, save to move the army back to Flanders to await the Dutch, who were to join the war several months later.

Relations between King George II's British and Hanoverian subjects remained poor in the wake of Dettingen, however, the following year saw an incredible shift in the minds of the British soldier-authors, in that the inactivity of

³⁰⁰ These forces were actually acting as the rearguard of the army. Skrine, *Fontenoy*, p. 79.; *The Confectioner General Setting Forth the H[anoverian] Dessert* (London: 1743).; *The H[ano]v[eria]n Confectioner General* (London: 1743).

³⁰¹ Dann, *Hanover and Great Britain*, p. 53.

³⁰² Francis, Lord Hasting, wrote from London of 'a very diverting dialogue between a trooper abroad and a sergeant at home upon their first meeting. What they say is truth, and has been confirmed by many by a great many officers lately come over', and he mentioned this particular tract and that 'two hawkers very often have the impudence to rehearse [it] publicly by dialogue in the street'. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Late Reginald Rawdon Hasting, esq.* (London: 1934), vol. III, p. 39.; Anon. *True Dialogue Between Thomas Jones, A Trooper, Lately Return'd From Germany, And John Smith, A Serjeant In The First Regiment Of Foot-Guards to Which is Added, a Memorial of the E- of S-* (London: 1743).

the army was contrasted to the rapidly improving relations towards their Hanoverian auxiliaries. The seeds of this shift were, in part, that the armies were becoming accustomed to one another, and that the focal point of tensions, George II, had departed and returned to England. Yet there was another element that would shift the focus away from Hanoverians, in that the arrival of the Dutch, their 'phlegmatic brothers of Holland', would redirect the ire of Britons (and Hanoverians) as would the dubious conduct of the Austrians' commander, the Duke D'Armeberg.³⁰³

D'Armeberg's rudeness and frequent disagreements with British commanders, including the newly appointed Marshal Wade, caused a deepening rift with the Imperial forces, and a mutual dislike of this particular officer was a point of commonality between Britons and Hanoverians. When D'Armeberg was reviewing the Hanoverian forces alongside Marshal Wade, the Hanoverian '*General en Cheff*' Wendt, deliberately waited for the Austrian to pass, then gave a sharp salute to the English commander, a subtle act of disrespect that Marshal Wade's aide-de-camp recalled as 'the finest sight I ever saw'.³⁰⁴

During this period of heightened contempt among the commanding officers of the British, Austrian and Dutch forces, the poor behaviour and deportment of the Dutch soldiery made them, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the key focus of British scorn. Such was the poor opinion of these soldiers that they made Britain's German auxiliaries desirable by contrast. By 1746, Joseph Yorke was writing of the forces provided by the States General: 'if they would but take some German auxiliaries into Pay', he felt, they might have made more of an impact, adding that he did not 'care how few of their National Troops they send into the Field, for worse there can't be.'³⁰⁵ The Duke of Richmond encapsulated the mood of many fellow officers when during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 he demanded that the Ministry 'send for 10,000 or more Foot, be they Hessians, Hanoverians or Deviles, if they will

³⁰³ NAM 6807-426, Diary of Andrew Robertson, pp. 10-12.

³⁰⁴ BL Add MS Hardwicke Papers 26250, Diary of Joseph Yorke, 1744, fol. 45.

³⁰⁵ Yorke would, ironically, go on to become ambassador to the United Provinces. BL Hardwicke Papers Add MS 35363 fol. 124, Letter from Joseph Yorke, Inverness April 30th 1746.

butt fight for us.’³⁰⁶ Suddenly, the Hanoverians did not seem so terrible, and contrasting them with the Dutch after latter’s failures at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745, Andrew Robertson, surgeon for the 42nd Highlanders wrote in his diary:

I remember sometime after the affair of Dettingen that the Hanoverian commanders had the title of Confachoners [Confectioners] given to them, and that that was no less than applied to His Majesty. But I think that the Dutch deserves that title better, and all the difference between a Hanoverian and Dutch Confachoner is that the former can spoil a fine victory, and the latter occation a bloody defeat.³⁰⁷

Robertson would continue to call the Dutch commanders ‘Confachoners’ for the remainder of his Journal. Hints at ‘great Disputes and Animosities’ and ‘Rage & Violence’ between British and Dutch forces also suggest that, though the hostility towards the Hanoverians was a real problem, it never matched the disgust for the Dutch troops, nor for that matter, the tenuous relations with Flemish civilians.³⁰⁸

At the same time, there was some indication of improving relations between British and Hanoverian forces, beyond the British finding an alternative focus for complaint. George Sackville, arriving in 1744, less than a year after Dettingen, wrote that ‘the Hanoverians are in great favour with us, and the English encamp and do duty with them without the least dispute, so Mr. Wade was in the right to say that the reconciling of the troops was the least difficulty he apprehended when he accepted the command.’³⁰⁹ Only a few days later, he wrote, ‘I cannot help every day looking with surprise on the good agreement of the English and Hanoverians. They get drunk very comfortably together, and talk and sing a vast deal without understanding one syllable of what they say to one another.’³¹⁰

For the remainder of the war, complaints of the Hanoverians all but disappear from the accounts of those who were the most critical, showing that even if they did not come to appreciate them, at least they were inured to one another. Later battles would bring these two camps closer together, the most notable being

³⁰⁶ BL Newcastle Papers Add MS 32705 fol. 423, Richmond to Newcastle, Coventry, Dec. 7th, 1745.

³⁰⁷ NAM 6807-426 Diary of Andrew Robertson, pp. 159-162.

³⁰⁸ Quoted in, Conway, ‘War and National Identity’, p. 888.; BL Add MS 36252 fol. 12.

³⁰⁹ HMC, *Stopford-Sackville*, vol. I, p. 284.

³¹⁰ *Ibid*, I, 288-9.

the famed and honourable defeat at Fontenoy, where the British and Hanoverians were in the thick of the fighting together, and emerged, though not victorious, full of praise for the actions of their fellow soldiers.³¹¹ That the relations between these camps would be better after a defeat than after a victory, reveals the strange relationship that marked the Anglo-Hanoverian associations within the Pragmatic Army. However, they were also indicative of most conflicts throughout the century, where initial distrusts were quickly worn away by shared experience and mutual respect among soldiers. This shift in sentiment is summed up effectively in the memoirs of Sir John Clerk, writing of 1745:

I observed while I staid in England a very great and unexpected alacrity amongst all degrees of people for defending our happy constitution, and 'tho but lately great pains were used to reproach the Hannoverians and render them despicable in the eyes of the people of England, yet now things took another turn, especially since the last year's Battle at Fontenoy, for at that time the Hannoverians behaved so well that many of the English souldiers protested to me that they were willing to divide a Loaf [of bread] with them.³¹²

From the words of one British cavalry officer after the Battle of Fontenoy, 'by the behavior of the Hanoverians they may henceforth justly be styl'd of the same nation.'³¹³

****Perceptions of Auxiliaries****

Most relationships between Britons and their German auxiliaries were far less dramatic in comparison to what transpired in the early days of the Pragmatic Army, though this should not suggest that perceptions of the respective soldiers were entirely positive. The effects of stereotypes, political persuasion and individual

³¹¹ NAS Rh4/195/2 fol. 9, Harrington to Dunmore, June 9th 1745.

³¹² Clerk himself was certainly a fan of German armies, later enquiring with John Christie about the viability of having his son join the Prussian Army under Frederick II. John Clerk, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik*, edited by John M. Gray (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, vol. xiii, 1892), p. 91. NAS GD18/4198, John Christie to Sir John Clerk, January 10th, 1751.

³¹³ Quoted in, Stephen Conway, 'War and National Identity', p. 887.

experiences should not be overlooked, nor overemphasized. There were in fact, numerous instances when British soldiers would merely mimic partisan viewpoints, but more often their commentaries would reflect their own circumstances – which is not to say they contradicted one another. Certainly there was a greater understanding of the differences between mercenaries and auxiliaries among soldiers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, than scholars in the twentieth and twenty-first. This can be seen in the discussions of many soldiers who employ one term or the other to reflect their own opinions, and the most derogatory commentaries regarding subsidy-troops almost always use the term ‘mercenaries’. Hanoverians could often escape the effects of the mercenary stereotype in political discourse, due to their ties to the Monarchy, yet they were periodically the most susceptible to these accusations, as we have seen with the Pragmatic Army of 1742-4, although these sentiments re-emerged in 1756.

There were recurring accusations of intentional tardiness, which bore with them insinuations of a reluctance to fight, which fell on most German subsidy troops, although most commonly associated with the Hessians. It was the nature of dealing with hired forces that made this slowness an occasion to question the loyalty and eagerness of these men – whereas for allies or fellow nationals it was a cause for questioning their discipline and organization. The lateness in which the Hessians arrived during the allied army’s march through Germany in 1743 made them a scapegoat for the unsuccessful conclusion of the campaign, and already the Hanoverians were being derided for their seeming cowardice and mercenary behaviour at Dettingen. Three years later, in Scotland, the Duke of Cumberland, while earning his sobriquet the ‘Butcher’ suppressing the Jacobites, complained repeatedly of the slowness of the Hessians, and the Duke and his correspondents saw the 6,000-strong contingent as a greater threat to his supply stores than to the Scottish rebels.³¹⁴ As we shall see in the subsequent chapter, such accusations of slowness or tardiness were filled with symbolism, and were particularly common among opponents of the practice of hiring mercenaries.

³¹⁴ W.A. Speck, *The Butcher: the Duke of Cumberland and the Suppression of the 45* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1981), p. 120.

The implications by critics of a mercenary behaviour among the subsidy troops was one of many means of creating a distinction between their own forces and the fighting men of other states – of course to the benefit of their own martial character. The most negative opinions of auxiliary forces in public discourse were during periods where there was a perception of favouritism over Britain's native sons. This was particularly true in 1743, when George II took to command of the Pragmatic Army, and during the brief time when the Hessians and Hanoverian guarded the English coast in 1756-7. Yet there were other areas of difference upon which soldiers and officers would focus, and not all of these comparisons favoured the author's own countrymen.

In matters of appearance and mannerisms, there was a great degree of parity between popular discourse and the sentiment of soldiers. As indicated by Colonel Wolfe, the German soldiers' stiff posture and moustachioed face awed some, but more found them peculiar, or comical. In terms of demeanour, here too there was a harmony between public discourse and private writings. In the American War, British officers complained of the stiffness and timidity of their Hessian colleagues, and there were some self-critical commentators among the German soldiery who confessed as much.³¹⁵ For a prominent aristocrat such as George Henry Lennox, his time as aide-de-camp in the Duke of Cumberland's Army of Observation was apparently a dull one. He wrote to a Scottish associate that his sheet music would be better company than 'our Friends the Germans', and later professed, 'I can't hear of this expedition without wishing to be with my Grenadiers, for these Germans grow tiresome. They are brave officers in the Field, but stupid dogs in society. For we

³¹⁵ From Rodney Atwood's quotation of Friedrich von der Lith: 'The pedantic, obsequious character of the Germans, empty of compliments, contrasts too greatly with the open, unaffected, noble ways of the English, for it to please them, and of individual freedom the Germans had scarcely any idea. Even many of the German officers felt this lack and sought to make up for it in their outward behaviour, but usually fell into a swaggering tone that made them laughable. They wished to speak and behave freely and openly, and through this only betrayed all the more their slavish sentiments in which they had been brought up and the servile fear in which they were kept. If the youngest English officer laid bare all his thoughts without shyness at the table of the commanding general with the greatest frankness and assurance, our German generals sat like schoolboys stiff and silent, and full of anxious modesty scarcely dared to speak and move. – The wonder is, that this pedantic character of the German people blossomed even in that clime.' Quoted in Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 152.

have no Prince Kinsky's, Lacey's, or any of them Jolly Fellows here.'³¹⁶ Such comments bear a striking resemblance to the tales of grand tourists, or accounts of diplomatic envoys, while further revealing the discrepancy in aristocratic officers' opinions of the courtly society of the Austrian high command compared to the seemingly provincial culture within these smaller German forces.

Contrasts in social behaviour and within polite society were only tangentially tied to criticisms of professional ardour, as it was expected that officers would also be good gentleman. Yet some comments regarding Teutonic soldiery could be directly traced to military matters. One of the primary areas of difference recounted by British commentators was the religiosity of the German soldiers, especially the Hanoverians and Hessians. The hostility shown by British soldiers for the Catholicism of Flemish, Portuguese and Spanish is easily contrasted with the admiration for Protestant zeal displayed among the German forces. The institutionalized piety and ceremonies displayed by the Hessian regiments in particular were remarked upon by English soldiers and no-doubt appealing to those who shared the belief that piety had a salubrious effect on a nation's soldiery. During their stint in Winchester in 1757, prints were made informing would-be spectators and curious locals as to the best time to visit in order that they might watch the proceedings.³¹⁷ During the rebellion in America, especially within the first months of operating together, British officers found Hessian demonstrations of piety particularly admirable, and a point of contrast with their own forces. Others merely found this worthy of mockery. Lord Rawdon, who disdainfully referred to the American rebels as 'psalm-singers', wrote that the Hessians within his own army 'sing hymns as loud as the Yankees, though it must [be] owned they have not the godly twang through the nose that distinguishes the faithful.'³¹⁸ In 1813, Thomas Morris and his fellow Englishmen were once again making jests at this outward

³¹⁶ RH4/195/3 fol. 5, George Henry Lennox to Dr. Dunmore, Hameln July 20th, 1757; fol. 6, same to same, Verden, 21st August, 1757.; W. A. J. Archbold, 'Lennox, Lord George Henry (1737-1805)' in McCann, *ODNB*.

³¹⁷ HRO 44M69/k7 fol. 147, 'A Correct View of the Hessian Camp on Barton Farm near Winchester' [1756]

³¹⁸ HMC, *Rawdon Hastings*, vol. III, p. 179.

expression of devotion by their Hanoverian auxiliaries, suggesting that they were in fact singing about their superior ration of schnapps.³¹⁹

Cleanliness was another area of contrast, and one that developed and changed as the century progressed. The distinction in hygiene (synonymous with professional competence) changed throughout the century, and reflected the increased interest within the British military establishment in increasing the health of the men in the rank & file. In 1689, when William's Army under Frederick, the Duke of Schomberg was encamped in northern Ireland, deep suspicions of favouritism arose from the British soldiers for the foreign mercenaries, given the latter's relatively healthy condition in contrast to the sickness found among the English forces – to which cleanliness and sanitation were primarily responsible.³²⁰ Yet, by the middle of the Eighteenth century, it was the British who placed a greater emphasis on cleanliness, which created numerous remarks from Briton and German alike on the undeniable contrast between the two groups. The dirtiness of Hessian, Prussian and other German soldiers was a common theme, as was the constant amazement of German authors regarding the cleanliness of English soldiers and sailors.³²¹

The most prominent subjects were in military ability, and the degree to which each group compared to the standards of an ideal soldier. Just as in discussions of religiosity, or cleanliness, these institutional and national differences were intertwined. The role of professionalism was critical to successful collaboration, and was particularly acute in descriptions of these hired soldiers. Just as inaugural encounters drew attention to key cultural differences, the first marches, parades and battles highlighted differences in discipline and martial ability. Some of the key areas of contrast, especially during the early campaigns of a conflict, are owing to the nature of the armies. The British, usually a collection of

³¹⁹ Thomas Morris, *Recollections of Sergeant Morris*, pp. 83-4.

³²⁰ John Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 163.

³²¹ Helga Doblin, (trans.); and Mary C. Lynn (ed.), *The American Revolution, Garrison Life in French Canada and New York: Journal of an Officer in the Prinz Friedrich Regiment, 1776-1783* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993), p. 4.; Johann Conrad Döhla, *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution; Translated, Edited, and with an Introduction by Bruce E. Burgoyne* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1990), p. 71.

rapidly augmented or newly raised regiments, would often find themselves fighting alongside troops from highly militarized German principalities, and because of this, in a greater state of readiness at the outbreak of war. Witnessing the drill and manoeuvres of the Hessians in Winchester in 1756, James Wolfe was envious of their degree of skill and discipline when he visited their camp:

We have waited upon the Hessians, in the exercise, both of their small arms, & artillery, their steadyness [sic] under Arms, & strick [sic] attention is worthy of imitation, and the exact knowledge that every officer has of his own part is exemplary, their parts are neither intricate nor difficult, [being] calculated for the Genius, & temper of the[ir] People.³²²

The Hessians were indeed something of a tourist attraction during their stay in England (as they had been in Scotland during the Jacobite Rebellion), but rather than focusing on religious practices or appearance, Wolfe was turning his attention primarily to military matters. While evaluating the Hessians military effectiveness, Wolfe here hints at a sense of the unique ‘temper’ of the Hessians, ostensibly a reference to the natural character of the people. Yet the focus remains on differences in discipline and bearing. In creating such contrasts national pride or bias had to sometimes be set aside, and for James Wolfe, his hastily assembled regiment (the 33rd) fell short in contrast to these auxiliaries, to the point in which he wittily remarked to the Duke of Richmond: ‘the Hessians, & such other Troops... are to compose the Army of this Country [in Salisbury] – in which I hope we shall not be included.’³²³

In many conflicts, most notably the Seven Years War and the American Revolution, these German ‘*Hilfstruppen*’ were seen to be equal in their discipline and professionalism – if not outright superior – than their British counterparts. In the months after arriving in Flanders in 1743, British commanders were constantly in need of corralling their soldiers, and curbing the violence between them and the local townsfolk. British generals had to repeatedly command their soldiers not disrupt religious processions within Flemish towns, or ‘ease themselves in ye streets

³²² West Sussex Record Office (WSRO), Papers of the 3rd Duke of Richmond, Goodwood 223 fol. 3/10, Letter from James Wolfe to the Duke of Richmond, June 23rd, 1756.

³²³ WSRO Goodwood 223 fol. 3/9, Wolfe to Richmond, Canterbury, 4th April, 1756

in the day time contrary to all decency'.³²⁴ Such problems of discipline were particularly acute at the commencements of each successive war, both in Europe and abroad, and were a by-product of Parliamentary insistence on maintaining a skeleton army in peacetime. While British cavalry remained exemplary throughout the eighteenth century, often the behaviour of the infantry regiments left a great deal to be desired, though usually in the purview of inaugural campaigns. When the Pitt-Newcastle ministry sent British troops to Germany in 1758, they were met with a positive reception, and praised by Ferdinand of Brunswick for their appearance and ability. Yet in one particularly condemnatory account, by the scholar and biographer Jakob von Mouvillon, the British were far from the ideal soldiers that they might have seemed.

Braver troops there cannot indeed be found in the world when in the battle field and under arms before the enemy; but here ends their military merit. In the first place their infantry is composed of so indiscriminate a conglomeration of men, that it is difficult to maintain even a shadow of discipline among them. Their cavalry is indeed differently constituted, but a foolish love for their horses makes them astonishingly rapacious after forage; so that in this respect they will exhaust a district far sooner than the Germans with whom a limit may be fixed. Officers' commissions among them are all had by purchase, and their consequence is, that their officers do not trouble their heads about the service, and with few exceptions, understand absolutely nothing whatever about it; and this goes on from the ensign to the general.³²⁵

Though Mouvillon was penning these impressions decades later, one contemporary account would seem to validate these rather disparaging assertions. From the diary of one Brunswick officer, Major von Ungern, the depiction of the British infantry matched these criticisms.

The [English] infantrymen are more disorganized and licentious in their behaviour than the cavalrymen; they impulsively eat and drink everything, and as precise as they are while on duty, they are equally rude when off it. They run through all the towns nearby stealing, robbing and plundering, they commit the greatest excesses, [and] they are overly fond of drinking... Since the English Corps has been with our army, the discipline within it has visibly declined. The English soldier permits

³²⁴ BL Add MS Hardwick Papers 36252 fols. 8a, 10. General Orders from June 25th and July 2nd.

³²⁵ Quoted in Edward Barrington de Fonblanque, *Political and Military Episodes... of the Right Hon. John Burgoyne*, p. 33.

himself all kinds of debauchery, and is an evil influence on the soldiers of the remaining troops from which our army is composed.³²⁶

Certainly there are matching descriptions of German auxiliary forces, most notably the Hessen-Kassel soldiers fighting in the American War, little more than a decade later. Yet what is most interesting here, particularly with Ungern's assertions, is the accusation of setting a bad influence on their fellow soldiers – a surprisingly common theme in armies where plundering was so commonplace. In New York, 1777, Major Francis Hutcheson recounted stories of the 'excessive plunder our Army has been shamefully guilty off [sic]', and portrayed it as due to the negative influence of the German auxiliaries: 'the Hessian[s] set the example and they were readily followed.'³²⁷ But there was a long tradition of attributing lapses in discipline to the subversive influence of others, and in the Pragmatic Army in the 1740's both the British and Dutch accused one another of being bad influences on their own men.³²⁸ It is curious that such accusations were so common, even among men who had previously discussed similar wrongdoings by their own troops.³²⁹ Here then is one of the effects of compartmentalizing based on national origin, as condemnations for acts such as marauding or theft seemed to always be couched in terms of nationalities, not regiments or individuals, and therefore have an heir of ethnic bias. In any event, there was a greater degree of parity in the committal of such ignoble acts than any side cared to admit, particularly in the mid-century wars.

However, the divide in professionalism between these forces – as far as soldiers' commentaries are concerned – changed significantly over time. Unlike previous conflicts, in the Low Countries in the 1790's the British were from the start to be deemed far superior to their German auxiliaries and allies – no doubt because

³²⁶ Decken, 'Tagebuch des herzoglich braunschweigschen Majors', pp. 341-2.

³²⁷ BL Haldimand Manuscripts Add MS 21680 fol. 175, Hutcheson to Haldimand. New York, February 16th, 1777.

³²⁸ Jeffrey Amherst wrote in his personal journal: 'The Dutch plundered much & our men began to take examples by them', though Amherst had recorded a number of General Orders over the past year to trying to limit British marauding. CKS Amherst Paper's U1350 01/01 Amherst's Journal for 1744 p. 151.

³²⁹ Stephen Conway has noted this phenomenon with British and Hessian officers in the War of American Independence in particular. Stephen Conway, 'Military-Civilian Crime and the British Army in North America, 1775-1781' PhD Dissertation, University College London (1982), esp. pp. 152-4.

some of the first contingents sent were the guard infantry. One English officer bragged that 'all about us we are worshipped, the British Guards look'd on as God Almightyes.'³³⁰ When the liberation of Germany in 1813 permitted Britain to once again subsidize German forces, this difference was even more pronounced. During the Waterloo campaign of 1815 there was an appreciable difference between the professional and dutiful British, and their auxiliaries of hastily assembled Brunswick and Nassau regiments and Hanoverian militia (*Landwehr*), which were derided repeatedly for their unprofessionalism, tendencies to plunder, and seeming indifference to their cause. As one officer recalled of the forces under the Duke of Wellington:

We were, take us all in all, a very bad army. Our foreign auxiliaries, who constituted more than half of our numerical strength, with some exceptions, were little better than a raw militia – a body without a soul, or like an inflated pillow, that gives to the touch and resumes its shape again when the pressure ceases – not to mention the many who went clear out of the field, and were only seen while plundering our baggage in their retreat.³³¹

During this conflict there was a growing sense of division between the British forces and their German allies, a phenomenon which reinforces the relative parity which had previously existed between the two groups, and indicates that the 'mercenaries' employed in previous conflicts were not merely valued by their quantity, but their utility.

While there were differences, real or distorted, the military profession and the cause for which these men fought contributed greatly to a sense of unity and commonality.³³² As discussed with the frustrations between Austrian, British and Dutch armies in this series of conflicts with France, the infighting and disparate motives of each ally greatly contributed to a disdain between the men in the ranks.

³³⁰ HRO 1M44/110 fol.15 Letter from Lord Wallingford to his mother, Camp near Valenciennes, May 28th, 1793.

³³¹ Quoted in: Fitchett, (ed.), *Wellington's Men*, p.136.

³³² Corporal Todd, perhaps one of the most valuable accounts of soldiering in the eighteenth century, wrote had found himself in numerous occasions surrounded by his Hanoverian, Hessian and Brunswicker allies during the Seven Years War. At one point, separated from his own regiment before a battle, he 'resolv'd to Joyn the first Collumn of Infantry belonging to our Army, whether English or Germans', as his main objective was to contribute to the battle by any means possible. Todd, *Journal of Corporal Todd*, pp. 156, 227-8.

Certainly perceptions of auxiliaries benefited from their being under the same command – and thus usually sharing the same objectives – as the British.

The other major unifying element was victories in battle and particular feats displaying military ability, which would remain throughout this epoch as the primary means of harbouring a sense of unity. Just as exemplary behaviour in battle would curb resentment of the Austrians, so too did this effect auxiliary forces – troops who were expected to fight, yet impressed their paymasters more by going beyond the call of duty. The work of the Hanoverian artillery at Dettingen in 1743 was so lauded that caveats to compliment their efforts could be found in even some of the more polemical condemnations of the Electoral forces. Conversely, any shortcomings by these subsidy troops would hamper the cohesiveness of these forces. One of the primary factors that forever damaged the memory of the ‘Hessians’ in the American War was that they were apart of, and in many ways contributed to, the defeat of British arms.

****Conclusions****

Few issues in British foreign and military policies in eighteenth century were as fraught with turmoil and political divisiveness as the hiring of German auxiliaries. Though most objections were geared towards the costs and motives of such practices, the subsidy troops themselves (Hanoverian and Hessian soldiers in particular) were recipients of intense public scrutiny. From the 1730’s to the 1770’s and beyond, auxiliaries were one of the chief bugaboos in the minds and mouths of those advocating isolationist or ‘blue water’ policies in Britain, yet most soldiers would see things differently.³³³ Those fighting alongside these auxiliaries saw them

³³³ At the commencement of each successive war, as the British Army assembled, be it in England, Flanders or America, British soldiers wrote of their anticipation of the arrival of their German auxiliaries. Similarly, in 1758, British officers were anxious to join their auxiliaries on the Continent, as was the case of John Mostyn, who hoped that the Duke of Newcastle would see to his placement in Ferdinand’s army in Germany, so he would no longer be relegated to ‘cruising like a marine with the fleet’ in one of the many raids against the French coast. BL Add MS 32881 fol. 238, Mostyn to Newcastle, July 19th 1758.

as assets vital to the war efforts for which they fought, not an intrinsic menace to their liberty and livelihood. The mercenary title has remained, and the legacy of these soldiers, particularly in the accounts of historians, is one that has reflected the popular impressions, not the attitudes of those with whom they served.

This chapter has surveyed these auxiliaries' motives, treatment within the army, and some of the key themes in the recollections of contemporary soldiers. From these, we can see that there was parity in the treatment of both native soldier and foreign auxiliary, and no callous frivolity in the usage and application of subsidy forces. Professional solidarities were enhanced by the discipline and *esprit de corps* apparent in the first encounters with these subsidy troops, revealing that these 'mercenaries' were potentially better soldiers than native Britons, at least until the end of the century, when the dynamics appeared to change. At the same time, a common cause was a strong unifier, seen not only in relations between soldiers, but between British fighting men and the civilian populations they encountered within Germany. The solidarities emerging from a joint cause and professional fraternal bond would at times have a strength surpassing national affiliation, as seen when a recently captured corporal Todd preferred the company of other captives, chiefly Hanoverians and Hessians, to the British and Irish men now serving in the French Army.³³⁴ National distinctions would certainly remain, but they were stronger in the vocabulary of soldiers than in their actions.

It would be foolhardy to try to label the relations between British forces and German subsidy troops throughout the century as innately positive or negative, because each encounter over this vast era had various factors that would inform opinions and determine the manner in which these polities related. Certainly, if the first two years of the Pragmatic Army are any indication, the relations between these forces could change quite dramatically over a short period. Yet, judging by the ever-improving relations in the War of Austrian Succession, the generally positive

³³⁴ Todd, *Journal of Corporal Todd*, pp. 227-229, 236.

attitudes during the Seven Years War, and the 'harmonious' nature of the auxiliaries in the First Coalition, the overall tenor leans towards cordiality, which, if not shocking or surprising in itself, is a dramatic contrast to the temperament of the nation at-large. Yet there is one instance of prolonged interaction between British and German auxiliaries that is well documented, and from this, we can glean a better appreciation of the social and organizational dynamics of this relationship. Having surveyed some of the themes common in dealings with German auxiliaries, we can now focus on the American War of Independence, where we can better appreciate the attitudes and associations prevalent within this form of Anglo-German army.

Chapter IV:

Case Study 1 – The ‘Hessians’ in the American War

For this, the first of two chapter-long case studies, we will examine the most widely discussed of the German auxiliaries in British service in the eighteenth century: the ‘Hessians’ in the War of American Independence. Throughout this thesis, we have been examining the role of preconceived ideas and stereotypes, and their effects on the perceptions of the soldiers themselves. Here we turn to a group that has some of the most enduring stereotypes of all, as the ‘Hessian mercenary’ is one of the more memorable actors in the American creation myth. However, this chapter is not designed to either narrate their services in America, or to combat the many myths regarding the ‘Hessians’, as these have been successfully done many times before. The military history of these German auxiliaries is well covered by German, British and American scholars from the nineteenth century onwards and the bibliography regarding their service has grown considerably since the last quarter of the twentieth century, especially during the Revolutionary Wars’ bicentennial.³³⁵ Yet with a few notable exceptions, not-the-least Rodney Atwood’s chapter on ‘Anglo-Hessian Relations’ and in the writings of Silvia Frey and Stephen Conway, an

³³⁵ Max von Eelking and Edward Lowell’s histories of these German contingents are the most extensive, with Lowell’s not having much of the ideological edge that Eelking’s work contains. Friedrich Kapp’s contribution contains perhaps the best account of the treaties with the various princes. More recently, the two best military histories are the works on the Hessen-Kassel forces, by Rodney Atwood and Ernst Kipping. The 1970’s and 80’s were a critical period for reappraisals of the ‘Hessians’, as their image as mercenaries or as pawns of greedy princes was successfully challenged (although this point had been raised by Joseph Rosengarten a century ago), while the social relations between British and German soldiers received some, albeit brief, attention in the ‘new military histories’ of Silvia Frey, Stephen Conway and Christopher Hibbert. Since then, the best works on ‘the Hessians’ have been examining the political or ideological histories of these soldier and their relations with America, and impressions of them in the public sphere in Britain, Germany, and the United States. There should be a special mention to the works of Bruce E. Burgoyne and Helga Doblin, whose translations of ‘Hessian’ diaries, have been of inestimable benefit in the creation of this chapter. Joseph George Rosengarten, *A Defence of the Hessians* (Philadelphia: 1899).; Edward J. Lowell, *The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884).; Friedrich Kapp, *Der Soldenthandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika* (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1874).; Max von Eelking, *The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence, 1776-1783*, translated by J. G. Rosengarten (Albany, NY: Joe Munsell’s Sons, 1893).

examination of the interactions and relations between British and German soldiers in the American War has received far less attention than most other aspects of their service.³³⁶ With this in mind, the aim of this case study is to fit this well-known instance of Anglo-German military cooperation into the broader context of the soldierly interactions of these polities. Doing so will be a means of providing crucial insight to how the German auxiliaries in the American War both typify this long-running relationship, but also stand apart from other instances of German forces in British pay.

****Background****

With the history of the 'Hessians' so widely covered, only a brief overview of their origins and composition will be necessary here. In 1775, Lord North's Ministry was in a crisis, facing a widespread rebellion across the Atlantic with an underpowered British Army numerically insufficient for conducting any operations of consequence in the following year. Therefore, once again, British ministers looked abroad to the large standing armies of the European continent to hire a force capable of helping quell the civil war currently underway in America. Yet, unlike in previous conflicts, where the smaller German states were a natural choice for bolstering the Army, preliminary efforts at hiring soldiers were directed mainly towards the Empress Catherine the Great, for 20,000 of her Russian troops. The failure to obtain these Russian soldiers, further compounded by the refusal of the Dutch Republic to lend out its Scots Brigade, meant that once again Germany seemed the best means of acquiring competent soldiers at a quick rate. Even before talks with Catherine came to naught, there were offers from the Princes of Hessen-Hanau and Brunswick, and

³³⁶ It should be noted that Atwood's chapter deals more with issues of rank and command hierarchy, and that many of the best accounts of British and German interaction are interspersed in other chapters. Atwood, *The Hessians*.; 'Stephen Conway, "The British Army, "Military Europe," and the American War of Independence', p. 76-7.

other princes were close behind.³³⁷ By February 1776, subsidy treaties had been ratified and soldiers from Hessen-Kassel, Hessen-Hanau and Brunswick were being mobilized for service in the colonies, all under the supervision of Colonel William Faucitt, who was simultaneously working with Colonel Georg von Scheither to recruit Germans for British regiments.³³⁸

The treaties that would lead to ‘the Hessians’ serving in America are unexceptional in comparison to those subsidy-agreements discussed in the previous chapter, save their unique trans-Atlantic nature. There was nothing particularly exceptional about these arrangements save for their incredibly high profile in Europe and that these German princes were leasing soldiers to a cause that was politically inconsequential for them, thereby exposing themselves to the criticisms of their contemporaries, and posterity.³³⁹ The terms of these treaties were highly favourable for the various German princes, and their only setback was the requirement to replenish fallen soldiers with new recruits, which would in time put great strains upon the smaller states to maintain their quotas.

‘The Hessians’ is a term that has come to signify these near 30,000 soldiers, from what were technically six separate armies hired from principalities in the heart of the Holy Roman Empire.³⁴⁰ The largest contingent, at 18,970 men, was the contribution from Hessen-Kassel, loaned from the Landgrave Frederick II, who in his youth had commanded the Hessian forces in Scotland during the suppression of the Jacobites.³⁴¹ As the largest and most notable force, they would lend their name, and in many ways their reputation, to the other German troops and serve in most of the major campaigns in the central colonies, including New York, the Jerseys, Rhode Island, and the Philadelphia campaign, with a few regiments also taking part in the fighting in the Carolinas and Georgia. The most distinguished troops from the Hessen-Kassel forces were the Jägers, rifle-armed soldiers who, along with a handful

³³⁷ These include the failed bids of Bavaria and Württemberg. Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 8.

³³⁸ Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 16

³³⁹ Redlich, *German Military Enterpriser*, vol. II, pp. 98-99.

³⁴⁰ The figures for these soldiers, with the exception of the Hessen-Kassel forces, are from lists provided in Kapp, *Soldenthandel*, p. 208.

³⁴¹ For his correspondence with his father, see: HSAM 4/2/3981.

of English and Highlander battalions, would serve as the primary skirmishers and light infantrymen for Generals Howe, Clinton and Cornwallis. These were well trained, and well-paid volunteers, who received continuous praise for their services by the British commanding officers, and were seen by many as superior in every way except range to the more celebrated American riflemen.

The other, actual Hessians, were those who made up the far smaller contingent of Count William of Hessen-Hanau, the eldest son of Frederick II and his wife, the princess Mary, daughter of George II of Britain. The Hessen-Hanau contingent, the first to be offered to the British Crown, numbered some 2,400 men and would be sent to Canada, with the majority taking part in the ill-fated campaign in upper New York under General Burgoyne. This disastrous expedition resulted in the surrender at Saratoga on October 17th 1777, of an army of roughly 6,000 men, half of which were German. From this point onwards they would be part of what was known as the 'Convention Army', and as prisoners of war encamped throughout the Middle and New England Colonies over the following two years, waiting their turn to be exchanged.

The more prominent of the two German forces serving in the Canadian theatre was the contingent of the Prince of Brunswick, which had close ties and a long history of cooperation with the British Army as auxiliaries, and this manifestation would see some 5,723 men serving in America.³⁴² Lt. General Friedrich von Riedesel commanded the German forces in this theatre, and maintained good relations with both British and German officers and soldiers. Fourth among the Germans contingents were the soldiers of Ansbach-Bayreuth, notable for the relatively substantial number of Catholic soldiers within its three regiments. Among the 2,353 soldiers that would be sent by the Margrave Charles Alexander was a young lieutenant, August Wilhelm von Gneisenau, who would later become the famous reformer and *Feldmarschall* in the Prussian service.³⁴³ The Ansbachers were certainly one of the more impressive looking forces to be sent to

³⁴² Kapp, *Soldatenhandel*, p. 208.

³⁴³ Charles Alexander was a heavily indebted prince, who would later sell his domain to the Prussian monarchy and spent his waning days in England.

America, but they were of dubious character, having mutinied once in transit down the Main River, and were initially held up in New York for fears of desertion. They would spend the majority of their time in America in the vicinity of New York, mainly operating in punitive raids and skirmishes, and were the largest German contingent at the siege and surrender at Yorktown.³⁴⁴

Lastly are the forces from Waldeck and Anhalt-Zerbst, both numbering close to 1,200 men, with the former being sent to fight in Florida, the latter as garrison troops in Canada. Waldeck, though it had some forces serving in British Pay under Ferdinand during the Seven Years War, was more commonly a lender of soldiers to the Dutch Republic, and together with the Anhalt-Zerbst and Ansbach-Bayreuth forces, represented an expansion in the number of principalities leasing soldiers to the British government through the middle of the eighteenth century.³⁴⁵

In numbers and in costs, this assembly of hired auxiliaries was not nearly as extensive, nor as expensive, as that employed in the Seven Years War. Collectively, these 30,000 soldiers, the Hanoverians serving in Mediterranean, and the several thousand Germans within British regiments, represented a large percentage of the total forces mobilized for George III. The German auxiliaries alone would represent between 33 and 37 percent of the total forces in America. They were often between a third and a half of the strength of any given army, yet only in New York during late 1781 did they comprise a significant majority of the forces in one particular region.³⁴⁶ From Canada to Florida, there was a nearly universal German presence, as only on the furthest frontiers, namely in the Ohio valley, was there an absence of some form of Germanic auxiliary force, and German born soldiers would comprise a considerable percentage of the American and French forces as well. The famous defeat and capture of the Hessian Regiments under Rall at Trenton, on Christmas Day, 1776, and the failed assault on a rebel fort at Redbank are the only instances of battles fought exclusively by German forces in this conflict, and in major operations

³⁴⁴ Edward J. Lowell, *The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884), pp. 256-7, 277.

³⁴⁵ Kapp, *Soldatenhandel*, p. 81.

³⁴⁶ Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 257.

and minor skirmishes British and German troops were often close to equal in numbers.

Though there were numerous fears that these auxiliaries would merely desert once they arrived in America (owing to the high number of Germans already settled in the colonies) their performance in battles and their remarkably low desertion rates, at least initially, discredited these fears.³⁴⁷ Nevertheless, desertion was high among these auxiliaries in the waning years of the war, and extreme in the case of the Brunswick and Hessen-Hanau 'Convention' forces. While the initial contingents sent to the colonies were of admirable martial ability and were seen by the majority of Britons as good soldiers, the requirements needed to keep the regiments at full capacity would mean that the quality of men entering into the army would decrease significantly. In the end, only slightly above half of the German soldiers sent to America would return home, with more than 5,000 remaining in the newly formed United States.

****Integration****

The smaller, almost intimate, scale of the British Armies in the colonies, and the extended duration of the conflict, led to a significant amount of integration during the American War, enhanced further by the favourable treatment the 'Hessians' received from their British paymasters. Though history may remember the 'Hessians' as mercenaries, they were very much 'allies' in the thoughts, words and actions of the British generals.³⁴⁸ The deference shown by many British commanding officers, their role within the army, and the tasks to which they were

³⁴⁷ For attempts at getting Hessians to desert, see: Lyman Butterfield, 'Psychological Warfare in 1776: The Jefferson-Franklin Plan to Cause Hessian Desertions', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 94. (1950), pp. 233-241.

³⁴⁸ For the deference shown by Jon Burgoyne (by no means a lover of the Hessian auxiliaries), see: John Burgoyne, *Orderly book of Lieut. Gen. John Burgoyne: from his entry into the state of New York until his surrender at Saratoga, 16th Oct. 1777; from the original manuscript deposited at Washington's head quarters* (Newburgh, N. Y., J. Munsell, 1860), esp. p. 17.

employed, reveal that they were to be treated – if not always considered – as equals. Whatever shortcomings in the perceptions of their fellow-soldiers, these foreign contingents were well cared for, far better in fact than the Germans serving *within* British regiments.

The first weeks of service in the British Army would not render such impressions. Conditions on the transports heading to England (often renovated slave-ships) were in some cases so poor that many German officers sought immediate improvements for the longer voyage to America.³⁴⁹ However, for the officers themselves, theirs were satisfactory accommodations, and the few complimentary remarks are further supported in that the most unfavourable comments were reserved for the terrible weather, and their obligatory seasickness.³⁵⁰ In most other cases, the German soldiers were transported alongside, or with British forces, and therefore enjoyed a great deal of parity in this respect.

The primary means to win over the hearts and minds of the auxiliaries, was to appeal to their stomachs. From their first meal upon George III's ships, the German troops would be given roast beef and English beer in a casual ceremony of Anglicization that would continue for foreign soldiers fighting alongside the British throughout the next half-century.³⁵¹ Though the food supplied *en route* was not particularly appealing, once in the colonies, conditions improved, at times as a direct result of British attempts at trying to alleviate the weariness and tight stomachs incurred on the long trans-Atlantic voyage. The commentary of the German soldiers regarding food and provisions throughout the war is generally favourable, with soldiers being granted 'allowances which even the most fastidious stomach can

³⁴⁹ The poor accommodation on the transports of the Ansbach-Bayreuth forces lead to a mutiny, during which their Jägers fired upon the mutinous regiments. This was in part due to the cramped conditions on the river boats, which, according to Lowell, the soldiers thought would be the ships they would be travelling to America in. Lowell, *The Hessians*, pp. 48-9.

³⁵⁰ Johann Friedrich Specht, *Specht Journal: A Military Journal of the Burgoyne Campaign* translated by Helga Doblin, edited by Mary C. Lynn (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1995), pp. 6, 12.

³⁵¹ Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 82. Bruce E. Burgoyne (ed. & translated), *Georg Pausch's Journal and Reports of the Campaign in America* (Heritage: Maryland, 1996), p. 46.

endure.’³⁵² There were a few exceptions of course, such as the noticeable depreciation in this variety of foodstuffs during Burgoyne’s campaign in upper New York in 1777, where soldiers were issued flour and an unwavering supply of salted pork, for ‘pork at noon, pork at night, pork cold, pork warm.’³⁵³ Worse still for these Brunswick and Hanau forces, the soldiers were required to bake their own bread, which one officer complained would not have been seen even in the Russian Army, which from the German perspective, was the nadir of European forces.³⁵⁴ Others, though well supplied, were not immediately won-over by English cuisine and their palettes still yearned for various German specialties – although ironically, the sauerkraut shipped to soldiers in the opening months of the war was destined for British and not German soldiers. Some men nursed small quantities of flour brought from home, or made an effort at acquiring rye bread and other familiar foodstuffs from locals once in the colonies.³⁵⁵ One Brunswicker praised the Canadian rye bread, but harboured disbelief at the reception in the British Army of a special Canadian delicacy: rattlesnakes.³⁵⁶ But foreign provisions, such as rattlesnakes and spruce beer (as a preventative against scurvy), were adjustments that not only the German auxiliaries had to make, but transitions which they experienced along with their fellow Europeans, the British, for in most cases the menus were one in the same, and new to both. While this was primarily a consequence of the theatre of war, there were deliberate attempts at fostering good will through a commonality of provisions. The Hanau artillerymen were indebted to the ‘uniquely good care,’ of General Phillips, who was ‘concerned that portions are as good for them as for his

³⁵² William L. Stone, (trans.), *Letters of Brunswick and Hessian Officers During the American Revolution* (Albany: Joel Munsell’s Sons, 1891), p. 60.

³⁵³ Quoted in, Lowell, *The Hessians*, p. 151.

³⁵⁴ August Wilhelm Du Roi. *Journal of Du Roi the Elder Lieutenant and Adjutant, in the Service of the Duke of Brunswick, 1776-1778*. Translated by Charlotte S. J. Epping (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1911), p. 90.

³⁵⁵ Murhardsche Bibliothek Kassel (MBK), 4* MS Hass, 247, ‘Im Lager Staaten Eiland’, fols. 102-107.; ‘Journal of Johann August von Loos’, in Valentine C. Hubbs, (ed.), *Hessian Journals: Unpublished Documents of the American Revolution* (Camden House: Columbia, 1981), p. 47.; Helga Doblin, *The American Revolution, Garrison Life in French Canada and New York*, p. 36.; Bruce Burgoyne, *The Diary of Lieutenant Johann Heinrich von Bardeleben and Other von Donop Regiment Documents* (Maryland: Heritage Books, 1998), p. 54.

³⁵⁶ ‘It may be that I am prejudiced, but none of it for me! Thanks!’ Stone, *Letters of Brunswick and Hessian Officers*, pp. 87-8.

own and the other Royal artillery companies.³⁵⁷ The sharing of the same foodstuffs was a point of commonality not always shared with Britain's allies, and can be seen as one of the more favourable aspects of being a subsidy troop for the British crown.

Other facets of the treatment of German auxiliaries are mixed, especially with billets and barracks, where few lessons were learned from the debacles of 1756.³⁵⁸ Notwithstanding this point of tension, in most cases the German *Hilfstruppen* shared the same hardships and bounties as British soldiers and had little in common with the feelings of resentment incurred by the poor care given to the Hessian and Hanoverian auxiliaries in the early days of the Seven Years War.³⁵⁹ Though this did indeed contribute to unity, as we shall see, a commonality in supply also had a detrimental impact from attitudes towards 'Hessian' plundering and marauding, as the contrast created by their behaviour and that of British soldiers, was seemingly unjustified or gratuitous on account of the parity in provisioning with British troops.

In terms of dress and drill, there was a deliberate policy of creating uniformity, and the changes were by no means well received. There was a degree of self-consciousness on account of officers of Hessian and Brunswick contingents, in regards to their highly ornamental uniforms. The gold-laced hats of the Hanau artillery were 'considered very ugly by the English' and shortly after arriving in New York, Hessian soldiers were required to cut the lace from their uniforms.³⁶⁰ At first, this was done so that they would match with the British in parade, but it was also a part of an adaptation to warfare in the colonial wilderness, seen previously with the adjustments made by 60th 'Royal Americans' Regiment in the Seven Years War, and now being adopted throughout the British Army.³⁶¹ Yet, most elements of the

³⁵⁷ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 46.

³⁵⁸ Upon returning to New York after the Philadelphia campaign, the Hessians were reported to have moved to 'miserable quarters in huts', and their reputation for plundering, and the subsequent hostility from the Colonial populace, meant that these soldiers were often moved to less desirable and more distant billets. Bernhard A. Uhlendorf (ed. and trans), *Revolution in America: Confidential Letters and Journals 1776-1784 of Adjutant General Major Bauermeister of the Hessian Forces* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1957), p. 231.

³⁵⁹ This balance could also be seen with ship bounties, for example, when Lord Cornwallis divided the bounty of a captured frigate evenly among British and Hessian grenadiers. Uhlendorf, *Revolution in America*, p. 228.

³⁶⁰ MBK, 4* MS Hass 247, 'Im Lager Staaten Eiland', fol. 102a

³⁶¹ Conway, "The British Army, "Military Europe,"", p. 76-7;

Germans' uniforms remained, especially for the Brunswick forces, which stubbornly maintained a dress totally unsuited for the climate and terrain they found themselves in. As for drill and commands, in both armies in Canada and the middle colonies, exercises with British and German soldiers were conducted to put both on an even footing – which more or less meant conforming to British commands and methods. Such practices were an introduction to techniques adopted by the British from years fighting on the American frontier, and represented not a Prussian or European manner of drill and exercise but an 'American' one, which caused a degree of resentment among German soldiers, especially when it was so far from their Frederician model. Resentment towards these impositions was quick to follow. The result was that, according to Georg Pausch's complaints to the Hereditary Prince of Hessen-Hanau, 'instead of previous friendship, only enmity is to be seen.'³⁶²

Another creator of tension was the seeming subservience of German officers demanded by their superiors, and often equals, within the British officer corps. Whereas small detachments of soldiers and even wings of an army would be left to the command of a German officer, the 'Foreign Troops' never operated independently of British commanders for a myriad of tactical, constitutional, and political reasons, and if given the opportunity to operate on their own initiative, this happened only briefly. Some private misgivings regarding the German officers supported such policies, as seen in the correspondence of the Scottish grenadier, Major Charles Cochrane, who referred to the debacles of Trenton and Bennington when he stated that 'these people have greatly deceived us all, and entailed Misfortune on us when ever entrusted with Commands separate from the British.'³⁶³ Furthermore, as Atwood has highlighted, in a manner fitting their true status as hired auxiliaries, the British officers neither required nor wished for much input from their Hessian counterparts.³⁶⁴ Unlike the joint leadership, or round-robin command structure that haunted the coalition attempts in European conflicts, here the British were definitively in charge.

³⁶² Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 59.

³⁶³ NLS MS 5375, fol. 38 Charles Cochrane to Andrew Stewart, Germantown, 19th October, 1777.

³⁶⁴ German officers were also present at Burgoyne's councils of war before surrendering at Saratoga, though it is not certain their specific effects on his policies. Atwood, *Hessians*, 245.

Unsurprisingly, some officers among the auxiliaries acutely disdained their subservience to the British. 'Personally, for my part, I never participate' confessed the artillery officer Pausch regarding the drills designed at creating uniformity within the forces in Canada. Still smarting from previous impositions, the Hanau artilleryman explained, '[I] only send an officer, because each time an English captain is assigned thereto, and only an English officer commands at the time. The national pride and haughtiness of these people allows them in their conceit to command my troops, but I can not command them.' Despite such conflicts between officers, he boasted that the NCOs and soldiers themselves maintained 'the greatest friendship and unity', suggesting that attempts at coordinating British and German forces primarily fostered resentment among the higher ranking officers.³⁶⁵

Positioning within the army would be another area in which subservience to the British was implied. Within the structure of the army itself, the German auxiliaries were nearly always the main units comprising the 'left wing' of the army, to the point where the Brunswick Colonel Johann Specht – and certainly many others – considered them to be synonymous.³⁶⁶ Mirroring previous European conflicts, the British demanded the 'right wing', the position of honour in parades and in army organization. While Hanoverian auxiliaries would often share this position with the British in large multinational coalitions, here, with the exception of light infantry, the German forces were relegated to the left, no doubt further adding to resentments of English hauteur. The same structural consideration was given for 'the extreme rear guard' of the army, which the Hessian Officer John von Krafft claimed the British 'constantly hoped for,' though this may have had more practical purposes.³⁶⁷

This was an implied distinction between the forces, yet there is no indication that the British utilized their German auxiliaries differently from their own men. In fact, both testimony and statistics reveal that on many occasions they were spared the brunt of the fighting, with some regiments receiving only a handful of casualties

³⁶⁵ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 59.

³⁶⁶ Specht, *Military Journal*, p. 78.

³⁶⁷ John C.P. von Krafft, *Journal of Lieutenant John Charles Philip von Krafft, 1776-1784*. (NY: NY Times, 1968), p.42.

through the course of the war.³⁶⁸ Yet this was not apparent at first. British eagerness to get the Hessians into the thick of the fighting shortly after their disembarkation in the summer of 1776, was met with resistance from Hessian officers, who wanted to ensure that their men were not used 'condescendingly as mercenaries' but as 'allies of a great Prince.'³⁶⁹ This emphasis on equal value was further reinforced by the adaption of a common practice of dividing various duties such as foraging, picketing, and reconnaissance to equal numbers of British and German forces, thereby ensuring that neither group would be given the least desirable tasks. Though it is difficult to judge the effect this had on the participants, it certainly provided yet another venue with which these groups might interact.

There was also a degree of psychological attachment to both the British Army, and the cause they fought for. No doubt, the oath of allegiances and the dynastic ties helped in this. While preparing to embark for England, Brigadier Specht recalled himself and his fellow soldiers cheering, 'Long live the King! Long live the Duke!' at the redoubt at the Hanoverian port of Stade, above which flew a Union Jack 'to honour' them.³⁷⁰ Celebrations for the birthdays of the Royal Family, and various other typically British festivities, added to a sense of unity, in which the Germanic ties of the Hanoverian dynasty played no small part. Months after her capture at Saratoga, Baroness Riedesel, the wife of the Brunswick general, gathered together British and German officers to drink to the King's Health, 'which was done with the most sincere loyalty, both to his person and his cause. Never, I believe, was "God save the King" sung with more enthusiasm or greater sincerity.'³⁷¹ For their part, British forces were more than happy to return the favour, and showed their high estimations with a variety of formal and informal salutations. One such salute from an English warship, was recalled as 'a great honor which the proud Englishman does not like to show to everyone.'³⁷² Nevertheless, even though many German soldiers would maintain an appreciation for the British Army, they remained very

³⁶⁸ Atwood, *Hessians*, pp. 117, 231.

³⁶⁹ Hubbs, *Hessian Journals*, p. 60

³⁷⁰ Specht, *Journal*, p. 5.

³⁷¹ Marvin Brown (ed.). *Baroness Riedesel and the American Revolution* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1965), p. 71.

³⁷² Hubbs *Hessian Journals*, p.61.

much German in their identity and their institutional affiliations. But there are indications of a lingering attachment to their time in King George's Army, for when the Bayreuth regiment paraded into its home city for the first time in six years, 'with dressed ranks, smartly shouldered weapons, and music playing', quite tellingly, the band was playing an English march.³⁷³

****Interactions****

The areas and methods of interaction between British and German auxiliaries in the American War were not particularly different from previous, or succeeding conflicts. Nevertheless, the unique circumstances of the American Rebellion meant that there were a certain number of divergences from the eighteenth century norms. More importantly, the increased popularity of this subject, as well as the enormity of sources in contrast to previous wars, make this particular episode an excellent period from which to highlight many of the forms of interaction typical between redcoats and German auxiliaries.

The inhibitors of language and distance remained prominent, yet, the dynamics of the language divide was slightly different, given the nature of the conflict, and more importantly, the setting. The British and German soldiers were operating in a predominantly English speaking environment, and therefore the impetus for learning new languages fell upon the German forces, as the Ansbach-Bayreuth officer, Johann Döhla explained:

Many of the [British] officers spoke French, some German also; however they seldom used the French language, and German only in the greatest emergency. All orders from the King, Parliament, and the commander in chief were given in English, and all reports were required in the same language. Our officers therefore had to apply themselves diligently to learn this language if they wanted to succeed and did not want to drag along interpreters, which cost money and were not always available.³⁷⁴

³⁷³ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 253.

³⁷⁴ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 71.

Whereas in Europe it was the British officers who were seen as unprofessional for their linguistic shortcomings (for example, when George Sackville was held chiefly responsible for the miscommunication between the British and German high commands), here it was English that was the *lingua franca*, and the onus to adapt would land squarely on the German commanders. Yet, this did not prevent the British officers from endeavouring to learn German, as Lieutenant W.J. Hale of the 45th Regiment considered the language ‘almost absolutely necessary for the frequency of British officers being detached with Hessians’ in the rank & file.³⁷⁵

Certainly the German officers knew the pressures imposed by this language barrier, and many relied heavily upon their knowledge of French, and any British or Irish men serving as aides or within their ranks who could act as translators.³⁷⁶ For those men without these options, the complications created by this linguistic divide were intense. Captain Pausch of the Hessen-Hanau artillery sought to resign (a request denied by his sovereign), because ‘not another single German officer in the whole of America finds himself, regarding his honour and fortune, in a more dangerous position,’ serving ‘alone and among troops, who do not understand me, nor I them.’³⁷⁷ Noticeably, death or capture do not figure into his risks, but they did for the Brunswick Lt-Colonel Friedrich Baum, whose ill-fated sortie at Bennington presaged Burgoyne’s surrender at Saratoga and made him a ready-made scapegoat for the failures of that campaign. With only a token familiarity of French, a non-existent knowledge of English, and a cantankerous personality that transcended these linguistic barriers, Baum was easily misled by a band of apparent loyalists. When these men turned out to be rebel sympathizers, the result was not only the loss of his ‘honor and fortune,’ but his death and the destruction of his expeditionary force.³⁷⁸ In most cases, the linguistic divide had less dramatic effects, though it was

³⁷⁵ H.W. Wilkin, *Some British Soldiers in America* (London: Hugh Rees, 1914). p. 240.

³⁷⁶ Burgoyne, *Specht Journal*, pp. 5-6.; Burgoyne, *Pausch’s Journal*, pp. 6, 49 .

³⁷⁷ Burgoyne, *Pausch’s Journal*, p. 54.

³⁷⁸ To assist in communicating, Baum was accompanied by an Irishman Laurentious O’Connell, in the Brunswick service. Another advisor, a provincial, Captain Samuel MacKay, was purported by his colleague Wasmus to exclaim, ‘How is it possible... that General Riedesel [the commanding general] could entrust such a ----- man with such an important expedition, who is so coarse and rude and also despised the council of those who had been sent along for guidance, assistance and advice’. For all the discussion of his monophony, the real fault may have lain in more practical character flaws, or

occasionally blamed for the poor relations among the soldiers – which despite the unique circumstances of the American War, was typical in Anglo-German coalitions.

One of the elements that set this conflict apart from so many others is the sphere in which British and German forces first interacted. Rather than the initial encounters between these men being at an army camp, or a military revue, in the American War transports became the most common venue, and before any German soldiers had met a significant number of their British counterparts, they had already spent months alongside British sailors. The difference created is striking. The trepidations and seasickness from which the German soldiers almost universally suffered meant that they were usually under duress during these voyages. This was compounded further in that their first interactions were with British sailors – neither the most reputable members of society, nor those who would share in the sense of camaraderie and fraternity that could be found between two groups of professional soldiers. The Brunswick Lieutenant August du Roi was relieved that the captain of his ship ‘did not have the course character common to other seamen’, possessing only the better ‘qualities of his nation’.³⁷⁹ Others, however, found little among the British sailors to like: impressions of these ‘sea-dogs’ were usually derogatory, and the feeling it seems was mutual. According to the Anbacher, Johann Döhla, insinuated that it was a natural disinclination, stating, in an indictment of German national character, ‘Above all, [British sailors] do not like the German people, because the German people are too arrogant and consider themselves better than others.’ However, his impression of the English sailors was no better,

those around him. James Hadden laid the blame, in part on the British officer, Colonel Skreene who appointed him to the task. ‘The trusting so important an affair [to someone] who cou’d not utter one word of English when “*insinuations*” were *required* and address expected certainly can hardly be palliated by the jealousy of Gen’l Reidesil [sic] from a wish to employ the Germans on some important enterprise’. Doblin, *The American Revolution*, p. 68.; Stephen Conway, *The War of American Independence* (London, Edward Arnold: 1995), p. 61.; James M. Hadden, *Hadden’s Journal and orderly books. A journal kept in Canada and upon Burgoyne’s campaign in 1776 and 1777* (Albany: Munsell’s Sons, 1884. Reprinted in Freeport, N.Y. by Books for Libraries Press 1970), pp. 132, 294 (footnotes).

³⁷⁹ He further adds of this particular captain, George Prissick, ‘His behaviour towards us soon won our friendship, and is attention to our men gained him the respect of the soldiers, who looked upon him as a father.’ August Wilhelm du Roi, *Journal of du Roi the Elder*, p. 10.

proclaiming them 'a thieving, happy, whoring, drunken lot and much inclined to swearing and cursing people.'³⁸⁰

Close proximity in tight confines with such characters was a catalyst for conflict, and the language barrier only compounded matters.³⁸¹ Throughout the war episodes of violence commonly occurred upon transports heading to the colonies, or in transit between areas of operation. One German officer recalled that miscommunication and suspicions between Germans soldiers and English sailors, 'immediately caused a nasty misunderstanding on the day of embarkation' – although the conflict was peaceably settled.³⁸² The small boats on the rivers of Canada and in upper New York would also be scenes of such conflicts between German and British soldiers and sailors, where on cramped *radeau* tempers would flare, to the point that officers dared not leave their men unsupervised for fear that they would become involved in some quarrel.³⁸³ On the longer voyages, conditions could be just as bad. 'It is easy to understand that a people like these Hessians, tired of being imprisoned for four or nearly five months... and obliged to drink foul water and to eat mouldy biscuit and... [bad meat] cannot be in good humour.'³⁸⁴

However it appears that once the German soldiers had *terra firma* underneath them once again, they took less umbrage to the jeers and jests of the British servicemen, and conflicts, at least instigated by German soldiers, were less frequent.³⁸⁵ More importantly, the rate at which conflicts arose between the auxiliaries and the men manning these transport vessels provides a comparison

³⁸⁰ Stephen Popp recalled that 'we really were amazed when we saw the sailors. What a raw and wild tribe they are! And we who could not understand a thing were shamed and ridiculed to the limit by them, until by signs and winks we finally caught on.' Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, pp. 14-15. Stephen Popp, *A Hessian Soldier in the American Revolution: The Diary of Stephan Popp*, translated by Reinhart J. Pope (Private Printing, 1953), p. 3

³⁸¹ Several conflicts are outlined in Atwood's discussion of Anglo-Hessian relations, yet he leaves out the settings of such conflicts as the crucial factor. See Atwood. *Hessians*, ch. 6, esp. pp. 154-157.

³⁸² Doblin, *The American Revolution*, p. 6.

³⁸³ 'It was already so well-filled with men that not all of them could be accommodated. We were all English because the space was too tight for any unpleasantness.' Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, pp. 38-9.

³⁸⁴ Quoted in: Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 55.

³⁸⁵ For the British sailors, the sight of terrified and bed-ridden foreigners was a point of humour, but for all their jests, there were numerous instances of cordiality, especially when pointing out the various forms of sea-life – such as the 'purpose pig' – to which men from land-locked imperial principalities had never encountered. Hubbs, *Hessian Journals*; Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 51.; Du Roi, *Journal*, p. 14.

with relations with the British soldiers. A large proportion of the violent interactions recounted by soldiers were on ships, and between soldier and sailor, revealing that it was not national antipathy that was the major catalyst, but a conflict between men of the navy and army. Once on land, and interacting with men of their own branch of service, relations seem to follow the trends common throughout the century. In many ways, the associations of British and German soldiers during the American War typified the standard manner in which these two groups interacted during this time period. Yet, there were still distinctive aspects brought about by the uniqueness of the American War.

For interactions between the men in the rank and file, once again, there is less evidence than for the officers, but certainly the very nature of the war resulted in making such encounters more common than they had been in previous conflicts. Despite the tendency to separate British and German troops, there would be frequent intermingling in camps and barracks. Unlike European theatres where the various armies would be encamped at times a day apart, in America, British and German troops would often camp together, or at least in close proximity.³⁸⁶ This 'brigading' with certain regiments could foster good relations, as testified by the cordial friendship between the 34th Regiment and the Hessen-Hanau artillery in Canada in 1776.

The Commander of this [34th] Regiment... entertained me and my two officers throughout the day and my troops were quartered in a barn, in which they all lay together, by his regiment. This is done by all the English and Germans here in Canada. A great amount of honor and friendship was demonstrated to us... by the mentioned regiment.³⁸⁷

As mentioned before, food and drink would be a common unifier, and while the armies' commanders tried to ensure that British and German soldiers were sharing the same food, they were trying to discourage them from sharing the same alcohol. Though this may be a positive sign of friendship and association, it was not exactly popular among their officers, as in the case of one Bayreuth private who had to run the gauntlet, having 'drank to excess with English cannoneers' while on

³⁸⁶ Brown, *Baroness von Riedesel*, p.44.

³⁸⁷ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 31.

duty.³⁸⁸ There was at least one conflict between the British and German soldiers of Burgoyne's Army 'occasioned by Liquor', where, according to the army's General Orders, 'one of the greatest Military Principles was so far forgot by some British soldiers that a Guard was insulted.'³⁸⁹ Though intoxication was a common cause of infighting, Georg Pausch was proud to note that after the first few months in Canada, there had 'not been the least conflict because of drunkenness.'³⁹⁰ There was quarrelling over a communal vegetable garden in the garrison in New Jersey, but more peaceful exchanges could be seen in Rhode Island, where British soldiers might visit the 'flesh market' established by the Hessian regiments.³⁹¹ There were other aspects of the daily life of British soldiers that would not necessarily involve interactions with German troops. Religious worship was obviously separated, especially for the Catholic Ansbachers, and the only times in which English soldiers sought out German chaplains, was for them to preside over weddings with the less reputable women among the Army's camp-followers.³⁹²

There was certainly evidence of discord among the rank & file, which included a notable amount of theft, and a few cases of murder. Von Krafft witnessed 'innumerable' incidents of such infighting during the campaigns in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In one instance, a Hessian grenadier sergeant was killed by a group of Irish soldiers, who assailed him 'with their bayonets, wounded him in many places, [and] robbed him of everything.'³⁹³ There are multiple accounts of a conflict between an English officer of the 20th regiment, and a Hanau corporal ('cannoneer') by the name of Heinrich Nantz, who drew the ire, and the bayonet, of

³⁸⁸ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 123.

³⁸⁹ Burgoyne, *Orderly book of Lieut. Gen. John Burgoyne*, p. 45.

³⁹⁰ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p.36.

³⁹¹ Peebles, *John Peebles' American War*, p. 274. Doblin, *Garrison Life in French Canada*, p. 116.; Atwood, *Hessians*, p.155.

³⁹² 'Such things and a thousand others of like or worse character were not rare here. A certain sergeant of the above named English regiment, a handsome young fellow, had been married sixteen times to loose women of the town by different English and German chaplains, through shrewd contrivances, without consent of his officers and told me too that he hoped to do so often again, before making up his mind to take the last one in real earnest.' Krafft, *Journal*, pp. 139-40.; For the segregated nature of Ansbach religious services, see: Bruce R. Burgoyne (trans. & ed.), *A Hessian Officer's Diary of the American Revolution translated from An Anonymous Ansbach-Bayreuth Diary (As originally written by Johann Ernst Prechtel...)* and *Prechtel Diary* (Maryland: Heritage Books, 1994), p. 141.

³⁹³ Krafft, *Journal*, p. 91.

the Englishman by staring at him and his female companion. Nantz, despite his insistence that he could not speak English, had enough familiarity with it to know that being called a 'Dutch bugger' was no compliment, and struck the officer, whose uniform was concealed under his coat. This was a conflict where both sides were clearly at fault, given that the English officer, Lt. Norman, took considerable offense towards a harmless action of a Hanau soldier, meanwhile the 'cannoneer', having met and been 'allowed to look at' Frederick the Great, was determined not to be belittled by someone he thought was a civilian.³⁹⁴ A disparity between class and rank was crucial in this conflict being preserved and recounted, as if these men were both of the same station, it might have been settled in a duel, and perhaps not come to the attention of the German officers who tried to reconcile the offended parties.³⁹⁵ That the conflict was relayed in this manner is a testament to the irregularity of such occurrences, though later scholarship would portray the different contingents in Burgoyne's Army to be constantly quarrelling.³⁹⁶ Similarly, though von Krafft attested to violence within the army, his definition of 'English' was broad enough to include loyalists from provincial regiments, some of whom assailed him when he tried to rescue a fellow German soldier from a drunken brawl.³⁹⁷ Once sailors and loyalists are removed from the equation, the number of quarrels between British and German soldiers is lower than at first glance.

As for interactions and associations between officers, the small size and close proximities of the various contingents within the army led to the parties, balls and other celebratory functions being predominantly multi-national affairs. The writings during the American War are invaluable for permitting insight into these events and the role that officers from among the German auxiliaries played in the social life of the British officer-class. There was a history between some of these

³⁹⁴ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, pp. 60-1.

³⁹⁵ The whole affair, and its resolution was handled primarily by Maj. Gen. Riedesel, the Brunswick commander, who on several occasions acted as a moderator and translator between the Hanau and British forces.

³⁹⁶ The editor of James Hadden's journal, the American Colonel Horatio Rodgers, wrote that the 'unfortunate element in Burgoyne's army was its mixed character' and that 'the British entertained a poor opinion of, if indeed they did not despise the Germans.' Hadden, *Hadden's Journal*, pp. lxxxv, 37-8 (footnotes).

³⁹⁷ Krafft, *Journal*, p. 83.

officers that predated the campaigns of 1776-7. It was not uncommon for colleagues and acquaintances from the Seven Years War, or the intervening period, to reunite during this new campaign. 'Not long after our arrival' in Portsmouth, wrote Colonel Specht,

Capt. Boyle, an English officer, approached us addressing us in German with the greatest obligation and offered to render us all sorts of services; he was happy seeing the Braunschweigers again, by whose urbanity he had been charmed in the last campaign, and offered to be our guide.³⁹⁸

For others it was a chance of reuniting men from official or recreational forays to the princely courts of the Holy Roman Empire. This did not necessarily endear them to one another, as attested to by the writings of Sir James Murray, who before the war had a 'deplorable time' at the court of the Prince of Brunswick.³⁹⁹ Yet a more positive sentiment can be found from another journeying British officer, George Hanger, whose 'pleasant and agreeable' years among German courts, and his close friendship with many officers from Hessen-Kassel, inspired him to leave the British Army to join the Hessian Jägers, where in America he would be a valuable liaison between British and German troops.⁴⁰⁰ For the officers of the auxiliary forces, there was also a great deal of prior experiences, and not just from 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany' in the Seven Years War. General Riedesel and several Hessian officers had spent time in England in 1756-7 with the Hessian and Hanoverian forces, where Riedesel himself acquired a token knowledge of the native language.⁴⁰¹ Though such connections would be uncommon, it did show that there was some history among men in the officer corps, and that not all friends and enemies among the officers were creations of the American War.

For the remainder of Britain's officers, this may have been their first prolonged encounter with their counterparts from central Germany, but it did not

³⁹⁸ Specht, *Journal*, p. 10

³⁹⁹ Robson, *Letters From America*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁰ 'The hospitality and the open honest character of the Germans, so attached me to the country, that when ordered home to join my [British] regiment, I quitted it with much reluctance, and absolutely shed tears on my departure.' Hanger, *Life Adventures and Opinions*, pp. 40-2, 44-5. Krafft, p. 56.

⁴⁰¹ Frederick Augustus von Riedesel, *Memoirs, and Letters and Journals, of Major General Riedesel, During his Residence in America*. Translated from the Original German of Max von Eelking by William L. Stone. 2 vols. (Albany: J. Munsell, 1868), vol. I, p. 3.

take long before the *Hessen* were a continuous presence, both in military duties and in their social lives as well. Certainly, there was a share of genuine friendship, and amiable relations were not merely due to a culture of politeness. General Clinton was considered 'a great friend of the Germans', and General Phillips was an especially popular figure among the Hanau and Brunswick men.⁴⁰² British officers and men in Burgoyne's army repeatedly praised General Riedesel, and even when the other officers and soldiers of the Brunswick contingent were under scrutiny, he was rarely suspected of misdoing. Yet we should not have too rosy a picture of such relations, as Rodney Atwood has shown, that in cases such as General Howe's attitude towards General Heister, the first commander of the Hessen-Kassel contingent, acts of politeness and deference merely cloaked resentments and mistrusts, yet this was more towards individual officers, and there is no indication that such apprehensions were universal.⁴⁰³

No doubt the British and each of the German armies had collected infirm and, generally speaking, humourless officers, but the apparent disparity between the two polities reinforced depictions of Germanic dullness and incivility, which dominated the discourses of the British upper class. Whilst garrisoned on Staten Island in the winter of 1778, Alexander Leslie complained of there being 'very little society' within the predominantly Hessian garrison, and the 'slowness' that dominated analyses of German military men were extended to critiques of the manners and mannerisms of their superiors.⁴⁰⁴ A year later, a civilian Robert Biddulph would relate much the same impression: 'The ensuing Winter will be a very dull one, as we are garrison'd by Hessians, who, tho' they all speak English, do not make their Way among the Inhabitants who are sociable talkers.'⁴⁰⁵ The implication here is that the language barrier, which was strong at first, did not remain the key inhibitor to the social interactions between these officers, which instead may have merely been cultural incongruities.

⁴⁰² Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 49. Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p.38.

⁴⁰³ Atwood, *Hessians*, pp. 108, 146.

⁴⁰⁴ NAS GD26/9/518 Letters of Alexander Leslie, Staten Island, November 23rd, 1778.

⁴⁰⁵ Quoted in Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 152.

Conflicts between British and German officers are rare sights among the journals and correspondences, in spite of the resentments many felt toward one another. For duels and matters of honour, the pugnacious John von Krafft's account is rich with details of these affairs, in part because Krafft seemed very keen to instigate them (he participates or is present at four within the first two months of becoming an officer), but these were mostly with officers within his own regiment. With such characters within the army, it is surprising that there are precious few accounts of conflicts between the two officer classes.⁴⁰⁶

Turning to more convivial associations, there were specific episodes that distinguish themselves from forms common in previous, or subsequent Anglo-German armies. Parties receive continuous mention in the writings of British and German officers, as do several other forms of association that are not paralleled in other conflicts. In the high profile festivities of the British officer corps, Hessian officers would be a continuous presence, and in significant numbers. A dinner party hosted by General Clinton included the invitation of 'as many Englishman and Hessians as the dining room could hold.'⁴⁰⁷ Baroness Riedesel did her best to alleviate the gloom and boredom of being a prisoner of the Americans by inviting 'all the generals and officers' of the so-called Convention Army, to attend 'a ball and supper' to celebrate her husband's birthday.⁴⁰⁸ Similarly, a 'Mischianza' in Philadelphia in honour of the departing General Howe was to have both officer corps as guests and participants.⁴⁰⁹ General Howe's German aide-de-camp Friedrich Muenchhausen wrote of New York: 'we have balls, concerts, and meetings, which I am already weary of. I do not like this frivolous life... A crazy life it is, just having been under serious fire, and then seeing fireworks of joy' and then dancing.⁴¹⁰ The King's Birthday was one cause for collective celebration, and British officers were

⁴⁰⁶ Krafft, *Journal*, pp. 31-36.

⁴⁰⁷ Uhlendorf, *Revolution in America*, p. 304.

⁴⁰⁸ Obviously, the highest ranking German officers were in high demand for various festivities, as Maj. General Riedesel, was urged by General Phillips to attend a ball given for the King's Birthday, despite his being several days ride away from Quebec. *Baroness* p.71. p. 345.

⁴⁰⁹ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 74.

⁴¹⁰ Friedrich Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side 1776-1778: The Diary of General William Howe's Aide de Camp, Captain Friedrich von Muenchhausen*. Translated by Ernst Kipling and annotated by Samuel Smith (Monmouth Beach: Philip Freneau Press, 1974), pp. 8-9.

also a part of celebrations in the armies of the respective German princes, such as one for the Duke of Brunswick, where it was noted, 'the English officers were present at the fete'.⁴¹¹ German officers were even invited to the parties of notable loyalists.⁴¹² Events were not exclusively for officers, as was the case when Sir George Osborne 'entertained the Hessian and British Troops with a *Fete Champêtre dans toutes les Formes*, which has made as much noise at the Rebel Head Quarter as at our own.'⁴¹³ Part of what is so noteworthy of many of these celebrations, is that they were accessible to a larger spectrum of classes, as the most prominent parties and celebrations during European campaigns would often comprise of princes and aristocrats, while in the colonies, it might be include many among the middling sort, lower ranking officers and subalterns, and even men in the rank & file.

Despite the presence of these foreign officers and soldiers, they did not necessarily have a prominent role at such events. For the grander balls, theirs was a minor role amidst the complex proceedings, and in what references we have regarding the social life of officers in the army, they were primarily relegated to running gambling games. During the grand 'gala' ball in Philadelphia in the winter of 1778, 'one of these rooms was cleared, and a faro [sic] bank was installed which was run... by three Hessian officers.'⁴¹⁴ John Peebles also mentions the presence of a 'Pharo Bank kept by the Hessians', one of main sources of entertainment for officers, although in this case it was something that lasted longer than just one evening.⁴¹⁵ Lieutenant Hale much resented this 'Pharaoh Bank' maintained by the 'yägers', which he stated had 'not a little disordered the finances of several officers... imprudent enough to endeavour.' It must have been a popular pastime, as he complained that 'this Army is now ten times worse officered than it was two years

⁴¹¹ Wasmus, *American Revolution*, p. 27.

⁴¹² Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 151.

⁴¹³ Huntington Library MS Pocock Papers, PO 1170, George Osborne to George Pocock, May 15th 1777,

⁴¹⁴ John Peebles confirmed this, in his diary. Quoted in Jackson, *With the British army in Philadelphia*, p. 246.

⁴¹⁵ Peebles, *American War*, p. 161

since, owing to that extravagant rage for play', which created indebted officers who would be compelled to leave the army.⁴¹⁶

Aside from running these gambling games, there is little mention of their role in most parties, other than their mere attendance. Therefore, in many cases, and in a manner quite different from the Hanoverians in the Napoleonic Wars, the German presence was more based on formality than celebrity. Admiral Lord Howe's secretary, Ambrose Serle kept track of the various dinner parties with General 'de Heister' and his 'suite' which he stated, 'like all such ceremonious affairs, went off very cold & very dull.'⁴¹⁷ Likewise, Hessian officers would often attend for the sake of politeness, as attested to by the Hessian Johann von Loos, who sought merely to 'please the English' by joining in their celebration of the King's birthday.⁴¹⁸ Therefore, it may be that more often the Hessians received mention in recollections of social events as a point of novelty or merely as a means of gauging an event's importance.

Novelty was reflected to an equal degree by accounts of another, more sombre aspect of the officers' lives: funerals.⁴¹⁹ The presence and often-prominent role of German soldiers and officers and the obvious cultural variations that were apparent in these ceremonies, was something unique to commentaries on the American War. It was in these solemn occasions that the Hessians took centre stage, performing elaborate burials that both impressed fellow Britons, but also reinforced perceptions that the German soldiers were obsessed with death and their own mortality. The appreciable difference of the Germans' funerals for their fallen warriors was noteworthy for British authors, and a point of pride for the Hessian soldiers. There are several remarks in British accounts on the presence of German officers at the funerals of fallen redcoats, as well as their attendance at those

⁴¹⁶ Riedesel also saw this as a leading cause of desertion among the German soldiers in the 'Convention Army', who would desert when they could not pay their debts. Wilkin, *Some British Soldiers*, pp. 241-2; Stone, *Memoirs, and Letters... of Major General Riedesel*, vol. II, chap. 1.

⁴¹⁷ Ambrose Serle, *The American Journal of Ambrose Serle, Secretary to Lord Howe, 1776-1778*. Edited by Edward H. Tatum, Jr. (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1940), p. 150.

⁴¹⁸ Hubbs, *Hessian Journals*, p. 30.

⁴¹⁹ Two decades later, Lord Wallingford would describe this part of life in the army as a 'more unpleasant duty than going to meet the enemy'. HRO 1M44/110 fol. 37a Letter from Wallingford to his Mother, 'Camp before Dunkirk' Aug 20th, 1793.

services for the German dead.⁴²⁰ As with the high-profile social events, attendance was due both to politeness, as well as fondness.⁴²¹ For the funeral of Friedrich Minnigerode, a man who 'was loved by the English and Hessians', the entire garrison took part in the procession, and the service at the local Lutheran church was attended by 'all the English generals.'⁴²² Funerals were noteworthy not only for those who attended, but the British reaction to them, especially as these ceremonies were not merely confined to the officer class. On July 3rd 1776 a 'musketeer' of a Hessen-Hanau regiment was buried 'with the usual ceremonies' according to the Brunswick surgeon Julius Wasmus, yet he remarked that 'the English and Canadians were astounded by the magnificent burial.'⁴²³ The death of an Indian war-chief in Burgoyne's Canadian Army was honoured by a procession of sixteen German dragoons, bearing a ceremonial musket to his grave, followed by the firing of three volleys into the air.⁴²⁴ The discrepancy in marking such occasions is likely why the German presence at these events were so often noted, even if they did not go to any length to describe their actions. Yet such displays further impressed upon British minds a picture of German soldiery that was obsessed with death, in their ceremonies and their sentiments. Thomas Anburey noted that during the winter of 1776-7, men from the Hessen-Hanau and Brunswick contingents would gather in groups of 'twenty or thirty at a time' and 'mope and pine about', convinced of their certain demise.⁴²⁵ Funerals were an important instance of interaction, but their

⁴²⁰ Doblin, *American Revolution*, p.40

⁴²¹ Yet no doubt that many colleagues were deeply moved, and such tragic events give some indication of the friendships between British and German soldiers, as when General Clinton tearfully embraced the dying Captain von Vollrath. Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 52.

⁴²² HSM 4* MS Hass. 18b, 'Dinklage Tagebuch' fols. 233-4.

⁴²³ Helga Doblin, *Eyewitness Account of the American Revolution and New England Life: The Journal of J.F. Wasmus, German Company Surgeon, 1776-1783* (Greenwood Press: 1993), p. 35.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.* 70.

⁴²⁵ Anburey continues, 'Nor can any medicine or advice you can give them divert this settled superstition, which they as surely die martyrs to, as ever it infects them. Thus it is that men, who have faced the dangers of battle and of shipwreck without fear (for they are certainly as brave as any soldiers in the world), are taken off, a score at a time, by a mere phantom of their own brain. This is a circumstance very well known to every one in the army.' Anburey, *Travels through the Interior Parts of America*, vol. 1 pp. 161-2.

elaborate roles in these events, combined with the context in which they transpired, contributed to a sense of 'otherness' rather than commonality.⁴²⁶

****Professionalism and National Character****

The impressions and reflections made by British soldier-writers regarding the German auxiliaries in the American War, though founded upon differences in nationality, were to a considerable extent focused on professional differences. Whereas the discourse in subsequent generations would contextualize their German allies very much in reference to national character, in the American War the focus was ability and performance in the various soldierly duties – no doubt owed in part to the contractual relationship that brought about the German presence. In fact, here in the American War, when both British and German authors most often discussed innate abilities or foreign characteristics at length, it was in describing Native Americans.

While most descriptions would be seen as merely commentary on professional merits, there remained a great deal of nationalistic sentiment, and descriptions of various groups of soldiers were always to some degree articulated in this way. In the retelling of various military feats, the Army was clearly divided into distinct European groups: usually 'English', 'Germans' (and even the occasional mention of 'Highlanders'), but also 'Hessians', which often became a catchall term. Though the 'Hessians' were in fact a far more disparate group than commonly portrayed, there was indeed a sense of solidarity among them, yet this was a collective 'German' identity, not a Hessian one. Johann Döhla, at the head of the Ansbach forces wrote, 'at the time of our arrival in America, we burned with a desire to demonstrate our bravery and to show that the Germans, and especially those of the famous Franconian blood, did not lack courage and wished to demonstrate this

⁴²⁶ Yet the difference was perhaps not so profound, and in the Peninsular War, one British officer, noting the fatalism among his fellow soldiers during times of sickness and hunger, stated that 'the English soldier thinks more seriously of death, and his accountability hereafter, than perhaps any other, except the Protestant soldiers of the north of Germany.' Sherer, *Recollections of the Peninsula*, p. 72.

also in another distant part of the world.⁴²⁷ This solidarity among the Germans may not have been especially common, but it is shown elsewhere, for example, eight months after Saratoga, the Hessian General Bauermeister was 'very happy' to hear an artillery commander give a 'testimony of the valour of all the German troops' from Burgoyne's now captured army, especially as he claimed that 'no straightforward account had ever been given.'⁴²⁸ Nevertheless, there were those who remained firmly committed to their own state or homeland, exemplified by the writings of Friedrich Muenchhausen who provides a glimpse of a conflict of allegiances and identities: 'Happy it would make me to be with my beloved old Brunswickers... I would seize every opportunity to show them that, although I am wearing a red British uniform, and am still a Hessian captain, I am really a Brunswicker in heart and mind.'⁴²⁹ While the forces within the native British regiments might be equally conflicted, both British and German could draw far greater contrasts between themselves and the 'cowardly' and 'undisciplined' forces of their Indian allies and American opponents.

These commentaries hint at another aspect of a nationalistic sentiment, when soldier-authors would usually reserve the strongest praise for their own forces, and in these evaluations the end result regularly favoured one's own army.⁴³⁰ Lieutenant Hale seemed particularly unilateral when comparing the two forces when he concluded that the Hessians, 'the best of the German troops, are by no means equal to the British in any respect.'⁴³¹ Conversely, the Englishman George Hanger went against the grain in proclaiming that there were 'no braver or better disciplined forces in the world' than the Hessians, but given his three year tenure as captain in the Hessen-Kassel Jägers, he too was being biased towards his own.⁴³²

Therefore identities beyond merely those of a soldier were at work in shaping perceptions, and while origins may have been a divisive force, this was

⁴²⁷ Döhla, *A Hessian Diary*, p. 22.

⁴²⁸ Uhlendorf, *Revolution in America*, p. 159.

⁴²⁹ Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side*, p. 14.

⁴³⁰ Lord Rawdon, though impressed with the Hessians, stated that 'They are good troops but in point of men nothing equal to ours.' HMC, *Rawdon*, p. 179.

⁴³¹ Wilkin, *Some British Soldiers*, p.224

⁴³² Hanger, *Life, Adventures and Opinions*, p.34.

overcome in part by displays of commonality to a shared cause and more evident contrasts found in those of colonial origins. The unity among soldiers was shared with a sense of a European identity, in which lesser cultural differences were minimized in contrast to non-European groups, and in which professional differences were slight compared to the appearance, methods of fighting, and motivations of the rebels.⁴³³ This was a common theme in extra-European conflicts during this era, for example on the Indian Subcontinent, where a European style of warfare was more pronounced. Commenting upon the speedy withdrawal from Philadelphia, the jäger captain, Johann Ewald, suggested that it was a 'very remarkable' feat of 'the European', while many accounts in soldiers' journals and correspondence describe at length the unfamiliar mores of colonial inhabitants, while similar commentaries regarding their European allies are almost non-existent.⁴³⁴

Solidarity was not necessarily dependent upon contrasts with an 'other', and there were more active means of unifying the British and German forces. One of the main aspects in creating good impressions among the British officers, was the 'zeal' and 'vigor' displayed by the German officers and soldiers when fighting the rebels. In such commentaries, it was not a matter of merely performing the duties of a soldier, as expected, but their seeming desire to go beyond these expectations, and to share with the British both a disdain for the American rebels and a loyalty to the King surpassing mere contractual obligation. Whether it was ideological reasons, *esprit de corps*, or merely a desire to see the war's speedy conclusion, the auxiliaries impressed their British allies by their tenacity in battle and a genuine, or apparent, support for 'the cause'.⁴³⁵ Hanger stated that the Hessians fought with 'the greatest

⁴³³ For a survey of European solidarity within the British Army, see Conway, "The British Army, "Military Europe"", esp. pp. 89-100.

⁴³⁴ For example, Thomas Anburey, whose correspondence focused far more on the peoples of Canada and Native Americans, than on the War he was fighting in. Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War*, p. 138.; Anburey, *Travels*.

⁴³⁵ For the 'Hessian' view of the American colonies, see Ernst Kipping. *The Hessian View of America, 1776-1783* (Monmouth Beach, NJ: Freneau, 1971); Inge Auerbach, et al. *Hessen und die Amerikanische Revolution 1776*. (Marburg: das Hessische Staatsarchiv, 1976). I, p. 244. For more on identities and solidarities during the American War of Independence, see: Stephen Conway, 'From

gallantry and fidelity, and the most sincere attachment to the cause', while repeatedly general orders and statements from the British commanders applauded the German forces for rendering 'the greatest service to the King' and for matching the ability and ferocity of the British troops.⁴³⁶ Unity in fighting against the rebels could even transcend national allegiances, as exemplified by the comments of the veteran officer and diplomatic envoy Joseph Yorke, who wrote to his friend Jeffrey Amherst, that 'the poor Germans they should be attended to by everyone in this sphere, since we trust them to fight our battles, whilst so many of our unworthy sons [meaning political opponents] are doing all they can to hurt us.'⁴³⁷ Yet this good-will and sense of unity through common purpose, could be, and often was, quickly undermined by the Hessian soldiers' inclination to plunder, which altered perceptions in the minds of Britons that their real motivation was greed.

Amongst the myriad of descriptions of German auxiliaries (and their accounts of the British), there is still a wide spectrum of topics regarding physical, cultural and professional differences. Some descriptions were merely musings on prosaic or mundane dissimilarity, yet far more were intrinsically tied into an ongoing comparison between 'English' and 'German', in which manners and methods of soldiering took prime placement. And while it is important to note that there were various different polities making up the German auxiliaries, the commentaries were very similar, and only divergent in minor matters, not the broad themes to which we now turn.

As with discussions of auxiliaries in other conflicts, the first significant interactions between these forces were often on parade grounds, and in formal reviews, which naturally would lead to reflections on appearances and physical descriptions. Most remarks were generally positive, regardless of the principality of

fellow-nationals to foreigners : British perceptions of the Americans, circa 1739-1783'. *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 59:1 (2002), pp. 65-100.

⁴³⁶ The Germans 'have been treated with the greatest Deference, which (as might be expected with Germans) has made a pleasing Impression upon their Temper and Conduct, and inclined them as heartily in the Cause as the warmest among us could desire.' Quoted in Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 64; Hanger, *Life, Adventures and Opinions*, p. 40.; Helgin, *American Revolution*, p. 61.

⁴³⁷ CKS, Amherst Manuscripts U1350 C41 fol. 70, Joseph Yorke to Jeffrey Amherst, The Hague, March 1777.

origin, although after meeting the Brunswickers for the first time, one Scottish officer, Alex MacDonald, told his wife that they were 'the oddest looking fellows' he had ever seen.⁴³⁸ The 'Anspachers,' in the words of another Scotsman, John Peebles, were the 'finest looking troops & tallest, I ever saw.'⁴³⁹ This was a sentiment and phrase which frequently emerged from first encounters with these auxiliaries (and as we have seen, German armies in general), and on occasion this dual compliment made its way into the descriptions of the English as well, for example for the guard artillery where one could find 'no taller, finer nor more proper troops.'⁴⁴⁰

Comments after the initial battles or skirmishes with the rebels were equally laudatory and are – quite naturally – the dialogue most concerned with comparing and contrasting the professional character of Briton and German. In 1776, British forces already in New York and Canada waited through an anxious spring and summer for the arrival of the German auxiliaries, and this anticipation quickly turned to acclimation with the clearing of the rebel presence in Canada, and more poignantly, the battles that resulted in the capture of New York. Success, as it so often did in this epoch, yielded praise. Frederick Haldimand, who had eagerly anticipated the Hessian arrival, in order to 'do something of consequence', was elated after the battle of Jamaica Pass, where he was certain that 'nothing could behave better than the Hessians.'⁴⁴¹ And the word-of-mouth very much favoured the Hessians in this early phase of the conflict. Sir George Osborne, muster-master for the Hessen-Kassel soldiers, wrote to his associate the Admiral George Pocock,

My Little Hessians are not inclined to spare their cattle or effects, [but] in every other respect they behave, like (what they are) the best troops in the world. Not one deserter in twelve thousand men, and are alacrity and steadiness in our cause that is really beyond the utmost of our expectations.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁸ NLS MS 3945 fol. 36. Alex MacDonald to his wife, Portsmouth, June 16th, 1776.

⁴³⁹ Peebles, *American War*, p. 311

⁴⁴⁰ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 36.

⁴⁴¹ BL Add MS 21680 fols. 135, 147, Frederick Haldimand to Hutcheson, Staten Island, August 8th & September 1st 1776.

⁴⁴² HL MS Pocock Papers PO 1169, Sir George Osborne to George Pocock, West Chester New York, October 26th 1777.

This rather iconic passage would indicate that professionalism and enthusiasm were notable points of praise for the German auxiliaries, in the face of which other defects might be overlooked, especially in the earlier phases of this conflict.

In the first months of the war participants would remark upon other areas of contrast. As in the other conflicts during the long eighteenth century, the religiosity was a topic of analysis and reflection. For the Hessen-Kassel contingent, the psalm-singing and church parades that a decade before filled the local Winchester civilians with curiosity and wonderment, would re-emerge in the commentary of British officers in the colonies. Once again, this area of difference became a means of not just comparing cultures, but British and German soldiery, with this topic being one of the few that favoured the latter. The god-fearing Ambrose Serle, walking around the army camps on Staten Island, wrote 'it was pleasing to hear the Hessians singing Psalms in the Evening, with great solemnity, while, to our shame, the British navy & army in general are wasting their time in imprecations or idleness.'⁴⁴³ Some British soldiers were not completely idle, if we are to incorporate the commentary of one Quebec businessman, James Thompson. Having hired men from both nations as day labourers, Thompson, a former-sergeant, noticed that the British soldiers had an 'abominable desire for liquor', would spend all of their money on alcohol and were often seen 'lolling in the dirt, like beastly swine', whereas the Germans he employed were 'very seldom seen Entoxicated [sic], and what money they get they take care of.'⁴⁴⁴ Comments comparing alcohol consumption were rare during the American Revolution, but would, as will be seen in the following chapters, become one of the key divides distinguishing the soldiers of these respective polities.

Though British soldiers might be described as 'lolling in the dirt', cleanliness was in fact an area where the German auxiliaries compared unfavourably – a conclusion in which the British soldier-author and travel-author would wholeheartedly agree. Upon arriving at Portsmouth, for many German auxiliaries their

⁴⁴³ Serle, *American Journal*, pp. 55-6.

⁴⁴⁴ Thomson further condemned the red-coated soldiery: 'while they have any money in their pockets, they are never at ease, while any of it remains, nor do they care how long it lasts, so that they are in a state of Entoxication, and whoever comes in their way while they are at it is heartily welcome to share.' Quoted in: G. A. Stepler, 'The Common Soldier in the Reign of George III', p. 125.

first view of an English town, the predominant description is 'clean' or some permutation thereof. But it was the tidiness of British soldiers and their camps which impressed the German officers, and the close relationship between cleanliness and health would lead to a stereotype of the 'Hessians' as unclean, unhealthy, and ergo: inferior soldiers.⁴⁴⁵ The pious singing of the Hessians did not soothe Ambrose Serle's disdain for them, and he penned in his journal – and later scratched out – that they were a 'dirty, cowardly set of contemptible miscreants.'⁴⁴⁶ Another man with a nautical background, the marine Captain John Bowater, who set the gold standard for negative commentaries regarding the Hessians, recounted them as 'so very dirty that they have always one half of their people in the Hospitals.' Perhaps unsurprisingly, he praised the British soldiers for being 'remarkable healthy from the great attention pay'd them' and their practices of swimming, foot races and 'other manly exercises.'⁴⁴⁷ These men further reveal the degree to which relations between Hessian forces and the men of the British Navy were at odds. However, Sir George Osborne, a fellow soldier who normally had a great deal of praise for these auxiliaries, supported these criticisms by stating that the poor state of the Hessians' hospitals meant their soldiers dwelt in them too long.⁴⁴⁸ Yet this relationship between dirtiness and sickliness was stronger in perception than in reality, where despite an influx of unhealthy raw recruits into the German regiments, their relative health compared to the British forces was consistently better, once the initial illnesses from sea-travel ran its course.⁴⁴⁹ The cleanliness of British soldiers was also contributing to negative stereotypes, where their seeming overemphasis on hygiene was interpreted in some German accounts

⁴⁴⁵ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 71.

⁴⁴⁶ Serle, *American Journal*, p. 246 footnotes.

⁴⁴⁷ Marion Balderston (ed.), *The Lost War: Letters from British Officers during the American Revolution* (Horizon: New York, 1975), p. 125.

⁴⁴⁸ CO 5/236 fol. 6, Copy of Letter from George Osborne, 15th March 1777.

⁴⁴⁹ One officer of the 3rd Waldeck Regiment bragged that during a hot summer of 1778, that their regiment had not one person sick, which is corroborated by much of the records concerning these regiments. For the data relating to active and sick soldiers among British forces in America from 1777 onwards, see C.T. Atkinson, 'British Forces in North America, 1774-1781: Their Distribution and Strength.' *JSAHR*, 16 (Spring 1937), pp. 3-23; 19 (Autumn 1940), pp. 163-166; 20 (Winter 1941), pp. 190-192. Marion Dexter Learned, (ed.) *Phillip Waldeck's Diary of the Revolution* (Philadelphia: Americana Germanica Press, 1907).

as a further indication of English foppery, a criticism of English martial character particularly levelled at their officers.⁴⁵⁰

Religiosity, sobriety and cleanliness were certainly prominent areas of contrast, but it was pace and speed in manoeuvres and manners that drew the most commentary, and where Germanic national and martial characters were the most closely related. Commentaries on pace, in military manoeuvres or social mannerisms, were common throughout this century-long association between British and German soldiers. For the Hessians specifically, being termed slow was nothing new. The Duke of Cumberland complained of the 'slow motions' of his Hessian auxiliaries when trying to suppress the Scottish rebels in 1746, and as we shall see, in regards to the King's German Legion three decades later, the characterization still existed.⁴⁵¹ Yet in the America War, there were more weighted and subtle reasons for remarking upon this particular feature of Germanic martial character.

During the war, this one issue could become the embodiment of an author's overall impression of the German auxiliaries. In one of his first remarks of the soldiers of Hessen-Kassel, John Peebles wrote, that they were 'slow but steady troops,' and for many commentators there was a sliding scale between these two traits, which directly paralleled the author's overall opinion of their abilities as soldiers.⁴⁵² Bowater, whose judgment of the Hessians was overwhelmingly negative, wrote that they were 'exceedingly slow,' citing their 'mode of discipline,' which was 'not in the least calculated for this country.'⁴⁵³ Another British serviceman, with a slightly more favourable but still negative estimation of these subsidy-troops, proclaimed: 'I believe them steady, but their slowness is of the greatest disadvantage.' His dismay that his own regiment so outpaced the Hessian

⁴⁵⁰ In one reported letter, a Hessian officer complained that they would 'soon find toilets in the trenches, and receive orders to perfume the gunpowder.' This published account was perhaps retold due to it matching the sympathies of the author, George Forster, who had less than flattering adjectives for the English in general ('selfish', 'phlegmatic', 'unfriendly' for starters). See Johann George Forster, *Briefwechsel*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1829), vol. 1 p. 244.

⁴⁵¹ Jonathan Oates, 'Hessian Forces Employed in Scotland in 1746.' *JSAHR*, 83:335 (2005), p. 210.

⁴⁵² Peebles, *John Peebles American War*, p. 63.

⁴⁵³ Balderston, *The Lost War*, p. 125.

Grenadiers at Brandywine, and therefore bore the brunt of the fighting, hints at earlier accusations of Hanoverian reluctance in battle during the 1740's.⁴⁵⁴ The same implications can be found in comments during Burgoyne's march on Albany, where the slowness of the German auxiliaries, was seen as deliberate, owed to a reluctance to fight, or attributed to the jealousies of the German senior officers.⁴⁵⁵ The Brunswick Colonel Breymann's late arrival at the Battle of Bennington, was likewise a *cause célèbre* for those critical or suspicious of the German auxiliaries.

Not all British observers who commented upon this discrepancy in pace and manner saw it as a bad thing, with some regarding it not as a defect, but a point of admiration, and emulation. For those positive portrayals, 'steady' or 'steadiness' were widely used in substitution of 'slow' or 'slowness.' Thomas Dilkes admired the 'steady and regular advance' of the Hessian grenadiers, which he felt, 'in comparison to the rapid movement of our own men' was 'uncommonly fine to see.'⁴⁵⁶ William Faucitt, while reviewing the first wave of auxiliaries from Germany, described these same grenadiers as 'perfectly steady under arms' while Lord Rawdon was pleased at the 'awe' inspired by 'these steady troops' during their inaugural campaign.⁴⁵⁷ Therefore the terms 'slow' and 'steady' were popular descriptions, and hint at a wide concurrence between the descriptions of like-minded commentators.

As weighted or biased as many of these criticisms might be, they also cannot be divorced from the fact that the Hessians were in certain ways a great deal slower than their British allies. While German slowness became symbolic with the key deficiencies of the 'Hessian Mercenaries', it was not something that the Germans would entirely discredit. In some cases, the German officers concurred, or at least testified to it in their own writings when describing the British.⁴⁵⁸ For them, the

⁴⁵⁴ Wilkin, *Some British Soldiers*, p. 245

⁴⁵⁵ Hadden, *Hadden's Journal*, pp.118, 132.; for other suspicions within the army, see: Frank Warren Coburn, *A History of the Battle of Bennington Vermont* (Bennington: Livingston Press, 1912), pp. 22-4.

⁴⁵⁶ Alfred Kroger, *Geburt der USA : German newspaper accounts of the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Madison: 1962), p. 180.

⁴⁵⁷ Faucitt to Suffolk, CO 5/139 fol. 25.; HMC, *Rawdon*, pp. 183-4. See also: A. W. Haarmann, 'Contemporary observations on the Hesse-Cassel troops sent to North America, 1776-1781', *JSAHR*, 54 (1976), pp. 130-4

⁴⁵⁸ Civilians also observed this contrast. For one example, see: Nicholas Cresswell, *The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell 1774-1777* (New York: Dial Press, 1924), pp. 220, 221.

relationship with a national character was more apparent than in British accounts. English officers, to Johann Döhla, 'move quickly and hastily' in contrast to the gentlemen in these auxiliary corps. Furthermore, this Ansbach-Bayreuth officer added that 'the common British soldier is swift, marches easily, and in general, the English nation is very swift and light on their feet', given that they were not burdened with the heavy clothing or the sense of foreboding common in the German contingents: 'when they go against the enemy, they are fresh, optimistic, and do not worry about their life.'⁴⁵⁹ Away from considerations about formations and marching pace, the quickness of the British was something admirable, and by no means as 'weighty' as the remarks of Britons. This cultural division would be noticeable through to the Napoleonic Wars, and though it never contained the same symbolism as the rebellion in America, it was an important element in discussions of national and martial character.

This concept of slowness was tied into a whole host of different criticisms with the German auxiliaries. The most apparent reason for this particular critique, was that the British Army had already adapted (or were adapting) to wilderness warfare in colonial America, and the Germans had arrived equipped and trained for warfare in central Europe. The slow orderly movements of the German auxiliaries, following the Frederician model, were contrasted to the quick pace and open formations adopted by British units. When British commanding officers tried to impose 'uniformity of pace and motion' among the contingents, not everyone was keen to change.⁴⁶⁰ As the stubborn Georg Pausch exasperatingly wrote to his Prince, 'every day on the parade ground I must execute their quick march with them, to my greatest displeasure. This would not be done by us nor in Prussia, nor in the entire world, except when hunting with fleet horses and good hounds.'⁴⁶¹ Therefore, many of these critiques were sparked from exasperation at the persistence of these subsidy troops to retain these impractical formations and motions.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁹ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 71.

⁴⁶⁰ From Burgoyne's General Orders. Quoted in Hadden, *Hadden's Journal*, p. 79.

⁴⁶¹ Burgoyne, *Pausch's Journal*, p. 59.

⁴⁶² Bowater claimed that the Hessians were 'strictly enjoined by the Landgrave, not to alter' their pace and formations. Balderston, *Lost War*, p. 125.

The stereotype of Hessian slowness was also attributed to the uniform and dress of the German armies. As previously addressed, these allies were often required, or felt obligated to make their uniforms match or conform to the British, or more specifically, colonial, style. Yet, they were still derided for their burdensome attire, which they clung to – and which clung to them – for most of the war. During Burgoyne’s campaign in the wilderness of New York, Riedesel’s dismounted Brunswick dragoons wore heavy boots, caps and coats, and bore a cavalry sword ‘weighing at least 10 or 12 pounds.’ Hadden, discussing the Brunswick and Hanau troops in Burgoyne’s Army, stated that men outfitted in such a way ‘cannot be expected to march or manoeuvre well on Foot and be expert at Treeing or Bush fighting’.⁴⁶³ While not as burdened as the Brunswick dragoons, most of the other auxiliary regiments wore clothing unsuited for the climate, and terrain, and an implication of clumsiness or awkwardness, common among popular stereotypes, was very much infused into these observations.

Finally, the last aspect in this perception of ‘Hessian’ slowness, was in reference to their tendency to have large baggage trains, which included an insinuation that they were burdened with carrying all their plunder. A caricature printed in London in 1778 entitled *A Hessian Grenadier* portrays an auxiliary soldier with his characteristic hat, hair and moustache, but also seven or eight bags hanging from his back, including a large cut of meat – an item not likely to be seen in parades or military revues.⁴⁶⁴ Once again the British political caricatures were – as they are wont to do – depicting their subject in the worst possible terms, but this time it was nearer to the mark. While no soldier burdened in such a manner could have escaped punishment for marauding, the Hessian Grenadiers in particular had a large wagon train for that purpose. In the summer of 1780, John Peebles, after having been delayed on the day’s march by the collapse of several such wagons, wrote in

⁴⁶³ Another account of the Hessian Dragoons, mocked them for their ‘high and heavy jack boots, with large, long spurs, stout and stiff, leather breeches, gauntlets, reaching high upon his arms, and a hat with a huge tuft of ornamental feathers’ dragging ‘a tremendous broad sword; a short bit clumsy carbine was slung over his shoulder, and down his back like a Chinese Mandarin, dangled a long queue.’ Hadden, *Hadden’s Journal*, p. 181, 231 (footnotes).

⁴⁶⁴ Anon. *A Hessian Grenadier* (London: M. Darley, 1778).

exasperation: 'what an amazing quantity of baggage the Hessians have.'⁴⁶⁵ Similarly, General Howe hinted that the Hessians' attention to their belongings was in part a reason for his inability to keep pace with Washington.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, slowness might seem merely a noteworthy difference in behaviour, but in fact it encapsulated a number of issues and points of criticism with the Hessian forces: their slow manoeuvres and pace in battle, unwillingness to adapt to frontier fighting, their burdens from bulky clothing and plunder, and perhaps even a reluctance or unwillingness to fight.

Of the various descriptions of difference ascribed to British and German soldiers, some were less tangential, and directly related to the differences in the military cultures. Of these descriptions, outpost duties and picketing were recurring criticisms of the British, and of course for the German auxiliaries, especially the Hessians, the issue of marauding became the most exceptional. As the war progressed and frustrations rose, some German officers began second-guessing and criticizing their British allies for a series of mainly tactical mistakes, thus highlighting areas of tension between the two forces. From criticisms of Howe and Burgoyne in their military decisions, to accusations of hauteur and arrogance for impositions on German dress and drill, there were specific issues that lowered the estimations of British forces in the minds of many of their auxiliaries. There was one topic however, which would be a long-standing point of condemnation regarding British soldiers: outpost-duty. The jäger captain, Johann Hinrichs, an officer who kept a journal during the campaigns in South Carolina, was particularly critical of 'the negligence of the English' in their outpost-duty, pickets and rearguards. Yet rather than leave it to an error in discipline and drill, he couched the problem in terms of English national character.

It is well known that the English are charged with heedlessness in military service. Whether this be carelessness, haughtiness, and conceit, or consciousness of their own greatness, inborn pride, confidence in

⁴⁶⁵ Peebles, *American War*, p. 481.

⁴⁶⁶ Captain Ewald of the Hessian Jägers laid the blame squarely on Howe, and, quite ironically, thought that they would have at least should have been able to catch up with the rebel's baggage if Howe had willed it. Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 106.; Ewald, *Diary of the American War*, p. 70.

personal strength, and the conviction of their superiority over the enemy, I do not care to decide. The fact remains that it is there.⁴⁶⁷

This neglect of outpost duty became yet another means of prescribing a defect to a problem beyond the military sphere, even if Hinrichs did not know exactly where to lay the blame. Such criticisms by German authors were usually on a variety of different topics, whereas for criticisms of the Teutonic soldiery, the issue of marauding was salient.

The breakdown of military discipline within the auxiliaries' ranks that lead to the frequent plundering of the colonial population received more commentary than any other concern, and though it tugged at moral sensibilities, it was more profoundly felt in reference to the professional sentiments of the British commentators. Though Francis Hutcheson, the paymaster for the army in North America, wrote glowingly of the Hessians' 'great coolness and resolution' in battle in the first campaign, he regretfully reported that they were 'to[o] much addicted to plunder,' and within the first few weeks of arriving in the thirteen colonies, these soldiers had gained a well-deserved reputation for, in the words of John Peebles, 'methodically' plundering and 'moroding to [a] shamefull degree.'⁴⁶⁸

Looting was despairingly common in all early-modern armies, especially when they were comprised of so many men with disreputable backgrounds thrown into such dire circumstances.⁴⁶⁹ British forces were no strangers to the practice, and in many cases were just as bad as the auxiliaries.⁴⁷⁰ Yet, the stigma remained

⁴⁶⁷ Bernhard A. Uhlendorf (trans and ed.), *The Siege of Charleston; With an Account of the Province of South Carolina: Diaries and Letters of Hessian Officers from the Von Jungkenn Papers in the William L. Clements Library* (Ann Arbor: UP of Michigan, 1938), pp. 161, 193, 265.

⁴⁶⁸ BL Add Ms 21680, fol. 149. Hutcheson to Haldimand, New York, Sept 1st, 1776.; John Peebles, *Peebles American War*, pp. 129, 378. For similar comments, see: Henry Cabot Lodge (Ed.) *Major André's Journal* 2 vols. (Cambridge (MA): Houghton & Co., 1903), vol. I, pp. 39, 42, 78-9.

⁴⁶⁹ For Hessian marauding and plundering, see Atwood, *Hessians*, chap. 8.; for a more comprehensive examination of the auxiliaries and British forces, see: Conway, 'Military-Civilian Crime', esp. chap. 2.

⁴⁷⁰ To over-generalize, some trends hint at a difference between these forces in that the British were likelier to commit crimes against the person, the Hessians more inclined to commit crimes against the property. After complaining of the Hessian plundering, George Osborne wrote that 'Among the British troops there is an inveteracy against the American Rebel that is so strong I am certain than any Army ever felt against an Enemy, it is with difficulty they are restrained from refusing quarter, and the prisoners they do take, they treat with a manner so - - - icating, that I am convinced thousands would come to us if they were certain of being received with common attention.' Furthermore, I have yet to find a discussion among Hessian soldiers to match Lord Rawdon's blasé

with the 'mercenaries', and once again, the nature of the War in America created a situation that would make such actions doubly insidious to Anglo-German relations. Firstly was of course, that this lack of professionalism would hinder the professional solidarity so important to a coalition army.⁴⁷¹ Equally important, the nature of the war, which was essentially a civil strife from the British perspective, made any such transgressions to potential allies and countrymen particularly grievous. The result was an instant point of contrast, and citing Hessian plundering was also a means to draw a divide between British and German forces in many commentaries, and a way of giving authors a means of bifurcating the redcoats and the bluecoats – to the advantage of the former.

The seeming inability to curb such behaviour, would also create a divide among the officer corps, and create suspicions – sometimes justified – that the Hessian officers were either accommodating, or promoting this behaviour among their men. In one instance, two Scottish officers were invited to dine with the Hessian Colonel Karl Donop, a seemingly positive instance of British-German interaction within the army, until of course the German Count's intentions were revealed. Donop, who, according to Major Charles Cochrane, 'came abroad to relieve a ruined fortune', invited the two Scottish infantry commanders to share a 'valuable seizure' made by his soldiers. 'To get them more readily to take part' in dividing the plunder, Donop reportedly tried to 'fill them Drunk', unsuccessfully, for 'the two Scotch Heads were too strong', and they turned down his offer.⁴⁷² Whether or not this tale was true is hardly relevant – what was important was that for all the abilities of Colonel Donop, his professionalism and motivations were hindered by a perception of Hessian fortune-seeking, and as mentioned earlier, similar cases would help characterize these auxiliaries as men not motivated by honour, duty or

comments regarding the raping of local women by British soldiers. Huntington Library MS Pocock Papers, PO 1169 Sir George Osborne to George Pocock, October 26th, 1776. West Chester New York.; HMC, *Rawdon Hastings*, vol. III, p. 179.

⁴⁷¹ Conway, 'The British Army', pp. 97-8.

⁴⁷² Cochrane was certainly dismayed with the Hessians in general, and wrote of this account as an example of the 'Plundering Mercenary Irregular behaviour of the German Soldiery.' NLS MS 5375 fol. 38, Charles Cochrane to Andrew Stewart, Germantown, October 19th 1777.

loyalty, but by profit.⁴⁷³ Ironically, the commentaries that emerge from Burgoyne's expedition to New York in 1777 are filled with discussions of marauding and horse stealing, but it is the Native American allies who are censured, from both British and German eyewitnesses.⁴⁷⁴

Marauding was a consistent issue in the first two years of the conflict, but other criticisms would emerge, in part owing to the poor quality of recruits arriving from Germany. As maintaining the strength of the regiments in America became more problematic, the various princes of Germany, especially Frederick II of Hesse-Kassel, turned to less and less scrupulous methods to acquire men, in many ways living up to the negative stereotypes regarding recruitment in the Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁷⁵ While a rapidly descending quality of soldier was a problem every army faced in this age of attrition, it deeply affected the German auxiliaries, particularly the Hessians, who prided themselves on their martial ability. As early as May 1777, John Bowater complained that 'now as to the Hessians, they are the worst troops I ever saw. [The] Government has been cheated by their sending one half militia, and the greatest part of the other recruits, [have] very few Viterons [sic] amongst them.'⁴⁷⁶ This comment is not without some hyperbole, nevertheless, the quality of the soldiers was deteriorating, and at the same time Bowater was making these remarks, Johann Ewald was complaining that the new jäger recruits were 'deserters from all the services of Europe', and he was in charge of an 'insolent rabble', whereas before he had 'commanded the most upright and obedient of men.'⁴⁷⁷ The problem of this decay in martial order and ability was acute in all of the German forces, as the Ansbach regiments removed some 100 soldiers (10 percent of their force) on returning to Germany, on grounds that they did not meet the army's

⁴⁷³ See Atwood, *Hessians*, esp. chapter 8.

⁴⁷⁴ The Brunswicker, Wasmus, complained in his journal of the extensive plundering of the Native American auxiliaries, as 'almost every one of them had a horse laden with all kinds of stolen goods.' Wasmus, *the American Revolution*, p. 70.

⁴⁷⁵ Frey, *British Soldier in America*, p. 17.

⁴⁷⁶ Quoted in Balderston, *The Lost War*, p. 152.

⁴⁷⁷ Ewald, *Diary of the American War*, p. 68.

requirements.⁴⁷⁸ The result was that perceptions of the German soldiery were not consistent from the beginning to the end.

Lastly, perceptions of the German auxiliaries were altered further by a series of military setbacks, which paved the way to all manner of rumours and scapegoating in which stereotypes and characterizations came to the fore. This was something of a tradition by the late eighteenth century, and for nearly the last hundred years German armies and soldiers had been a target for blame, and the American War was no different. From the defeats at Trenton (1776), to Bennington (1777), to Red Bank (1777) and beyond, the auxiliary forces would become one of the many scapegoats during, and after the war. The defeat and capture of three Hessian regiments at Trenton was especially singled out as an event with critical repercussions.⁴⁷⁹ Yet there were others instances, some of which were blown far out of proportion in order to fit a particular narrative. Writing from Pennsylvania, Charles Cochrane stated that during Burgoyne's expedition (which he would have had very little knowledge of) was greatly delayed by the 'infamous behaviour of the Foreign Troops', presumably at the Battle of Bennington, where he had heard that several hundred soldiers had surrendered before "ere nine of them were lost".⁴⁸⁰ This greatly exaggerated account was one of many examples of the rumours and hearsay which was rife in the army, since this was, as Ambrose Serle reflected, 'a fertile soil for lying.'⁴⁸¹ Regarding the defeat at Trenton, the army chaplain Samuel Seabury wrote to his friends in Edinburgh, that 'some say they [the Hessians] had kept Christmas a little too merrily; others, that instead of briskly turning out on the alarm, they stayed to secure the plunder they had amassed.' Given that Seabury was

⁴⁷⁸ Döhla, *Hessian Diary*, p. 245.

⁴⁷⁹ Thomas Hutchinson, the *de jure* governor of Massachusetts, stated rather surprisingly, that the setback had 'lessened the opinion of the abilities of the commanders of the British army', rather than the German commanders. Ira Gruber, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1972), p. 156.; Peter Orlando (ed.). *The Diary and Letters of his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson Esq* II Vols. (London: Sampson Low, 1883), p. 139.

⁴⁸⁰ NLS MS 5375 fol. 38 Charles Cochrane to Andrew Stewart, Germantown, October 7th, 1777. See also: William Digby, *The British Invasion from the North. The Campaigns of Generals Carleton and Burgoyne from Canada, 1776-1777, with the Journal of Lieut. William Digby of the 53rd, or Shropshire Regiment of Foot. Illustrated with Historical Notes by James Phinney Baxter*. Munsell's Historical Series No. 16 (Joel Munsell's Sons, Albany, NY: 1887). pp. 288-9

⁴⁸¹ Serle, *American Journal*, p. 140

also willing to believe that Washington had been appointed 'dictator', his accounts are less valuable for their validity than they are for their insight into how rumours were built around perceptions and negative stereotypes of German auxiliaries.⁴⁸² No doubt that many times the auxiliaries were worthy of blame, but in several accounts, they were faulted disproportionately. Just as success bred praise, defeat incurred undue derision.

****Conclusion****

The German auxiliaries in the American War may never escape the 'Hessian mercenary' stereotype which defined them for two centuries, and has only been seriously challenged in the last three decades. Their legacy as egregious plunderers, their status as hired soldiers (a concept deeply egregious to the nationalistic sentiments of nineteenth and early twentieth century military historians) and their relative prominence in a futile war, have seemingly doomed them to infamy. As the last several decades of scholarship have revealed, their ignoble reputation is owed for the most part to the popular rhetoric from within Britain, Germany and America, though a healthy number of transgressions certainly fortified these assertions. These traditional views have had a significant effect on our impressions of German auxiliaries throughout the eighteenth century as it is assumed that the negative aspects of this relationship were mirrored in previous and succeeding wars. While this chapter has looked to better defining the exceptionalities of this particular conflict, there were a number of developments which matched previous trends. While the objective here was not to confront the caricatures of Hessian auxiliaries, the evidence provided should reveal that they were by no means pariahs within the British Army.

Apart from a few dissimilarities, one of the great values of the wealth of information we have about these 'mercenaries' is that they permit us a better

⁴⁸² NLS Fettercairne Papers, MS 4796 F3/75, fols. 111-113, S. Seabury to Doctors Chandler & Cooper, New York, February 9th, 1777.

understanding of the inner workings of these forms of Anglo-German military association. In terms of their treatment, the 'Hessians' received a degree of care matching, if not surpassing, other instances of Germans fighting alongside the British Army, and again, they were well supplied and did not suffer undue casualties. While their professional relationship may have been similar to previous wars, the men of all ranks were integrated in the day-to-day social and professional lives of the British Army to a much greater degree. Whereas in conflicts on the European continent armies would be more dispersed and segregated, in the colonies these various forces were intertwined, making interactions between these two polities mundane, but also criticisms and faults more pronounced.

Concerning their portrayals and depictions of one another, if the majority of these commentaries are negative, it is due to the focus on their respective professional shortcomings, not on account of any national disinclination. In fact, the most disparaging opinions of the German auxiliaries in the American War reveal the extent to which these forces were contextualized as an investment, and comparisons of martial ability were not couched in discussions of national character, but rather evaluations of whether these subsidy troops were worth the money and trust invested in them. It should be remembered, that disagreements or condemnations show up more in records more than when all sides are functioning as expected, and therefore a few disgruntled British soldiers (or more commonly sailors) should not skew the overall picture.

Furthermore, when contrasted with the opinions of colonial civilians, not far removed from being Englishmen themselves, the contrast is stunning. Of all the derogatory remarks made of the Hessians by British military men, nothing matched the views of the colonial population, who looked upon them as 'monsters' or cannibals, with an appearance and comportment which to one young Philadelphian was 'dreadful beyond expression.'⁴⁸³ Back in England opposition politicians and

⁴⁸³ Jakob Piel recalled after his capture that many colonial civilians visited him and his fellow officers: 'They had come to see strange animals and found to their disgust that we looked like human beings.' Bruce Burgoyne [trans. & ed.], *Defeat, Disaster and Dedication: The Diaries of the Hessian Officers Jakob Piel and Andreas Wiederhold* (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1997), p. 23.; Atwood, *Hessians*, p. 151.

polemicists were no kinder to these soldiers, predicting that they would quickly desert, with one MP professing that sending Hessians to fight in the colonies would only lead to 'peopling America with Germans.'⁴⁸⁴ While thousands of these auxiliaries did in fact stay in America, the first year of the war proved to be the opposite of what these doomsayers predicted, and belied the potency of the mercenary stereotype in the thoughts and arguments of prominent dissenters. Yet as time progressed, there was a noticeable decay in how British soldiers perceived the 'Hessian mercenaries', and these real or perceived shortcomings of their subsidy forces became a growing issue, made particularly acute by the seeming futility of the war. This is perhaps one of the greatest impacts of the 'Hessians' in the American War, as the concept of the German auxiliary has become synonymous with this losing effort, which has overshadowed the many other successes allowed by hiring German troops to assist British forces.

The American War was unique for a variety of reasons, and though much of what has been discussed in this chapter may further support a portrayal of the relations between Briton and 'Hessian' as tumultuous, if not contemptuous, there was a great deal of stability and camaraderie as well. In spite of the professional differences or the inability of the officers of the respective polities to blend seamlessly into one corps, the merging of German and British soldiers should be looked upon as a success, even if the war itself was not.

⁴⁸⁴ Quoted in: Butterfield, 'Psychological Warfare in 1776', p. 233.

CHAPTER V:

GERMANS WITHIN THE BRITISH ARMY

In the last three chapters we have examined the various similarities and differences between British soldiers and their German counterparts in coalition-style armies, and as auxiliaries of a predominantly British force. In the next two chapters, we will turn to those German soldiers who served formally within the British Army from the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, focusing on the staggered progression towards direct integration into the army. This discussion will be followed by a case study of one particular force that achieved a degree of structural and social integration that no previous foreign corps had attained – be they Dutch, Huguenot, or German. That this force, the King's German Legion should come into being at the end of the period under examination is no coincidence, as those factors that spurred German assimilation throughout this period were particularly acute in the quarter century of conflict with Republican and Imperial France. Yet the King's German Legion was merely one of scores of foreign corps and integrated forces on the British establishment during this time period. In fact, though French émigrés would be recruited in droves during the first years of war with Revolutionary France, it was men from the various German states who would remain the most common and most sought after.

The English Army had always contained a number of foreign-born troops, and therefore the presence of German soldiers in the eighteenth century army would seem at first, unremarkable. In the wake of the glorious revolution, the English Army had become as heterogeneous as ever, as can be seen at the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland in 1689, where less than half of William III's forces were

English.⁴⁸⁵ William's desire for professionalism and competence from his officers meant that the inexperience and questionable loyalties of the English officer class were undesirable, and he spent the majority of his dozen years as monarch confiding in Dutch and German generals. The rank & file itself was extremely multinational, with many of William's Dutch forces being put into English pay in the wake of his ousting of James II, and these Dutch troops were not alone. Certainly the most notable collection of foreigners in this time period were the Huguenots, who were to serve throughout the Nine Years War under English pay, and, significantly, the only ones to be placed on the British establishment.⁴⁸⁶

Within a few years of the Glorious Revolution the polyglot nature of the army had become extremely unpopular, and reaction against it, lead by ousted or marginalized English officers, pushed for parliamentary legislation preventing the King's Armies from being so un-English. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this resentment and hostility would be a direct reaction against this preference of foreign soldiery, and this intolerance helped fuel the anti-Hanoverian movement that emerged in the following decades. This nascent nationalism, or perhaps merely xenophobia, went hand in hand with concerns over the religious make-up of William's Army. Much was said at the time of his invasion of the several thousand Catholics serving in the invader's forces, and fears of a foreign army stripping away the god-given rights of an Englishman were inextricably linked with trepidation that a Catholic army would become the militant arm of popery in Britain. The Disbandment Act of 1699, and the Act of Settlement in 1701 were the two weapons that Parliament deployed to parry such attacks.⁴⁸⁷ Following these acts, and for the next several decades, the trajectory of the English – and later British – Army would be towards an ethnic

⁴⁸⁵ Kenneth Furgeson, 'The Organization of King William's Army in Ireland, 1689-92'; *Irish Sword*, XVIII (70), pp. 68-9.

⁴⁸⁶ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p.132.

⁴⁸⁷ Matthew H Glozier, *The Huguenots of William of Orange and the Glorious "Revolution" of 1688* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2002), p.136

and religious homogeneity, where non-naturalized foreigners were a rare occurrence, or at least at great variance when contrasted to the Armies of the continental states. Instead, most foreign soldiers fighting alongside the British Army would be those contracted and hired through the German princes, and in most cases, kept a healthy distance from the British establishment lists.

****German Contingents in the British Army****

These policies would remain intact for half a century, yet restrictions against non-protestants and prohibitions against foreign officers would be gradually rescinded, with the most significant changes transpiring at the end of the century, a period better known for seeing a strengthening of local and national identities. The manpower discrepancy that led to Britain's alliances with various German states, and the subsidizing of forces to augment her own army, would also create a demand for foreign soldiers within the British Army. This phenomenon is best placed alongside Parliament's attempts at incorporating the untapped manpower within the British Isles, a theme particularly dominant in the decade following the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745-6. By the Seven Years War, 1756, the manpower requirements to fight a truly global war, the first of its kind, meant that the British Government would need an army (and navy) large enough to deal with France and Spain, all without the traditional and now obsolete partnerships with the Austrian Habsburgs and the Dutch Republic. Coinciding with an increase in subsidizations to smaller German states in Europe, in the American Colonies a group of former Dutch officers of Swiss-Protestant stock were tasked with creating a British regiment of foreign-born soldiers to compensate for shortfalls in recruitment there. The successes already seen with the raising of Highland Scots regiments would be the template for recruiting German men in the colonial hinterland with equally questionable loyalties, but also a susceptibility to the pacifism of their Quaker neighbours. Filling the army with foreigners was still an unpopular and unconstitutional idea, but the latter was amended (very slightly) when a 1756 Act of Parliament permitted the

creation of the 62nd Regiment of Foot, which before it was refashioned as the 60th Foot, was given the moniker, 'The Royal Americans.'⁴⁸⁸ Yet Americans these were not, as two battalions were composed of mostly German colonists – defined both ethnically and linguistically – and the other two battalions were taken from men rejected from the Irish establishment.⁴⁸⁹ In an unprecedented step, and one owing to the Dutch-recruiting officer background of its co-founder, Augustine Prevost, recruiting officers were sent to Germany as well (including Prevost himself), to fill the ranks of the Royal Americans' battalions. Thus began a policy recurrent over the next 60 years, of recruiting officers from British regiments travelling throughout the Holy Roman Empire, mimicking the ages old tradition of the German military enterpriser.⁴⁹⁰

The Royal Americans Regiment was a successful undertaking, and battalions served in most of the major campaigns in the colonies in the Seven Years War, and the Regiment continued to be largely German in composition right through the Napoleonic Wars.⁴⁹¹ Though recruiting in the Holy Roman Empire was not overwhelmingly successful (which explains why men had to be imported from Ireland) it was just effective enough to encourage other regiments of the British Army to send recruiters into Germany, to help increase their numbers.

⁴⁸⁸ The Act tried to justify the policy for raising foreigners to protect these regions, in part because these colonists would not do it for themselves: 'the natural born Subjects of [Pennsylvania] ... do in great part consist of the People called Quakers, whose Backwardness in their own Defence exposes themselves, and that Part of America, to imminent Danger.' Act of Parliament 29 Geo. II., CAP: *An Act to enable His Majesty to grant Commissions to a certain number of Foreign Protestants who have served Abroad as Officers, or Engineers, to act and rank as Officers, or Engineers, in AMERICA only, under certain Restrictions and Qualifications.*; HL Loudoun Papers, LO 6739 'List of Lieutenants and Ensigns proposed for the Royal Americans'.

⁴⁸⁹ For an insightful history of the 60th Regiment see: Alexander Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment: An Atlantic History in Microcosm, 1756-1762* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).

⁴⁹⁰ HSTAH Hann 47. nr. 113 I fol. 126

⁴⁹¹ The Royal Americans were only allowed to serve in the American Colonies and the Caribbean until the 1804 Act, permitting as many as 10,000 foreign men to serve in Britain. Lewis Butler, *The Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps: Volume I. 'The Royal Americans'* (Smith & Elder: London, 1913) p. 208. Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (Harper Collins, 2002), p.329

The following conflict, the American War of Independence, saw another important step in the integration of German soldiers, when in the autumn of 1775, the Lord North Ministry contracted Georg von Scheither, a Hanoverian colonel with experience in the Seven Year War, to raise 4,000 men from across Germany to help bring British regiments up to full strength.⁴⁹² The requirements needed to augment the line regiments for warfare in the colonies meant placing German soldiers side by side with British soldiers in established regiments, sometimes at the rate of ten percent of the total.⁴⁹³ Scheither spent the next 8 months, journeying across the Holy Roman Empire (he claimed he travelled well over 2,500 English miles), under the supervision of Colonel William Faucitt, who was likewise charged with dealing with Hanover and the various other states from which Britain would purchase her auxiliaries.⁴⁹⁴ ‘Scheithers Recruits’ which in the end neared 2,000 men, were sent in small groups to Dover to be reviewed, and then shipped to the colonies for distribution into the various British regiments.⁴⁹⁵ Their treatment was fairly poor, and from the moment of their enlistment, to their arrival in their respective regiments – and beyond – they were treated more like prisoners than soldiers, usually locked up at night and heavily guarded to prevent desertion or their kidnapping, which was the fate of some sixteen soldiers who were sold to Austrian and Prussian recruiters by local fisherman.⁴⁹⁶ But it was not just outside influences that were a problem, as they were from start to finish a group prone to desertion, certainly a problem shared by all nations recruiting in Germany, but an indication that few of these

⁴⁹² HSTAH Hann. 47 II nr. 113 II fol. 151

⁴⁹³ Silvia R. Frey, *The British Soldier in America*, p. 16.

⁴⁹⁴ For Scheither’s personal papers, see: HSTAH Hann 47. I nr. 113 – 114.

⁴⁹⁵ CO 5/168 Barrington to Germaine, 20th June 1776.; CO 5/196 fol. 391 Barrington to Germaine, 22nd July, CO 5/210 fol. 419.

⁴⁹⁶ ‘I am very sorry to tell this, but... these Recruits and engaged and payed by the King at so great an expense, havent only been seduced but even carried away and caused to be sold to the Austrian and Prussian Recruiting parties, by his Majesty’s own Hannoverian Subjects. I had taken all possible care to prevent desertion... but I never suspected that two Stader sailors had them in their passage boats in some unknown place and carried them off. I really confess that I never thought, that we had such traitors among us.’ See: WO 43/405 , fols. 214-216, 324-5 Baron Grothaus to Barrington, Stade, May 15th, 1776.

men had had any intention of serving for very long.⁴⁹⁷ When they arrived in America their ill health, lack of equipment and poor discipline made them the pariahs of both British and German corps. Alongside the chequered fate of Scheither's recruiting efforts, the Royal Americans would continue to enlist German soldiers (for service in the Caribbean) during the time period, with their light infantry maintaining an especially central-European composition through to the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

One of the most important developments in the American War of Independence was that the restrictions on religion were quickly falling by the wayside. Throughout the course of the conflict, laws preventing the service of Catholics in the army were slackened then abolished, which was a policy directly geared towards swelling the army with Hibernian blood. Yet this policy, which within a quarter century would lead to an Irish presence (and eventual plurality) in the British Army, also had a knock on effect in the incorporation of German soldiers, if the inclusion of German Catholics did not outright precede it. Among Scheither's recruits were a large number of 'papists', usually between 10 and 20 percent of the contingents, and though British inspectors would turn away a large number of these soldiers for being unfit (or in a few instances, 'mad'), religion was not grounds for rejection.⁴⁹⁸

The global struggles of the 1750's-80's, which would spur the incorporation of German soldiers into Britain's colonial armies, would be dwarfed by the new strains created by the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Unsurprisingly then, the trend of integrating German soldiers continued, and indeed, reached new levels when a variety of so-called 'foreign-corps' would be placed upon the British establishment, while thousands of other foreign men served as 'English soldiers' within British regiments, and at times within England. These foreign corps, usually intact or semi intact

⁴⁹⁷ For more on these issues, see. Peter Wilson, 'The Politics of Military Recruitment in Eighteenth-Century Germany' *English Historical Review*, no. 472 (June 2002), p. 539.

⁴⁹⁸ Don N. Hagist, Forty German Recruits: The Service of German Nationals in the 22nd Regiment of Foot, <http://www.revwar75.com/library/hagist/FORTYGERMANRECRUITS.htm#1> accessed May 1st, 2011.; See also: WO 43/405, esp. fols. 237, 297, 354.

regiments rescued from disbandment or destruction on the continent would in many ways become entities mid-way between fully integrated units and auxiliaries. This was in part because they would often maintain their uniform, drill and customs from their time as a German unit, sometimes preserving some of these elements, or all, for the duration of their service within the British Army. Yet through time, some of these forces would become more Anglicized in these respects. In many ways, this meant that the British Government had gone nearly full circle, beginning the nineteenth century, where the seventeenth had ended, with the British Army being a heterogeneous mixture of foreign soldiers and native servicemen. Apart from French émigrés, there was a wide selection of foreign corps during the wars between 1793 and 1815, including contingents from Corsica, Sicily, Switzerland, and Greece. But once again, the German contingents were the largest and most significant.⁴⁹⁹

The first of these Germanic foreign corps, was a regiment of Hussars recruited by of Charles Hompesch, which, following the cessation of hostilities in northern Europe in 1795, were taken into the British Establishment, and sent to fight in Saint Domingue.⁵⁰⁰ Within two years, they would be divided among the 20th Light Dragoons, and the Battalion of the 60th Regiment, where the remnants of the original corps would serve for the remainder of the wars against Napoleon. A similar history can be found with a collection of soldiers raised by the Duke of

⁴⁹⁹ One such corps, composed of Germans and Swiss, was the 97th Regiment of Foot, a single battalion formation, which was created from a Swiss regiment under Spanish employ that was captured on Minorca, and spent most of its existence within the British Army fighting in the Mediterranean, and the Peninsula. Though mostly Swiss to begin with, 'The Queen's Germans' became a repository of foreigners of all types, a smattering of Britons and Irishmen, and included just enough men of Teutonic origin to justify the name. See: Charles Oman, *Wellington's Army, 1809-1814* (London: Greenhill Books, 1986), p. 227.; Charles Boutflower, *The Journal of an Army Surgeon During the Peninsular War* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1997), p.53.

⁵⁰⁰ Hompesch would later propose 'collecting and forming into a corps or Legion all those Germans, natives of the banks of the Rhine, who through compulsion are made to serve at the present moment with the French' of course, led by himself, but with the assistance of 'a certain proportion of British [sic] officers to each Battalion'. Rodney Atwood stated that Scheither was the 'last independent recruiter of any note in Germany, a statement that Hompesch would have undoubtedly disagreed with, as he was fairly well known in northern Germany, and his contributions to the British Army alone were more than double that of Scheither. WO 1/237 fol. 32 Undated Letter.

Brunswick, which, after a failed attempt at liberating their homeland in 1809, in a movement reminiscent of the histories of Xenophon, fled to the coast to be rescued and brought to England. During this same period, these men were joined by the remnants of Major Ferdinand von Schill's hussar regiment, a band of Prussian freedom fighters of whom many would join the British service after their leader, von Schill, became a martyr for the cause of German liberation.⁵⁰¹ The cavalry and infantry of the Brunswick-Öls Corps, styled the 'Death or Glory' men on account of the skull and crossbones motif on their caps, or more commonly, 'The Black Brunswickers' in reference to their pitch-black uniforms, would first be stationed in the Channel Islands, but ultimately spent the majority of their time in the British establishment fighting with Wellington in the Peninsular War and as garrison troops in Sicily.⁵⁰² Though they were not always considered very effective troops, they did however achieve a great deal of integration within the British Army, owing to their association with a more famous foreign corps, the King's German Legion.⁵⁰³

The most notable integration of German soldiers into the British Establishment was the King's German Legion, a force of predominantly exiled Hanoverian soldiers who formed an important part of the British Army's European resistance to Napoleonic France.⁵⁰⁴ In many ways the King's German

⁵⁰¹ For a fascinating and highly readable monograph on the many propagandized retellings of Major von Schill's life, see: Sam Mustafa, *The Long Ride of Major von Schill: A Journey Through German History and Memory* (Plymouth: Rowan & Littlefield, 2008).; See also: German Cavalryman [J. von Wickede], *Wider Napoleon! Ein Deutsches Reiterleben 1806-1815*, herausgegeben von Friedrich M. Kircheisen (Stuttgart: Robert Luß, 1911), esp. vol I.

⁵⁰² Holmes, *Redcoat*, p.51.

⁵⁰³ Brunswickers would share the same benefits in rank and pensions/half-pay as officers in the King's German Legion. WO 1/428 fol. 67.; WO 26/42 fol. 83-84.

⁵⁰⁴ The King's German Legion have received by far the most attention of all Germans within the British Army, with the most noteworthy and significant contributions to their history from North Ludlow Beamish, *History of the King's German Legion* (London: 1837 (1997)).; Adolf Pfannkuche. *Die Königlich Deutsche Legion 1803-1816* (Hannover: Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926).; Anthony Brett-James, *Life in Wellington's Army* (London, George Allen: 1972); Daniel Savage Gray, 'The Services of the King's German Legion in the Army of the Duke of Wellington: 1809-1815,' PhD, Florida State University, (1969).; Roger Edward Francis Guilford North, 'The raising and Organizing of the King's German Legion'. *JSAHR*, 39 (1961), 168-84.; Bernhard Heinrich Schwertfeger, *Geschichte der königlich deutschen Legion, 1803-1816*. (Hanover and Leipzig, 1907).

Legion, or KGL, was the high point in the long history of these military collaborations, and beyond purely military matters, was perhaps the single greatest instance of British-Hanoverian unity apart from the monarchy itself.⁵⁰⁵ The origins of 'the Legion' can be traced to the days following the resumption of hostilities between Britain and France in the spring of 1803. The invasion of Hanover in June by French forces led to the disbandment of the Electorate's Army in accordance with the Convention of the Elbe, ratified by Hanoverian ministers on July 5th. The occupation of Hanover resulted in an exodus, first of high-ranking officers such as the King's son, Prince Adolphus (the Duke of Cambridge), followed by men from the rank and file of the Hanoverian Army. Already, there had been some interest in preserving or rescuing remnants of this force, and now, with an influx of Hanoverians arriving in England, plans began circulating for creating a regiment from the exiles.⁵⁰⁶

The formation of these refugees into a single corps was the brainchild of the Scotsman and ex-Dutch Army officer Colin Halkett and Friedrich von der Decken, a Hanoverian and former aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cambridge. To help in the recruiting process, the Duke of Cambridge issued a proclamation on August 10, 1803 to be circulated in northern Germany which called for 'all brave Germans' to take up arms in this 'King's German Regiment.' The results of the royal family's efforts, and the widespread advertisement that soldiers would serve under German officers, was that by the end of the year there was a surplus of recruits, and enough men to form a battalion of artillery and three cavalry regiments as well. To reflect this force now being a compound of the three branches of the military, the King's German Regiment was renamed the King's German Legion.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁵ C.T. Atkinson, 'Hanoverian Soldiers in Gibraltar,' *United Service Magazine* 180 (1919), p.25.

⁵⁰⁶ The Convention of the Elbe, formally known as the Convention of Artlenburg, stipulated that the Hanoverian Army could be transferred to England in exchange for French prisoners held in England, and the raising of a regiment within Britain was seen as a means of working around this clause. Gray, 'Service of the King's German Legion', p. 16.

⁵⁰⁷ Gray, 'The Services of the King's German', pp. 16-18.; and Roger North, 'The raising and organizing of the King's German Legion', pp. 169-170.

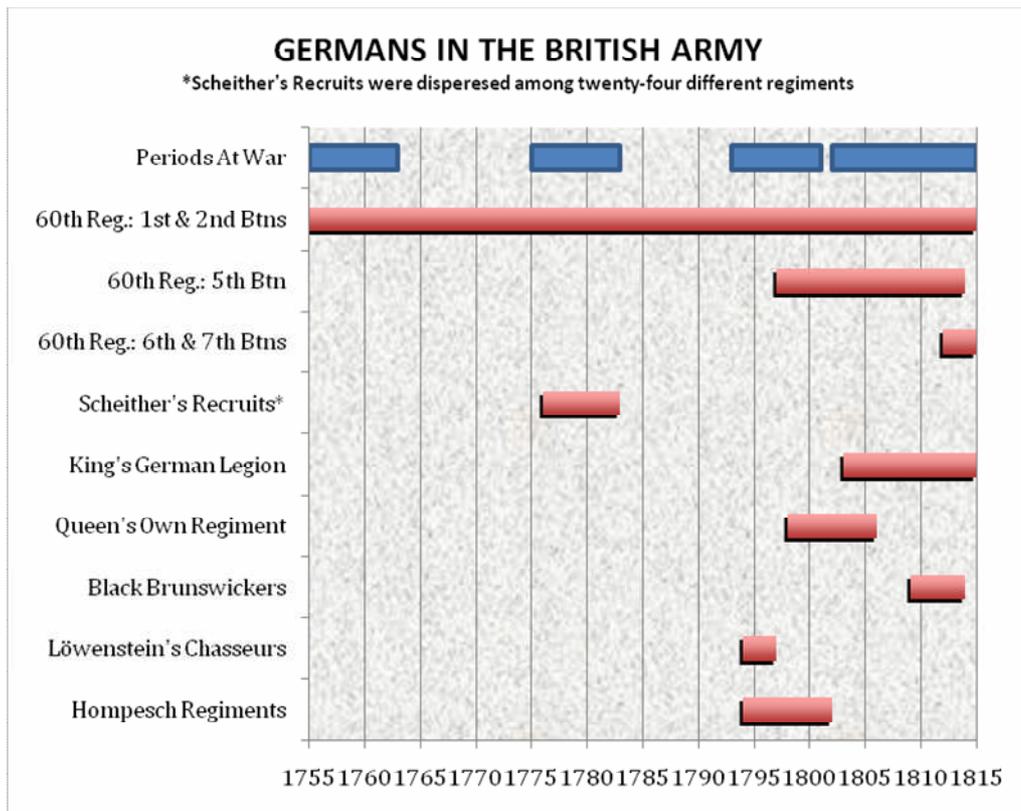
Originally charged with helping in the defence of southwest England in the event of a French invasion, the Legion would soon find itself a part of the majority of Britain's subsequent campaigns in Europe: northern Germany (1805), Denmark (1807), Sweden (1808), the Netherlands (1809), Sicily and Italy (1808-1814), the 'Peninsular War' in Spain and Portugal (1808-1814), and finally the 100 days and Waterloo (1815). Similarly, the Legion was charged with garrisoning various locations throughout Britain's European dominions, including Ireland between 1806 and 1808, Gibraltar at intervals between 1805-1813 and of course England throughout the conflict, mainly at the KGL headquarters at Bexhill.⁵⁰⁸

Such was the success of the King's German Legion, that following the liberation of central Europe in 1813, a British-sponsored 'Russian German Legion' was formed and meanwhile officers from the King's German Legion were sent to assist the reconstruction of the Hanoverian Army.⁵⁰⁹ Yet perhaps the most striking testament to the vitality of the corps' legacy, was the 'German Legion', formed at the outbreak of the Crimean War, in 1854, some 38 years after the disbandment of the KGL, and more than a decades after the termination of the dynastic Union between Britain and Hanover. Some 10,000 German men were originally recruited, primarily from the states and provinces of northern Germany, many of who were recently relieved from service with the Danish Army. Though the intention and the personnel were similar, it was by this point an antiquated system, and this Legion ended up not fighting in the Crimean steppe, but rather settling the South African veldt, where it was sent upon the war's conclusion, thus determining this last embodiment of a German Legion as

⁵⁰⁸ The growth of Bexhill from a village to a town at the beginning of the nineteenth century is credited to the presence of the Legion's headquarters, where a number of men were continuously stationed. There were even schools established to teach the children of the soldiers in English and German. See <http://www.bexhill-museum.co.uk>, Accessed April 4th, 2009. Biedermann, Emanuel. *Von Malta Bis Waterloo: erinnerungen Aus den Kriegen gegen Napoleon I* (Bern: Hallwag, 1941), p. 134.

⁵⁰⁹ New Hanoverian formations were also in British pay, and wore British-style uniforms, and considered British soldiers. NAM 35694 Manfred Bresemann, 'The King's German Legion 1803-1816 and the British Traditions Handed Down by the Legion to the Royal Hanoverian Army up to 1866', Hanover, 1984 p.12

settlers more than soldiers.⁵¹⁰ The German Legion's existence is noteworthy, not for their own contributions to British military efforts, but more for the affirmation of the importance, both actual and psychological, of German soldiers to the British Army, whose legacy – though not utility – lasted into the second half of the nineteenth century.



****Features of German Recruitment****

Having briefly examined the history of the Germans in the British Army in the long eighteenth century, there are a few points that need to be made here or

⁵¹⁰ W.B. Tyler, 'The British German Legion – 1854-1862', *JSAHR* vol. 54 (1976), pp. 14-29.

readdressed concerning this transition from a largely English army, to a force that incorporated into its ranks thousands of foreign-born males.

Firstly, the integration of Germanic soldiery directly parallels the integration of other forces, especially when compared to the integration of Highlanders by the mid century, and Catholic Irish at the time of the American War of Independence. The continued necessity of filling and sustaining Army regiments required a steady influx of new recruits, and this was the leading cause for the rolling back of restrictions on ethnicity and religious affiliation. This last aspect is crucial, as the opening up of service in the British Army to Catholics, meant that men from throughout all of the Holy Roman Empire could be recruited, and is, in part, why describing these men as 'German' – as indicated in the introductory chapter – reflects the broader definitions of Germany, and is not merely restricted to the handful of principalities that were allied with Britain.

Secondly, the government's policy of integrating men from the Holy Roman Empire was not particularly innovative, as in most cases, they were actually reacting to recruiting operations already under way. The Swiss colonel Prevost, the man responsible for helping to create the Royal Americans, was already contracting officers and recruits months before the policy was ratified by Parliament – in essence, breaking a law by pre-empting its passage. This led to a conflict between many German and Swiss men in the 60th and Prevost, who had promised them greater wages than what they received once Parliament gave its consent to the practice.⁵¹¹

In the case of Scheither's recruits, though this was an enterprise of the War Office, the one action which preceded governmental policy, was the recruitment of known Catholics, men who would be present in the British Army with the full awareness of all participants that their presence was in direct opposition to the laws against Papists serving in the British military outlined in the Act of Settlement. This policy of course would be revoked within two years,

⁵¹¹ There were inquiries into conduct of Colonel Prevost who denied, or failed to give promotions to the foreign officers in the Royal Americans, affecting them 'in what is most dear to them, Honor, Preferment, Privileges and Property.' HL Loudoun Papers : LO 6304 March 5th, 1761

to some vigorous, if not delayed, public outrage. Even the King's German Legion was created only after the recruitment of several hundred Hanoverians by Colin Halkett made creating a new foreign corps possible.⁵¹² Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that Parliament and the Secretary of War spearheaded the integration of German soldiers, rather, as the government was want to do during this time period, they reacted to situations already transpiring within the army.

This leads us to the third point regarding the integration of German soldiers: the importance of a transnational officer class. In much the same way that Britain was reliant upon German commissaries, and officers for movement and procuring supplies in Germany, so too was it totally reliant upon German, Swiss and Dutch know-how for accessing the pools of able-bodied men from the various principalities in the Holy Roman Empire. Though there was an important bond between British and Germanic forces, this is not to suggest it was unique. In fact, as discussed before, the Dutch role in introducing many of these practices into the British Army was critical, and no greater example can be seen than with the role of ex-Dutch officers in the recruitment of Germans, such as the Swiss-born officers Haldimand and Prevost, and the Scottish Colonel, Halkett, a veteran of the Guards Regiment in the Dutch service.⁵¹³ Therefore this strong connection between British and German soldiers was not a bi-national movement, but a transnational one, where a wide variety of men from various countries and principalities crossed boundaries to serve and recruit in a borderless environment created by the 'soldier-trade'. In many ways, this was a lingering aspect of European militaries, and the actions of these men harkened back to the era of mercenaries and military enterprisers common in the preceding centuries.⁵¹⁴ The result was that, in a manner that was directly opposite to the intentions of the Act of Settlement, professionalism and skill took

⁵¹² Halkett would later help form the Hanoverian Levies (*Landwehr*) after the liberation of Hanover in 1813. Beamish, *History of the King's German Legion*, vol. 1, pp. 75-78. Gray, 'Service of the King's German Legion', p. 325.

⁵¹³ Adolf Pfannkuche, *Die Königlich Deutsche Legion*, p. 19.; H. M. Chichester, 'Halkett, Sir Colin (1774-1856)', Gates, *ODNB*.

⁵¹⁴ In this spirit, Alexander Campbell in his work on the Royal Americans repeatedly refers to James Prevost as 'the mercenary.' Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, esp. chap. 1.

precedence over nationality. For the Royal Americans, foreign men such as Haldimand and Bouquet were selected above native Britons because – aside from their personal contacts – they had experience in multinational armies, and could act as liaisons between British and German troops given their fluency in French, the language of the military profession. In many ways, their preference over already naturalized foreign men, especially the pool of men from the colonies, suggests that professionalism in a military setting could be a stronger bond than that between Briton and colonist.⁵¹⁵ Therefore, officers from continental armies, with the experience and contacts needed to recruit within the Holy Roman Empire, were the real facilitators of this integration.

Lastly, there should be some mention of the role of the Monarchy in the integration of German soldiers. The ‘Germanness’ of the Hanoverian Kings was integral to relations with allies and auxiliaries, as it was here. Most attempts at recruitment within the *Reich* began with a Royal patent, and pamphlets distributed in recruiting areas along the Rhine or near to Hanover, would utilize the Monarchy’s Electoral status and Imperial offices to a cause that without them, would have been illegal.⁵¹⁶ The Monarchy itself was beneficial for recruiting in Germany, but the King was not the greatest factor in bringing in and integrating German and British soldiers, but rather the royal family as a whole. Augustine Prevost, who founded the Royal Americans, was a friend of the Duke of Cumberland, the son of George II, while Decken used his contacts acquired from serving as an aide-de-camp for George’s III’s son, the Duke of Cambridge, to put himself at the head of efforts towards recreating the Hanoverian Army in the guise of the King’s German Legion.⁵¹⁷ Throughout the conflicts with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, the sons of George III (the Dukes of York, Cambridge, and Cumberland – the latter becoming King of Hanover in 1837) became liaisons for soldiers coming from occupied states in central Europe,

⁵¹⁵ WO 43/405 fols. 2-14-6 William Faucitt to Viscount Barrington, Hanover, 10th November, 1775.

⁵¹⁶ HSTAH Hann. 47 II Nr. 113 II, fol. 151, Werbungflugblatt, printed Hannover, 30th December, 1775.; Conway, ‘British Army’, p. 84.

⁵¹⁷ Gray, ‘Services’, pp. 16-18.

given their close affiliations with the Hanoverian Army, and their education at the University of Göttingen. Their vocal support for foreign corps such as the King's German Legion, the men from Hompesch's Regiments and the Brunswicker troops protected them from public backlash and infighting within the army.⁵¹⁸ As with auxiliaries, a lack of dynastic connection or direct Royal ties to one's land of origin did not necessarily prohibit a degree of support for the British Monarch/Hanoverian Elector. George III, even as his health was fading, was eager to welcome these foreigners and make them feel apart of the army, often deliberately celebrating the army's heterogeneous nature during their tenure as defenders of England's coasts.⁵¹⁹ Such support did not go unnoticed by the British press, who had their fears of a Germanic 'Praetorian Guard' being formed from these refugee-soldiers, yet the Royal Family reaffirmed this bond in spite of criticisms, and did a great deal to protect the image of the many foreign corps, but the German ones in particular.⁵²⁰

Therefore, the origins, and developments that lead to the incorporation of German soldiers, involved not only political and demographic factors, but also the efforts of a wide variety of people, including a number of foreign-born

⁵¹⁸ HSTAH Hann. 38 nr. 158 fols. 2-13, 18.

⁵¹⁹ Bexhill, Sept. 20th, 1804 'Our heavy cavalry at Weymouth is one of the main objects of the King's attention. That has, of course, its disadvantageous side for us, as opposing us to the English. Even the German tune *Landesvater* is said at times to have taken precedence of *God Save the King*. Really moving are such incidents as these: The King walked in among the ranks, went into home details, many of which were unknown to him – particularly much of the decisive part of our latest history. He then consoled the men over the present unhappy condition of their country, and exhorted them to be of good cheer and trust in Providence.' Another account of a previous ceremony at Weymouth recalls the King walking among these foreign corps, and upon discovering the origins of various soldiers, continually made remarks such as 'very good soldiers!', or 'all good men' and encouraged these foreigners to sing and dance in a manner reflective of their nations of origin. Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p.176.; Gleig, *The Hussar*, pp. 68-9.

⁵²⁰ Landsheut recounted one such *faux pas* where after a review of a troop at Weymouth, Queen Charlotte sent for the women and children of the regiment: 'Her Majesty had a kind word to say to each, and desired that each should have a guinea. But when, at last, she came to one – the native of her own country – she drew forth her purse and gave her five guineas. Finally, the King ordered a hogshead of beer and an amply supply of pipes and tobacco for every troop, and departed. Yet, for this act of kindness, both King and Queen were abused in the prints of the days, as if their affections had pointed only to foreigners, and the English regiments were neglected.' Gleig, *The Hussar*, pp. 69-70. Nick Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire, 1700-1837* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 255-8. For a collection of William Cobbett's arguments against this favoritism, see: Daniel Green, *The Great Cobbett: The Noblest Agitator* (London: Hobber and Stoughton, 1983), pp. 345-8, 377.

officers and the royal family itself. And in contrast to the nature and character of Anglo-German coalitions, there was a dramatic change over time from a period in the beginning of the century where non-naturalized foreigners were purged from the muster rolls, to a period when they represented a large proportion of the British establishment. Perceptions played a part in this process, and now that we have addressed the manner in which German soldiers were incorporated, we will turn to the motives for doing so.

****Recruiting German Troops***

There are several reasons in particular that made German recruits desirable, although their availability and the need for expediency were the leading factors. The political situations in Europe contributed to a preference for German soldiery. As German states were for the most part at peace with Britain throughout this period, or antagonists for short intervals, their soldiers did not suffer from the frequent bans placed on men from most western European states. In British regiments with a strong foreign presence, such as the 60th Royal Americans or the King's German Legion, there were limitations or prohibitions on recruiting French-born men, and often a number of other nationalities – a ban that not found for Germans.⁵²¹ In many ways, this meant that German-born men were not so much desired as they were acceptable, and were sought after, not because they were the best troops, but since they did not represent potential enemies.

While there were fears of recruiting future enemies, Germans also benefited from having served as former allies, with the frequency of finding

⁵²¹ During the Napoleonic Wars, this list of banned soldiers for such regiments became quite long, for example, for the King's German Legion: 'neither French, Italians, Danes, Swedes, Russians, Spaniards or Portuguese shall be enlisted'. The Huguenots were an exception to this, given that they were perceived to share a common enemy, although they never were so large a presence after their heyday in the Nine Years' War. WO 1/648 fol. 373, 'Proposal for enlisting Recruits from amongst Prisoners of War in England, for the King's German Legion', October 17th 1811.

veterans in Germany, especially light infantrymen, particularly appealing.⁵²² The interests and innovation in light infantry tactics in the states of the Holy Roman Empire (especially their jägers) meant that they would be recruited, or incorporated into the army to compensate for a fighting-style in which German troops were considered to excel, and one that was commonly scorned as un-English. This disinclination towards light infantry work, in Europe and the New World, in part explains why it was foreign officers such as Augustine Prevost and Henri Bouquet who, combined with the backwoods experiences of the colonists themselves, geared the 60th Regiment into specialists in frontier warfare. As the Royal American Regiment would remain a repository of German recruits for the next half-century, its light infantry tradition would persist throughout its history and subsequent transformation into the 'King's Royal Rifles'.⁵²³ In the case of the recruits raised by von Scheither, himself a commander of light infantry, it was advised that he clarify that these recruits would not be '*chasseurs*', as it was feared that light infantrymen would resent being placed in line regiments.⁵²⁴ Furthermore, in the 1790's the regiments raised by Charles Hompesch, and his brother Ferdinand, were exclusively light troops, with the hussar regiment being asked to perform as light infantry (which they flatly refused to do) while serving in Saint-Domingue.⁵²⁵ A decade later, light infantry formations became one of the hallmarks of the King's German Legion as well, where in the Peninsular War, these foreign light infantrymen were tasked with mentoring the British. One Irish Lieutenant recalled of his fellow riflemen, that the 'German sharpshooters improved them considerably in the several duties of light troops; still they never attained to such a degree of perfection as might have been expected from a

⁵²² This explains the leaflets issued by Scheither calling for non-invalid pensioners to fill his quotas. HSTAH Hann. 47 II Nr. 113 II, fol. 151.

⁵²³ 'Because it was expected to be employed in bush warfare operations, its uniforms were devoid of lace – an unprecedented step at this time', A.J. Barker. *Redcoats* (Gordon Cremonesi: London, 1976), p. 145.

⁵²⁴ HSTAH Hann. 47 II 114 fol. 21.

⁵²⁵ Gleig, *Hussar*, p. 35.; René Chartrand, *Émigré and Foreign Troops in British Service (I) 1793-1802* (Oxford: Osprey, 1999)

consideration of their natural qualifications.’ Elaborating further, this highlighted the cultural dichotomy in the approach to such work:

Our men... entertained very generally the absurd notion that... [using cover] was an act of cowardice... How differently the old Germans thought! They were always to be seen dodging from tree to tree, or ensconcing themselves between rocks and fences, with admirable method and steadiness, while the British skirmisher would step out sturdily on the open space, and make a target of himself for the enemy.⁵²⁶

Though there were implications that such behaviour could be learned, many similar comments were couched in a way that implied Germans were simply naturally better or more inclined for such work, despite these Britons’ ‘natural qualifications.’ In either case, these men were sought after for fulfilling a key gap within Britain’s military.⁵²⁷

This form of typecasting touched upon a discourse on national character prominent within the army, and as a consequence, these stereotypes held by British military men, (emerging from their own experiences) had no parallel with popular preconceptions. Other characterizations merely diverged, or contradicted prevailing characterizations. The propensity of drunkenness within the British Army created a negative stereotype to which foreigners, especially German soldiers, benefited.⁵²⁸ Despite the ages-old depictions of German drunkenness (part of the purported effects of being from a northern climate), here German soldiers were seen as naturally less susceptible to this professional and moral weakness. George Bent reflected that the foreigners, primarily Germans of the 60th Regiment, were surviving in the West Indies at a dramatically better ratio than his fellow Britons, to which he postulated:

⁵²⁶ Ross-Lewin, *With ‘The Thirty Second’*, p. 306.

⁵²⁷ This relationship was further highlighted by the frequent publications of light infantry handbooks by Germans who had fought within or alongside the British Army, such as the Hessian Captain Ewald who served in the American War. Conway, *War of American Independence*, p. 246.

⁵²⁸ The account of one sergeant in the Peninsular War seems to reveal this was a truly British trait, given that among the English, Welsh and Scottish contingents, ‘the only point of general resemblance’ was ‘excessive drinking’. Anon. *Memoirs of A Sergeant: The 43rd Light Infantry During the Peninsular War* (Gloucestershire: Nonsuch, 2005). See also: Christopher Hibbert (ed.), *A Soldier of the Seventy-First: The Journal of a Soldier of the Highland Light Infantry 1806-1815* (Leo Cooper: London, 1975), p. 33.

Let two regiments of an equal strength embark from Portsmouth for the West Indies, the one composed entirely of Britons, the other of Foreigners; let them live together and be stationed in the same quarters, and, at the expiration of two years, it is found that the latter regiment musters double the effectives of the former, and it is the liquor that must account for it. The cheapness, and great plenty of intoxicants is too great a temptation to the British soldier, who, when weakened by a state of continued inebriation, falls an easy victim to the Island fevers. The foreigner, on the contrary, being more naturally inclined to sobriety, and subject also to severer discipline, does not so readily collapse.⁵²⁹

Such perceptions, in fact, lead to policy, as can be seen with the arrival of the horse-less cavalymen of Hompesch's Hussar Regiment in Port au Prince in 1795, who were given the freedom to go into the market towns where the British were not.⁵³⁰ This approach to drink had parallels in the Peninsular War as well, where the horses of the Legion would remain in better health than with their English counterparts, who prioritized alcohol over forage.⁵³¹ Given that this problem was prevalent among the aristocrats in the British Dragoons and the 'dregs of society' in Caribbean garrisons, we can infer that it was not merely an issue of class or rank. Yet, German sobriety would seem more of a perception than a reality, as one KGL officer proclaimed he and his comrades 'drank barbarously,' and 'not once did any of us go to bed sober.'⁵³² In a different corner of the world, German soldiers garrisoned at Halifax in Nova Scotia seemed to make a habit of getting drunk and wandering into the woods while on picket duty, for which they were repeatedly court martialed.⁵³³

Though such examples belie prevailing theories differentiating the Britannic with the Teutonic, there was a more negative, homogenizing reason for wanting foreigners: that they could serve as cannon-fodder – or more appropriately mosquito-fodder – for the British Army. In these undesirable

⁵²⁹ Captain George Bent, 'Major Morris Bent, South Staffordshire Regiment, A "Royal American"' *Journal for the Society of Army Historical Research*, *JSAHR* 1 (1921), p. 98.

⁵³⁰ Gleig, *The Hussar*. P.35

⁵³¹ For one example, see: Schaumann, *On the Road*, pp. 218-219

⁵³² *Ibid*, p. 269.

⁵³³ A typical case can be found in WO 71/198 Fol. 17 Trial of Peter Driesens and Joseph Schneider, Halifax in Nova Scotia, September, 22nd 1814.

locales, one soldier was as good as another, especially when their utility was more in occupying strategic positions, rather than fighting battles. This is one of the major contrasts with the treatment of German auxiliaries, where there was some amount of responsibility felt for their loss, and there was a hesitation to put them in a position that was unfavourable to other soldiers. This was not always the case with regiments such as the Royal Americans. After the conclusion of the French and Indian War, these soldiers would be garrisoned in some of the least appealing outposts in British North America, from Halifax in the north, to the small forts along the Great Lakes in the west.⁵³⁴ An indication of the miserable conditions in these outposts can be seen in the appeals of one garrison officer for better rations for Fort Miamis:

We are so miserable here... that I have never in all my life seen a soldier actually in service suffer so much by want as we suffer without distinction. We have no kind of flesh nor venison nor fish, nothing to hound; and that we could suffer with patience, but the porck is so bad that neither officer nor men can eat it, and self lief [I myself have lived] more than seventeen weeks up[on] flour and peace soup, and have eat no kint of meat but a little bear at Christmas. We have plenty to drink, and that I think is what kips up in health, and the bread which is tolerably good.

As for the Caribbean, an equally undesirable location, this was the first destination outside Germany for Hompesch's Hussars, with their colonel, Charles Hompesch, a man who tried to convince these men that they would be heading to a land of 'gold and silver', conspicuously absent during this expedition.⁵³⁵ Likewise, the Hanoverian recruits who would later become the King's German Legion were originally destined for distribution among the British Regiments in the West Indies, until the War Office was convinced there were enough men to constitute a separate corps. Yet several years later, while the Legion were encamped on England's southern coasts, the famous opposition MP and parliamentary historian William Cobbett would denounce the Ministry for having

⁵³⁴ Quoted in: Lewis Butler, *The Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps: Volume I. "The Royal Americans"* (London: Smith & Elder, 1913) p.130.

⁵³⁵ Gleig, *the Hussar*, p. 34.

not sent them abroad, especially for the campaigns in South Africa and South America.

amongst all the regiments... upon the embarkation list, I have not seen any of the Hanoverians, of whom we have, according to the lowest account, thirteen thousand in this country! That these heroes might not relish the East or West Indies or the Mediterranean or North America... I could easily conceive. But supposing... that they must burn... with impatience to join in the “deliverance of Europe” and particularly of their own dear country I am... filled with astonishment... to see such a long embarkation list and not a single man of them upon it.⁵³⁶

It is interesting to note, that his arguments here stem from not wanting the Legion in Britain, but serving on the other side of the Atlantic (something Cobbett had done himself) was not an issue for him, as it was by this time the natural depository for these foreign corps.⁵³⁷ For Cobbett, he could make his appeal at a time when the views of German martial ability, in discipline, battle, and character, were at their lowest ebb, following Napoleon’s defeat of the Prussians a few months before. This was proof to him, and his colleagues with anti-establishment sympathies, that having Hanoverians in the Army, did not necessarily make them stronger, or less susceptible to defeat by the French.⁵³⁸ Yet this was not always the case, nor was it the universal view, as the army was still typecasting German recruits, and filling specific areas of the army – especially light cavalry and light infantry – with men from the recently dismantled Holy Roman Empire.

Be it for a perception of natural ability, or pragmatism in the need of cannon fodder, there were certainly a number of reasons for recruiting German soldiers, and perhaps above all, it was often cheaper – especially when foreign

⁵³⁶ Quoted in Nick Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire, 1700-1837* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2007), p. 253.

⁵³⁷ Similar concerns were raised when the Commons debated the appropriate role of awarding permanent ranks upon the officers of the KGL, where Lord Milton protested that he ‘had no objection to their being employed in commands abroad, but he did not like to see them in command in this country.’ Handsard ‘Motion Respecting the King’s German Legion’ December 1812. c. 261.

⁵³⁸ Nick Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire*, pp. 253-256.

officers would serve for reduced pay.⁵³⁹ As Lieutenant John Ford conjectured in his personal account of the Peninsular War, 'Foreign Soldiers will march over the same ground as the British Troops supported upon one half their cost'.⁵⁴⁰ This may have been the only incentive that the War Office needed.

****German Recruits: Motivations and Reservations****

Having discussed the motivations of the recruiter, it is only logical to turn to the recruited, and examine their motivations for joining the British Army and the reservations they had about joining taking the 'King's Shilling'. In most instances, we cannot assume that the reasons were much different than for those in any other service in Europe, yet, there are a few trends worth mentioning.⁵⁴¹

The first explanation is perhaps the simplest: money. Either for profit, to stave off starvation, or to escape/pay-off debts, service in the British Army could provide. The Brunswick surgeon Wasmus before heading to America in 1776 stumbled into a friend, whose severe debts provoked him into enlisting in Scheithers' Corps.⁵⁴² In the British Army, a higher wage for privates and officers alike was appealing, as was the increased rations that made service in the British Army famous.⁵⁴³ As one light infantryman recalled, 'an English soldier, to be sure, cannot amass a fortune; but in comparison with soldiers of other nations, he appears like a lord; and altogether his lot is far preferable.'⁵⁴⁴ German soldiers often made remarks about their positive impressions of the food with

⁵³⁹ German troops were usually paid at the rates of native soldiers when placed within British Regiments, or when serving within British territories.

⁵⁴⁰ NAM 6807/71, fols. 105-6, John Ford, 'Military Scraps'.

⁵⁴¹ For recruitment into the British Army, see, Stepler, 'The Common Soldier in the Reign of George III, 1760-1793'. Kevin Barry Linch, 'Recruitment of the British Army: 1807-1815' (PhD Thesis, University of Leeds, Unpublished, 2001), pp. 200-209.

⁵⁴² Doblin, *The American Revolution*, p.6.

⁵⁴³ In October of 1796, one officer recommended that there should be a 'reduction in their spirits ration in order to give them a larger allowance of bread, 'as foreign soldiers are bigger eaters than British', in C.T. Atkinson, 'Foreign Regiments in the British Army, 1793-1802', *JSAHR*, vol.22 (1943-44).; WO 1/872.

⁵⁴⁴ Anon, *Adventures of a Young Rifleman in the French and English Armies, During the War in Spain and Portugal, From 1806 to 1916* (London: Henry Colburn, 1826), pp. 297-8.

which they were supplied, although less common during the height of a campaign. While encamped in Kent, Norbert Landsheit, a hussar veteran, recalled that upon his arrival in England, 'we had every reason to be satisfied with the pains which the English government must have taken to render us comfortable. Hut barracks [with]... commodious stables... [our] bedding, provisions, pay, and general allowances, were all on the most liberal scale,' so that 'in the course of a week or two we felt as soldiers ought to do, who respect themselves, and are taught from experience to feel, that they are in the service of a just and liberal government.'⁵⁴⁵ Yet there is no evidence to suggest that Germans were willing to endure travelling to England for higher rations and better pay, but there is no doubt it helped to keep them satiated once they had joined. In reality, this discrepancy in pay, at least for lower ranking officers, may have done more to retain Britons than it did to lure soldiers from across the North Sea. However, such benevolent treatment was a feature for the latter decades, and not experienced by the first waves of Germans entering the British service. For the men joining the Royal Americans, there was an incentive of land to settle upon the cessation of hostilities after the Seven Years War, but it is uncertain whether this was the primary motivation for the Europeans who joined – though this inducement was repeated again for recruiting German soldiers for the war of 1812, where men were offered land in Canada in return for service as light infantrymen in the newly formed 7th Battalion of the 60th Regiment.⁵⁴⁶ Such policies reveal the mercenary motivations for enlisting in the army of a foreign power, however, there were nobler causes, as in the case of the men of the King's German Legion, who will be discussed in the subsequent case study.

Given that these motivations were relatively typical for men in European armies in this era, the primary inquiry here should not be why men joined, but rather, addressing why German men refused. In most cases, recruitment in

⁵⁴⁵ Gleig, *The Hussar*, p.33.

⁵⁴⁶ Lewis, *Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps*, vol. I

Germany produced underwhelming results, and, with the exception of the King's German Legion between 1803-6, most attempts achieved fewer men than originally intended. There are a number of factors that explain this. First were the obvious constitutional inhibitors, from both sides, forbidding the British from hiring German soldiers to serve in Europe, and from edicts within the *Reich* banning foreign recruiters. This was very much the same for the British Army, yet there were some key differences – mainly that the scattered and minuscule nature of most German principalities meant that most German princes had difficulty preventing their able-bodied men from crossing a border to join in another army. Likewise, this same scattered and fractured nature meant that it was equally difficult for imperial authorities to prevent outside agents from snatching away men who would otherwise be sought after by the Austrians or other German armies. There was still some degree of effective resistance, as was the case of Major John Savage, a recruiting agent who was thrown in prison for his attempts at enlisting men to fight in the British Army in 1775-6.⁵⁴⁷ Once again, the solution was to utilize the King's status as Elector to facilitate recruiting, following the precedent of Danish and Prussian Monarchs.

Beyond legal enforcement, there was direct interference by various states, especially Austria and Prussia.⁵⁴⁸ Prussians were the most consistent competitors, which should not surprise, given their reputation and history of both recruiting outside their borders, and the famously unscrupulous means with which they would obtain their 'recruits.' Prussia remained the primary road-block to recruitment for the King's German Legion, especially after their occupation of Hanover in 1806, but they had been a thorn in the side of British recruiting efforts for half a century, with Frederick the Great also being the chief spokes-person against the leasing of German soldiers at the time of the American

⁵⁴⁷ Conway, 'British Army', p. 80.; WO 43/405 fols. 214-216, William Faucitt to Viscount Barrington, Hanover, November 10th, 1775.

⁵⁴⁸ The Danish government was also hindering the embarkation of recruits from Hanover, in 1805. HSTAH Hann. 38 D, nr. 91 Varia & Korrespondenz, fols. 2-3. Letters to Lord Camden, Secretary of State.

War of Independence.⁵⁴⁹ Certainly, in this process, British recruiters maintained a slightly higher level of integrity than the Prussians, returning their deserters to Frederick's forces even while his own recruiters were kidnapping men from George III's agents.⁵⁵⁰ Competition for these potential recruits was a consistent theme, and Scheither's recruiting efforts were helped to some degree by the relative peaceful situation in central Europe in 1775 and 1776.⁵⁵¹ Yet even he fell short of his goals.

Aside from political obstructions, many of the factors hindering British recruiting efforts were relatively straightforward: issues such as language, distance and placement in the army. Officers in particular were not sought after from within Germany, given the unhappy legacy of William III's Army and the legal roadblocks that emerged thereafter, and this had an effect on recruiting troops as well, as soldiers normally preferred to serve under an officer of their own nationality, especially if that commander was well known. This was a point of contrast for the Legion, which was able to lure additional recruits to England given the presence of numerous Hanoverian officers who were now permitted to command in these foreign corps.⁵⁵² Throughout the century, the presence of German men in the British Army helped draw away fellow-nationals from within the French Army, yet getting these men to desert from the French was not the same as getting them to enlist with the British.⁵⁵³

Perhaps the greatest barrier to successful recruiting in the Holy Roman Empire was the deep-seated fears of sea travel, ostensibly synonymous British

⁵⁴⁹ WO 1/632 fol. 235, Decken to Lt. Col. Gordon, Stade, 8th March, 1806.

⁵⁵⁰ HSTAH Hann. 47 II Nr. 113 II fols. 91-3.; WO 43/405 fols. 324-5 Grothaus to Barrington, Stade, May 15th, 1776.

⁵⁵¹ Scheither's knowledge of recruiting and recruiters is exemplified in the lists he maintained of known recruiters and their associated armies. See: HSTAH Hann. 47 II Nr. 114 fols. 43-4.

⁵⁵² Prince Adolphus believed that bringing in Hanoverian officers well-known to potential German recruits would 'prove a great stimulus to the Hanoverian Soldiers', York agreed, suggesting that this would help create a corps with 'Officers of Abilities and Experience and Men who are already formed and disciplined'. WO 1/626 f. 437 Letter from Adolphus Frederick to York.; WO 1/626 f. 433, Letter from the Duke of York, October 17th 1803.

⁵⁵³ In Canada during the Seven Years War, German soldiers who had been tricked into French service were quick to desert to the British. See: John Knox, *An Historical journal of the campaigns in North America for the years 1757, 1758, 1759 and 1760* edited by Sir Arthur Doughty (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1914-6), vol. I, pp. 246, 323.

service; an apprehension nearly universal among potential German enlistees, subsidy soldiers, and even native Britons as well.⁵⁵⁴ As Norbert Lansheit, one of Hompesch's Hussars, recalled,

there prevailed throughout Germany the greatest horror of England, and of the English service. We had been taught to believe that England was never at peace, and that all her soldiers were liable to be sent, and were sent, to act as marines on board of a fleet. Of the sea, however, we had one and all the utmost dread

Lansheit further added, upon hearing news of possibly being sent to England, that 'we took it for granted that, were we once fairly embarked, we should never see our native land again, nor indeed, escape from our floating-prisons.'⁵⁵⁵ A decade later, when the British Army was on what was essentially a glorified recruiting expedition to the Elbe in 1806, preparations were made in advance to prevent their bevy of new recruits from deserting during re-embarkation for England.⁵⁵⁶ The Hessen-born Friedrich Lindau was encouraged to join the King's German Legion by a man who had deserted shortly before their embarkation, and only his fear of punishment for being a deserter prevented him from

⁵⁵⁴ Thomas Agostini, "Deserted his Majesty's Service", *Military Runaways*, the Press, and the Problem of Desertion in the Seven Years War', *Journal of Social History*, vol. 40, no. 4 (2007), p. 967.

⁵⁵⁵ This fear was almost totally justified, after they embarked, and stayed on ships for the entirety of the winter, in appalling conditions, then were sent to the Isle of Wight, and shortly afterwards, when given the impression that they would be serving as guards in London, were instead sent to garrison duty in the Caribbean. Gleig, *The Hussar*, pp. 20-1. For their fate upon entering the British service, see *op. cit.* chap. 3.

⁵⁵⁶ Beamish notes that on the re-embarkation after the 1805 campaign, many hesitated as they thought: 'That they were destined for colonial service, and would never be permitted to return to their own country, as strongly dwelt upon, and the "barbarians" and "cannibals" of the East and West Indies would, it was affirmed, be the inhabitants of their future quarters.' Desertion was highest among the cavalry, who were hesitant to leave their lands behind. General Don was instructed to do the utmost 'to prevent desertion amongst the troops' for, 'However well disposed the Hanoverians are, and however Cordially attached to their Sovereign, it is not unnatural that they should feel indisposed to Sea Voyages, and Individuals may, under such circumstances, be inclined to withdraw, and remain behind. You will therefore take all possible means, by embarking the German Legion in the First Instance, and by stationing the British Troops in proper Positions, to guard against this danger. I am sure you will, at the same time, feel that it is desirable to avoid anything which should in appearance mark distrust, with respect to the conduct of this highly respectable Corps.' Beamish, *History of the King's German Legion*, pp. 88-89.; WO 6/13 Fol. 14.; WO 6/13 Fol. 17, Castelreagh to General Don, October 16th 1805.

escaping to England to rejoin.⁵⁵⁷ German soldiers would readily admit to their fears of the ocean (which interestingly became a source of admiration for British soldiery),⁵⁵⁸ yet it was not something they wished to replicate, and was no doubt a major detriment in attempts to recruit soldiers from German states. British military policy, and the fate of many of these soldiers, did little to dissuade German men of these fears.

****The Problem of Desertion****

One glaring divide between enlistees and auxiliaries is that the recruits serving within the British army were far more likely to desert. Desertion was always a serious problem in any army, yet the measures that were employed by Scheither's agents appear more like the transferring of prisoners rather than soldiers.⁵⁵⁹ This may be in part due to the unscrupulous methods in which they were 'recruited', but it also was an indication of an endemic problem within early modern militaries, and in particular, recruiting within the Holy Roman Empire. Just like the difficulties in obtaining recruits, it was equally hard maintaining them. The battalions of the 60th Regiment garrisoned at Halifax had a terrible problem with desertions from among their German soldiers, and would again have these same issues once they were transferred to Spain. The King's German Legion's infantry battalions were likewise in part composed by professional deserters, men who had fled from several European Armies and had acquired a number of languages in the process.⁵⁶⁰ But it was the 2,000 Germans brought into the British Army in 1776, which had the most problems, as they were constantly under watch and suffered from extremely high desertion rates. We

⁵⁵⁷ Friedrich Lindau, *Erinnerungen Eines Soldaten aus den Feldzügen der königlich-deutschen Legion* (Hameln: 1846), p. 8.

⁵⁵⁸ Decken, *Englischen National-Character*, p. 34.

⁵⁵⁹ HSTAH Hann 47. nr. 113 I fol. 35, Johan Stutz to Scheither, Stade, February 13th, 1776.; Hann 47. nr. 113 I fol. 57, William Faucitt to Scheither, Hanover, February 29th, 1776.

⁵⁶⁰ Christopher Hibbert (ed.). *The Wheatley Diary: A Journal and Sketch-book kept during the Peninsular War and the Waterloo Campaign* 2nd ed. (Gloucestershire: Windrush Press, 1997), p. 8

know from John Burgoyne's General Orders to the Army, that groups of these German recruits deserted together, even though they were serving in different Regiments, which suggests they were not blending in with their British comrades and were still in close contact with German soldiers in other units.⁵⁶¹ Such was their untrustworthiness, that they would often be forbidden from performing picket duty, and, several months after their arrival in New England, the recruits in the 22nd Foot, were ordered to be locked up at night to prevent their deserting.⁵⁶²

Certainly desertion was nothing new, and barely notable in Britain's Armies of the eighteenth century. Yet unlike native Brits, who when deserting usually made a poor reflection upon the battalion or regiment, these deserters had a detrimental impact on Germans in general. During the second year of the rebellion in the American Colonies, the arrival of the Scheithers' men and the wave of newly recruited (or impressed) Hessian soldiers, led to a dramatic increase in desertions among these foreign soldiers and auxiliaries, and perceptions of German soldiers in the eyes of the British forces steadily decreased from their laudatory beginnings. The motives that spurred this desertion, in part, were the means in which these soldiers were recruited or treated, and the confusion and isolation of being set amidst a strange army in a stranger land must have been immense. Yet simpler reasons certainly remained. In the end, we must look at some of the more general causes for desertion, which Thomas Agostini and Peter Way have outlined, and here we find little variation between natives and foreigners.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶¹ *Orderly Book of Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne* (New York: J. Munsell, 1860), p. 78.

⁵⁶² Germans serving in the Royal American Regiment in the Seven Years War appear to have acted in the same manner. Hagist, 'Forty German Recruits', (endnotes); Agostini, "Deserted his Majesty's Service", p. 970.

⁵⁶³ Regarding Germans in the 60th Regiment, Way writes: 'Many soldiers cited the breaking of their terms of enlistment as the reason behind their desertion. Mathias Wassirman of the Royal Americans said he deserted because he had listed as a surgeon barber for three years, but was made a private for four years, and had been promised he would not serve beyond 100 miles of Pennsylvania, but was made to do so. His four days of freedom brought him a death penalty. Sent to a similar fate were Frederick Muller and Roger Camps, both German deserters from the Royal Americans, who claimed they did not receive their 15 weeks sea pay (wages for the time spent in transit across the Atlantic), and that their five days worth of ration were given all in turnips

****The Integration of German Soldiers****

It is difficult to determine to what degree these men assimilated into their host-Army, for there are very few accounts of the soldiers themselves, and those forms of commentary that spring up for allies and auxiliaries are absent.⁵⁶⁴ Yet there are bits and pieces from the personal writings of the soldiers and administrative documents that can tell us something about their relations. In this discussion, the King's German Legion will be for the most part excluded, given their unique circumstances. However, other formations, particularly the Royal Americans and the foreign corps of the 1790's-1801's attained varying degrees of structural and social integration, where though they may have been wearing red uniforms and being paid as British regulars, it did not necessarily mean that they were fitting seamlessly into the army. Meanwhile, other regiments maintained their former, German, customs, which created noticeable divides between themselves and other forces on the British muster rolls.

One of the key factors that worked against assimilation, and perpetuated a feeling of difference, was the appearance of these various soldiers, both in their comportment and their uniforms. In the same manner that the Highland kilt nurtured a Scottish identity, German soldiers, especially those forming their own corps, would cling to their clothing as a means of preserving their heritage, and

which were consumed by the fourth day'. Thomas Agostini, "'Deserted His Majesty's Service'; Peter Way, 'Class and the Common Soldier in the Seven Years' War', *Labor History*, Vol. 44, no. 4 (2003) p. 476.

⁵⁶⁴ Perhaps the best account we have, especially in English, is a memoir of Norbert Lansheit (or Landscheit as he is known on the books in the WO), transcribed and edited by Robert Gleig, himself a memoirist of the Peninsular Wars and later rector of the Chelsea hospital, where he found this German Hussar. Landsheit had an amazingly long career, in part why Gleig chose to write and publish his history. Beginning his service with Hompesch's Hussars in the war against the French Republic, he went on to serve in Saint Domingue, Guernsey, Southern England, the Cape Colony, Argentina, Portugal, and Spain, and upon disbandment, was placed on a pension of one shilling a day. Having transferred from Hompesch's Regiment to the Queen's Hussars, then to the 20th Light Dragoons, and Finally in the Foreign Hussars, his experiences provide an incredible insight to the experiences of a German soldier (he never was ranked higher than sergeant) within the British Army. For his discharge papers, see WO 97/1180 fol. 9.

the adoption of the redcoat was a key aspect in their assimilation. Upon its formation, the Royal American regiment bucked traditions and contained no lace in their uniforms, an action that was deemed to be beneficial to light infantry work, but which made them stand out among other infantry regiments. For the 5th battalion of the Royal Americans, their badge can be traced back to the men's association with various foreign corps, with their Maltese Cross motif a possible nod to the Hompesch family, who counted among them Ferdinand Hompesch, the last Grand Master of the Knights of St. John.⁵⁶⁵ Though the Hanoverians of the Legion were used to wearing red (the colour of the Hanoverian uniform), their flags and insignias, while still more British than Hanoverian, gave subtle reminders of their difference and special origins.⁵⁶⁶ The Legion's 1st Hussar regiment stubbornly clung to their blue uniforms, as worn from their days in the Hanoverian service, but after years of campaigning, they too switched to scarlet.⁵⁶⁷ This was in part due to the pride and tradition of donning such outfits, but could also point to more superficial reasons, such as a love for costume and flare, especially among cavalry regiments. Landsheit bitterly regretted having to give up his dashing Hussar costume, in favour of the drabber British uniforms: 'we were', he confessed, 'prodigious dandies'.⁵⁶⁸

Of all the German units on the British establishment, none received more commentary in terms of appearance, and in this process attributed the greatest sense of difference, than the Brunswick-Öls corps, whose very identity, as the 'Black Brunswickers' was intrinsically tied to their uniform. Dressed head-to-toe in black, with a silver skull-and-crossbones on their hats, according to one Englishman, their 'appearance excited general astonishment', and he claimed that 'anything so fierce I never before saw'.⁵⁶⁹ Another officer recalled them as 'a

⁵⁶⁵ Victor Sutcliffe, *Regiments of the British Army: Part 1 Infantry* (East Rudham: Mulberry Coach House, 2007), p. 329.

⁵⁶⁶ Pfannkuche, *Die Königlich Duetsche Legion*, pp. 17-18.

⁵⁶⁷ They had donned red uniforms long enough, that once they returned to their original blue jackets for the Waterloo campaign, none of their friends in the British Hussars recognized them.

⁵⁶⁸ Gleig, *The Hussar*, p. 55-6.

⁵⁶⁹ Charles Boutflower, *The Journal of an Army Surgeon During the Peninsular War* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1997).

picturesque group' with 'somber uniforms' and 'dark mustachioed visages', though he was well accustomed to their appearance by the end of their service.⁵⁷⁰ One German soldier in the Legion was rather unimpressed with this exterior: '[They] had been described to us as warlike, fierce, and blood-thirsty: they did not, however, at all correspond to the description.' His fellow Germans in the KGL were also quick to distance themselves from this other foreign corps, which had a less favourable reputation, adding that they 'called them, in derision, "The Brotherhood of Revenge."⁵⁷¹ The black uniforms which these soldiers donned, including the 'death's head' insignias were a strange sight to the eyes of British soldiers, and several writers questioned the justification and appropriateness in donning such gloomy façades, which were designed as a symbol of mourning and revenge, and very much a reminder of these Regiments' origins. 'Is this chivalry, or barbarity?' pondered Augustus Frazer, who though a close friend to many Hanoverians in the King's German Legion, viewed the Brunswickers as something apart.⁵⁷² As fate should have it, most contemporaries would lean towards barbarity. Posterity, however, rested squarely on the side of chivalry, thanks in part to the painting, *The Black Brunswicker* by John Everett Millais, which, composed thirty-four years after Waterloo, was one of the most popular images of Britain's allies from the war. Yet this was a romanticized difference that had popularity among the public, while those within the military shared a greater admiration for those foreign corps who had served with greater distinction.

There were other institutional variations that also reinforced a sense of integration, or perpetuated a sense of foreignness. Some of the most dramatic examples are found in the variances between manners of enforcing British or German forms of drill and discipline. Here, some of the key cultural and professional differences were brought to the fore, and instigated a great deal of commentary, especially late in the period in question. Integrated soldiers would

⁵⁷⁰ Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 239-40.

⁵⁷¹ Anon. *Adventures of a Young Rifleman*, p.209

⁵⁷² Sir Augustus Simon Frazer, *Letters of Colonel Sir Augustus Simon Frazer, K.C.B.*, edited by Major-General Edward Sabine (East Sussex: Naval Military Press, 2001), p. 263.

often be expected to conform to various rules and regulations, but there could be a great deal of resentment, or reluctance, in accepting alternative forms of commands, drills, and punishment.

In terms of drill, the method of integration was not vastly different from the treatment of auxiliaries, although, it was received with perhaps less reluctance, given their nominal status as British soldiers. Nevertheless, such reforms could take some time. For the King's German Legion, it took fully five years for the universal adoption of British regulations.⁵⁷³ For the York Hussars, the Isle of Guernsey became the crucible where they were forged into soldiers of the British mould, where their new commanders set 'aside all [their] old usages... introducing English drill, English habits, English distinctions, and English punishments'.⁵⁷⁴ The cavalrymen of the Brunswick-Öls Corps, who arrived a decade later, underwent the same process.⁵⁷⁵ Yet, this was an era of remarkable parity between various armies, especially within English and German military cultures, exemplified by, among others, Norbert Landsheit, who was familiar enough with English commands after a year's service with the British, to be promoted a sergeant with authority over native Englishmen.⁵⁷⁶ Therefore, delays in adopting British drill were made by choice, not determined by difficulty.

While variations in drill and command would create strong perceptions of difference, by far the most glaring, and dramatic comments on institutional 'otherness' are born out of variations in the methods of punishment. For a Saxon rifleman joining the King's German Legion after serving in the French Army, his memoirs are filled with precise details about punishments and forms of discipline, which become the primary area of discussion, after his transferring to garrisons in Malta and later Sicily.⁵⁷⁷ Such commentary was especially dominant when soldiers were moved a way from the battlefield, when these public displays

⁵⁷³ Beamish, *History of the King's German Legion*, vol. I. p. 85.

⁵⁷⁴ Gleig, *The Hussar*, p. 62.

⁵⁷⁵ Anon, *Wider Napoleon*, vol. I. p. 315.

⁵⁷⁶ These commands were some of the few words of English he knew, having served with an all-German regiment. Gleig, *The Hussar*, p. 76.

⁵⁷⁷ Anon. *Adventures of a Young Rifleman*, esp. pp. 247, 267, 273, 298

of discipline became the most violent and visceral aspects of their military lives.⁵⁷⁸

The variations in punishments were not as methodical or as organized as one would expect, and sometimes relied merely upon the whims of the commanding officer. Landsheit and his comrades would in the course of the 1790's serve under a variety of English and foreign officers, each with their own brand of meting out discipline. Yet one of the most interesting features of their differences was that both sides looked upon the other's methods as harsh and cruel, even when their own methods went without comment. For German soldiers, the severity of British punishments, and in particular the use of the cat-o'-nine-tails, was an act of savage cruelty which seemed to encourage, rather than discourage misbehaviour.⁵⁷⁹ Colonel Ompteda of the King's German Legion, believed that this harsh treatment led to 'excessive drinking among the English soldiers,' owing to a 'despair' at having to endure 'a discipline indisputably the most severe to be found in any European army.'⁵⁸⁰

British opinions of 'German' discipline were equally condemnatory. The Black Brunswickers, which became a coven of former and potential deserters, had a continuous problem with iniquitousness to which corporal punishment was handed out on a regular basis. Already, this tacit display of unprofessionalism made this foreign corps an 'other' in the minds of officers and men who put an emphasis on their military duties, and the methods and manner of such punishments only added to this sense of difference. An English fusilier, John Cooper, who had spent several campaigns fighting alongside the Brunswick troops, recalled their 'most fearful' practice of 'flogging by beat of drum' whereby 'many were lashed into insensibility,' and in the case of one Brunswicker soldier, beaten to the point of insanity. 'It required strong nerves to look on. Indeed,

⁵⁷⁸ Landsheit dedicates much of his dictated memoirs to this subject. Gleig, *Hussar*, pp. 57-8, 62, 80.

⁵⁷⁹ Adolf Pfannkuche, *Die Königlich Deutsche Legion 1803-1816* (Hannover: Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926). p.18. Gleig, *Hussar*, p. 62

⁵⁸⁰ Ompteda himself would act as translator for several courts-martial during his time in Britain. Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, pp. 200-201.

many fainted during these prolonged punishments.⁵⁸¹ Other dramatic forms prevailed elsewhere, such as the gauntlet, or the more traditional caning that was a staple of the Prussian disciplinary code. The English Legionary, Edmund Wheatley, viewed the physical abuse endured by the Germans of the King's German Legion to be a contributing factor in the poor relations between the ranks, given that 'officers... do not hesitate to accompany a reproof with a blow and I cannot imagine any man so dejected in situation as to bear patiently [this] corporal chastisement.'⁵⁸² Intriguingly, this was an opinion that reflected his commanding officer Baron Ompteda's opinion of *British* punishments. In part, such sentiments were informed by a reformation in thinking that was sweeping these European armies, and in particular, the British army and society, in which such violent measures were often scorned, or at least adhered to with reluctance.⁵⁸³ The debate regarding Prussian style discipline within the British Army had now expanded to encompass the questioning of British means of enforcing obedience. What is striking is that outsiders commenting upon both English and German styles of punishment viewed the others' as overly severe. In this case it was the mere difference that was important, as such institutional variations might have been more notable, not because they were improper, but that they were different from that serviceman's ideals of implementing discipline.

In many ways, discussions of harsh discipline or brutal punishments mimicked debates over absolutism and liberalism in discussions of national

⁵⁸¹ John Spencer Cooper, *Rough Notes of Seven Campaigns in Portugal, Spain, France and America During the Years 1809-1815* (Spellmount: Staplehurst, 1996), pp. 14, 20.

⁵⁸² Hibbert, *Wheatley Diary*, p. 8.

⁵⁸³ One of the manifestations of how punishment within a military setting reaffirmed difference between native and foreign soldiers, was who would be allowed to inflict such punishments on British troops. The King's German Legion, which as we shall see in the following chapter had shared a great degree of administrative commonality with their host-army, nevertheless created a furore when several Legionaries were ordered to carry out punishments on several militiamen. While this may have been normal in the military sphere, in the public sphere, it was something altogether offensive, and such was the wrath of William Cobbett, that he was thrown in jail for sedition for the comments he made upon the subject. This received a deal of attention, but perhaps less than the trial of Joseph Wall four years earlier for having African men flog his soldiers. See: Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire*, pp. 255-259.; Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600-1815* (New York: Anchor Books, 2002), p. 328-332.

character, an otherwise, unaddressed topic within the writings of soldiers. For decades the brutal practices within German armies were regarded as a manifestation of the absolutist nature of their princes. Yet, the British Army, unlike the nation itself, could not offer a contrast, as the cat-'o-nine tails and the harsh restrictions on British soldiers would create a parity in the ill treatment of soldiers between Britain and their German allies. Despite the relatively close proximity of these two military cultures, there were aspects in each that further highlighted divisions between the soldiers who adhered to them, although in reference to discipline, it was the manner of enforcement, not the severity, where discrepancies arose.

The meting of discipline was not only valuable for highlighting difference in the perceptions of other armies, but it has also left the historian a paper trail of courts-martial proceedings, which can provide some snapshots into the lives of these integrated soldiers – although it is a source that must be used with moderation given that may portray relations as overly negative. One German, Christopher Strobel, brought to trial for deserting a colonial regiment, complained ‘that he was used better by the Indians than by the Christians.’⁵⁸⁴ A little over a decade later, Georg Hunderdtmark, one of Scheithers recruits serving in the 9th Regiment, was found guilty of desertion, and in his defence made similar claims. In his trial he listed a variety of grievances, which paint a tragic picture, and show some of the difficulties that might have been shared among fellow German soldiers. He had never had the Articles of War read to him in his native tongue, had not received the clothing and money he was owed, was inadequately fed, and most telling of all, ‘on giving some Shirts to the only two Women who are with the Comp[an]y ... [to be cleaned] they flung them back and said they did not wash for Dutchmen.’ Here, the officers, soldiers, and even their wives, played a role in isolating Hundertmark, and he was called a term that did less to hurt him than it did to reveal the perpetrator’s geo-political ignorance. That fellow Germans within the regiment testified to his defence, did little to

⁵⁸⁴ Quoted in Peter Way, ‘Soldiers of Misfortune: New England Regulars and the Fall of Oswego’, *Massachusetts Historical Review*, vol. 3 (2001), p. 77.

prevent a guilty verdict, for which he was executed shortly thereafter.⁵⁸⁵ Though British soldiers could have equally discomfiting experiences in the army, such accounts show the difficulties many Germans in the rank & file had in trying to integrate within the army, and the unwillingness of British troops, and their camp followers, to adopt them.

These may be one-off cases, but there was certainly a problem that was nearly universal for these foreign soldiers – the withholding of pay. Such grievances can be found from the Royal Americans through to years after Napoleon’s last battle, with repeated complaints of being withheld money owed, with one of the most common being transit costs, a graft often used by pitiless superiors. While this was a predicament for British soldiers within the army as well, no doubt the problems for these foreigners were compounded, given that they were not used to the customs and regulations in the army, and their naïveté and linguistic difficulties made them easy prey for corrupt officers.⁵⁸⁶ The images one gains of these ‘military enterprisers’ like Prevost, Scheither and Hompesch, only reinforces the aura of corruption and graft. The ill-treatment and subsequent backlash from Scheither’s recruits were a glaring contrast to many sentiments related about the good pay and care given by the British Army from later commentators or their contemporaries among the Hessian auxiliaries.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁵ He also complained that his ‘treatment in the company ‘was more like that of a dog and a Soldier.’ Though some of his treatment was disputed, a fellow German in his company seconded his comment that the women would not ‘wash for Dutchmen’ WO 71/84 fol. 181, Trial of George Hundred Mark, Dewar’s House, August 24th 1777.

⁵⁸⁶ Stepler, ‘Common Soldier’, pp. 77-81.; HL Loudoun Papers, 5812, box 124, John Donner, et al. ‘Petition from a number of recruits raised in Germany against Col. Prevost’, New York, April 22nd, 1758.

⁵⁸⁷ According to Specht, while journeying to the colonies, ‘The officer of the ship *British Queen* came to us and reported to the colonel that the German recruits on his ship were again disobedient not wanting to go on guard duty unless they got tobacco, more meat etc.; that they were uncontrollable; that there were four particular ringleaders, who stirred up the others.’ After his officers delivered a few lashings, ‘they changed their minds and the revolt was finished’. Also *en route* to America, Georg Pausch hears so many complaints from the recruits of Scheither, which he only stays on that transport ship for a short time, and returns to his own. Upon their arrival in America, General Bauermeister reported that, ‘these low-spirited people have received nothing besides their German thaler pocket money, their two shillings at Portsmouth, and their daily rations, and, moreover, they have no prospect of getting anything. Some have even been engaged as officers, but will never be able to serve in that capacity here, not even as non-commissioned officers. At our request, General Howe turned over to us all the Hessian deserters

But there is a notable divide here, in that many of the depredations came while these forces were cast into the far corners of the British Empire. Closer to home, they were in better care, and better provided for.⁵⁸⁸

****Conclusions****

Between the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, German soldiers were steadily adopted in greater numbers into the British establishment, matching the trend whereby the state was harnessing ever-greater quantities of her own manpower in her titanic struggle against France. Though the series of wars that transpired from 1755 to 1815 have been seen as formative agents in the unifying of Britain, this same era saw increasing numbers of foreign-born soldiers incorporated into the British Army. Yet the German element within the military during this period remained both small in scale and impact. Whereas allies and auxiliary forces could match, or even dwarf the British contingents, the proportion of Germans serving in the British establishment would rarely surpass ten percent in a single army, and only in the case of the 60th Regiment did they at any time comprise the majority in a regiment of British regulars. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of men from across the Holy Roman Empire served in King George's Army between the Seven Years War and the Hundred Days of 1815, contributing to a wide variety of international and domestic military undertakings.

The level of integration was determined by several factors, but ultimately, Germans shared a similar reception as those of the Celtic fringe who were

discovered among them.' Specht, *Journal* p.19; Burgoyne, *Georg Pausch's Journal*, p.16.; Bernhard A. Uhlendorf, (ed. and trans). *Revolution in America: Confidential Letters and Journals 1776-1784 of Adjutant General Major Bauermeister of the Hessian Forces* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1957), p. 59.

⁵⁸⁸ Upon discharge, the rifleman in the Legion received all his arrears in pay, to which he announced he had 'not the slightest cause of complaint against the English government'. *Young Rifleman*, p. 357.

funnelled into the ranks at much greater numbers. Their failure to completely blend in was often attributable (aside from their language barrier and cultural differences) to the fact that the German soldiers who did serve in the British Army were usually far less dedicated to the military profession. Once in the army these men could be mistreated and denied pay, and suffering from a sense of isolation, neglect or betrayal, many deserted, while others merely slackened in their adherence to the ideals of a good soldier. This combined with the influx of professional deserters and the other unscrupulous characters thrown into these various formations lead to a perception that they were untrustworthy, and equally important: unprofessional. In many ways, this parallels the shift in sentiments experienced by the Hessians in the American War, when the German Princes, desperate to meet their quotas, turned to less desirable candidates to fill their ranks. Yet unlike perceptions of the Hessians in the American War, the primary point of criticism aimed at the Teutonic soldiery within the army emerged not from marauding, but desertion – a more ignoble offense.

Concerning the public view towards these men, once again there was a disparity between popular discourse and the opinions of soldiers. However, unlike German allies or auxiliaries, most of the British population showed little care or interest in these forces, and when they did, it was during their service within the home islands, or when a foreigner stood to command native Britons. This was largely due to the fact that several thousand soldiers within the British Army was an issue nowhere near as striking as hundreds of thousands of pounds being sent to foreign monarchs. The result was there were few negative stereotypes regarding Germans as redcoats, as far as the public was concerned. The one exception was the King's German Legion, whose ties to the Hanoverian dynasty and Electorate allowed a new generation of polemicists and political gadflies to resurrect the decades-old arguments of Hanoverian impositions upon Britain and its people.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁹ Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire*, p. 244-256.

For soldiers, the most prevalent preconception emerged from the roles that German soldiers performed within the British Army, as experts at skirmishing and specialists of light cavalry work. Here their relative successes helped foster respect, and in doing so reinforced preconceived notions of national character and fighting ability – that Germans were somehow more adapted to these duties than Britons. No foreign corps did more for the enhancement of these impressions of martial character than the men in the King's German Legion. Indeed, the Legion followed a number of trends common to integrated corps, but was also an exceptional entity for a variety of reasons. Having largely ignored them for much of this discussion, we can now turn to a case study of their formation and nature of their dozen years of service to see how they became something both wholly unique, but also a broader manifestation of the relationships common to Anglo-German armies.

CHAPTER VI:

CASE STUDY 2 – THE KING’S GERMAN LEGION, 1803-1815

The history and historiography of the King’s German Legion leave the scholar with no doubt, that this foreign corps was the most successful instance of German soldiers operating in the British Army at any point between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Contemporary accounts of contacts with the Legion, and the opinions born out of those various interactions, further support this conclusion. While the King’s German Legion was unique in its highly regarded and lauded status, it was also very much a product of a century of Anglo-German soldierly relationships, and an embodiment of some of the major themes common not only to the foreign corps of this period, but the myriad of military associations that in many ways culminated in this specific force. The Legion is invaluable as a topic for a case study, since it existed at a time when the soldier diary and memoir enjoyed exponential growth in popularity and demand, thereby leading to a prolific amount of primary sources, and, given the nature and high drama of the war against Napoleon, an ample plate of secondary materials as well.

Since the King’s German Legion has received far and away more attention than any of the other forms of integrated German soldiers, the history and deeds of this corps will not be required here. Instead, this case study will turn towards a social history of the Legion, something only rarely touched upon, both in histories of the KGL, and those of the Peninsular War in general.⁵⁹⁰ The sheer quantity of soldier narratives, also permits a look into the types of communal association between British and German soldiers, and from these pools of sources we can further investigate the sliding scale between national character and transnational soldiering. Focusing on the Kings German Legion allows us not only to draw comparisons with other integrated corps, but also to test how issues of national

⁵⁹⁰ For the best account of this relationship, see: Antony Brett-James, *Life in Wellington’s Army*.

character, identity, and the homogenizing influences of the military profession played out in this incredibly well documented epoch.

****Composition, Integration and Treatment****

Similar to the battalions of the 60th Foot, and the Brunswick and Hompesch regiments, the King's German Legion was composed of predominantly, but not exclusively, German men. Throughout its twelve year history as many as 30,000 soldiers had passed through its ranks, and though most of these soldiers in the earlier years were Hanoverian (in fact the 8,000 men enrolled in the corps by 1805 were almost exclusively from the Electorate), by the end of the war the Legion had become a diverse and polyglot force.⁵⁹¹ One of the more resounding effects of the Treaty of Artlenburg in 1803, ratified following the occupation of Hanover by the French, was the agreement to dissolve the Hanoverian Army. The British government wishing to tap into this external source of manpower, but not being able to specifically target Hanoverians for fears of breaking these terms, broadened their scope beyond the Electorate, thereby establishing the Legion's future as something both separate from the Hanoverian Army and an embodiment of a wider German resistance to Napoleon.⁵⁹²

The increasing difficulties in recruiting soldiers directly from Germany, due to French and Prussian obstructions, made it mandatory to find other sources of manpower, which resulted in a policy whereby prisoners and deserters from the

⁵⁹¹ Most estimates are around 25,000 – 30,000, with 28,000 seeming to be the most popular. Gray also estimates that at its height, some 3,000-4,000 men were needed every year to maintain the corps at full capacity. From its conception, the Legion had been opened to men of other nations, with the exceptions of Spanish, French and Englishmen, the latter restriction referring primarily to soldiers, and not officers. The presence of Polish soldiers indicates that the Legion was not merely limited to co-religionists. Gray, 'The Services of the King's German Legion', pp. 314-325. For a well-preserved copy of the Legion's patent, see WO 246/111 fol. 1.; *Act of Parliament 29 Geo. II., CAP.5.*

⁵⁹² Gray, Services, p. 17.; HSA, Hann 38D, nr. 237, 'Proclamation of the Duke of Cambridge', August 10th, 1803.

French Army would be brought into the ranks.⁵⁹³ More so than in previous conflicts, the presence of Germans in the army was a successful lure, due to the rather prominent officers that had taken command in the Legion.⁵⁹⁴ Though ideally these recruits needed to at the very least speak German, this was not always the case, and by the end of the Peninsular War, its infantry battalions would be filled with Danish, Dutch, Swiss, Polish and French soldiers as well.⁵⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the KGL remained a predominantly German force, in language and culture, and 'Legionaries' and 'Germans' were synonymous in the description of its soldiers. Although in structure the King's German Legion was not particularly unique, (except perhaps for its sheer size), it did achieve unprecedented integration within the British Army, far beyond what was shared by previous Anglo-German corps. This assimilation was not merely structural: its utilization, the greater degree of legal integration, and even psychological incorporation, make the KGL remarkable.

The line infantry rarely stood out in the minds of fellow soldiers and commanders in the army, and for better or worse, they shared in the same tasks as permanent regiments. This lack of specificity is best exemplified in that the Legion never acted as a single force and the line regiments were dispersed and brigaded amongst various British formations during campaigns. In respect to treatment, duties, equipage and discipline, the various components of the Legion were treated

⁵⁹³ French obstructions, such as making the recruitment of Hanoverians by British officials a capital offence, successfully hampered efforts to recruit within the Electorate. Similarly, the Prussians, who occupied the Electorate in 1806 upon agreement with the French, did all they could do hinder recruitment, and set up various obstacles to prevent the exodus of able soldiers, whom they might have otherwise tried to recruit themselves. So wrote Friedrich v.d. Decken, while acting as a diplomatic liaison to Prussia: 'I am sorry to add that the Prussians have taken such strong steps against our recruiting, that it will be impossible to carry it on, in the same manner, as has been done hitherto: a considerable reward has been offered for detecting our recruiting Parties [and] several of our Officers have been arrested by [Prussian Magistrates]' See: North, 'The raising and organizing of the King's German Legion', pp. 168-84. Gray, 'The Services of the King's German Legion' pp. 197-200.; WO 1/627, fol. 379, Clinton to John Sullivan.; WO 1/632 fol. 235 8th March, 1806 Friedrich v.d. Decken to Lt. Col. Gordon, March 8th 1806.

⁵⁹⁴ One such example was the exploits of Georg Baring, who, in December 1813, while discussing a prisoner exchange with French officers present made an agreement for the desertion of the two Nassau Regiments. Frazer, *Letters*, pp. 344, 365-6.

⁵⁹⁵ There was a great deal of debate over the recruitment of deserters and prisoners of war, and the policy did not last once the recruitment of Hanoverians was again possible, following the Electorate's liberation in 1813. WO 1/245 fols. 151-5.; WO 1/648 fols. 369, 373.; WO 1/651 fol. 21.; WO 3/54 fols. 459- 462.; WO 6/135 fol. 128.

in a like manner to their native-British counterparts. For the relatively non-distinct infantry battalions, if they received much notice, it was for being as reliable as the predominately British elements of the army.

Unlike previous formations, such as the battalions of the Royal Americans or the German regiments serving in the French Revolutionary Wars, the Hanoverian Legion was rarely given far-flung or undesirable stations, and in some cases shown a great deal of favouritism. Due to the inherent problems in replenishing its numbers, the British commanders, including Wellington himself, frequently spared the Legion those operations that inflicted the heaviest casualties – a point picked up on by many in parliament who would have preferred utilizing them specifically for such tasks.⁵⁹⁶ The light infantry, artillery, and cavalry became renowned in the Army for their effectiveness, with the cavalymen being frequently eulogized in histories and personal narratives. In fact, such was the skill and quality of the Legion's horsemen, especially the 1st and 2nd Hussars, that they were widely seen as superior to their British counterparts.⁵⁹⁷

The respect and renown of the KGL's light cavalry, paved the way for a greater acceptance of the rest of the Legion. In British discourse the most common topic regarding these soldiers was the skill and care shown by these Hanoverian horsemen, be it to their duties, or to their mounts.⁵⁹⁸ However, the area in which they were given the most praise was in their performance of the British Army's long standing area of deficiency – outpost duty. '*The German Hussars in the Peninsula army were our first masters in outpost duties*' one British officer later confessed, a sentiment which was widespread among the Hussars' contemporaries.⁵⁹⁹ Edward Cocks, who for many years fought alongside these German soldiers, shared this outlook

⁵⁹⁶ Lord Folkestone during a Commons debate in 1812, made a comparison of the rather large contrasts in casualties between British regulars and Legionaries in the Peninsula. See: Hansard, 'Motion Concerning the King's German Legion,' vol. 12, December 10, 1812.

⁵⁹⁷ George Robert Gleig, *The Subaltern: A Chronicle of the Peninsular War* edited, and with an Introduction by Ian C. Robertson (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2001), p. 138.

⁵⁹⁸ There are dozens and dozens of commentaries and comments made on the difference between how British and German soldiers cared for their horses. Suffice to say, the KGL's cavalry won unanimously in these comparisons.

⁵⁹⁹ Original Italics. Lieut.-Col William Tomkinson. *The Diary of a Cavalry Officer, in the Peninsular and Waterloo Campaigns* (Spellmount: Staplehurst, 1999), p. 216.; Ian Fletcher, *Craufurd's Light Division* (Spellmount: Tunbridge Wells, 1991), pp. 91, 97.

in his diary in 1810, stating that ‘these Hanoverian Hussars are the best cavalry we have... The 16th [Dragoons] is brigaded with them, they have been our masters.’ For Cocks, these Hanoverian cavalymen deserved British admiration, given that they ‘understand outpost duty better, and take more care of their horses, than British dragoons.’⁶⁰⁰ Captain Harry Smith, who shared many ‘hairbreadth escapes’ with the men of the 1st Hussars, had nothing but praise for them, saying that they were ‘regarded, as indeed they were, as exemplary soldiers for our emulation.’⁶⁰¹

The skill and dedication for such work was something lacking in British squadrons, and as a result, it became common for German and British troopers to conduct outpost work together, so that the Britons could learn the craft. Indeed, one infantry officer who had a deal of disdain for the aristocratic sensibilities of the English cavalryman, recalled that ‘a considerable portion of the [English] officers were careless young fellows, brought up in luxury, and unused to anything bordering on serious application... till at length two regiments of German light horse in our service... taught them something of the real duty of a soldier.’⁶⁰² Contrary to what might be expected, this teacher-student relationship did not incite jealousy, or resentment, but in fact created something of the opposite. As one Hanoverian officer in the Corunna Campaign stated, ‘The English Dragoons enjoy serving under the command of Germans, and endure the severity, which one has to use against them, very well, because they see that it is in their interests and for everyone’s welfare.’⁶⁰³ Here, professional considerations wore away hesitancy from working under the command of foreign officers, given it was felt it helped them achieve a greater proficiency in the methods and tactics of outpost duty and light cavalry work. Through this close contact, strong friendships emerged, and these soldiers became markedly unified – both structurally and emotionally. In the words of Edward Cocks, whose diary is perhaps our best contemporary account of the inner-workings of this relationship: ‘Never have two regiments been more united. We

⁶⁰⁰ Page, *Intelligence Officer*, pp. 63, 83.

⁶⁰¹ Harry Smith, *The Autobiography of Sir Harry Smith, 1787-1819* (London: John Murray, 1903), pp. 24, 26.

⁶⁰² Ross-Lewin, *With ‘The Thirty Second’*, pp. 303-4.

⁶⁰³ Bernhard Schwertfeger. *Der Königlich Hannoversche Generalleutnant August Friedrich Freiherr v.d. Busche-Ippenburg* (Hannover: Hahn’sche Buchhandlung, 1904), p. 122.

have been like one corps.⁶⁰⁴ Once again, success and professionalism became unifying agents.

Yet this structural integration did not come without its critics. The initial promotions for the Legion's officers were met with jealousy from many among the high-ranking British officers.⁶⁰⁵ The main cause for this friction with native officers stemmed from the policies between 1803-5, when various noblemen were given commands that they held while in the Hanoverian Army, and in a very un-English manner, did not have to earn (or purchase) their way through the ranks as the British officers had. As in all militaries, fights for rank and promotion were often carried out with more zeal and ferocity than battles, and this professional concern fostered resentment. Shortly after the creation of the Legion in 1803, the Hanoverian Baron, Christian von Ompteda, wrote to his Brother about the mood in London after one such episode:

Decken's unheard-of promotion to an English colonelcy had provoked such opposition among the English of the same category that the English... place every possible obstacle in his way, which is not promising for the construction of such a corps as the Legion. Generally speaking... *Et l'intérêt, ce vil roi de la terre* stretches its scepter in all directions... 'Get rank, get money,' is the first principle here, in pursuit of which Bonaparte... and who knows what else get forgotten.⁶⁰⁶

Certainly one such thing that was forgotten was distinction over nationality, for it was a reaction against a breach in the military traditions and the Act of Settlement that drew their ire, not any national prejudice – though their foreignness by no means assuaged these resentments.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁴ Cocks would later bemoan the loss of many of his closest companions within the German cavalry. 'Poor Hussars! I have scarcely a friend left in the regiment... These men are not to be replaced.' Page, *Intelligence Officer*, pp. 128, 143.

⁶⁰⁵ Resentment over promotions, including a department in England under the command of Colonel Linsigen, still provoked resentment, mainly at Horse-Guards and opposition MP's. For continuing debate over promotion of the Legion's officers, see: Hansard, 'Motion Concerning the King's German Legion,' vol. 12, December 10, 1812.

⁶⁰⁶ Christian Ompteda. *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 170.

⁶⁰⁷ One Englishman from the Coldstream Guards (a regiment notorious for its ambitious officers) wrote, 'the appointment of General Alten to the Light Division has given great disgust to the army; he is a German who has never done any one thing yet, and the command of that division is far the most desirous of any in this army.' Such was the lingering resentment to similar promotions (more among politicians than much of the army), that Lord Folkestone brought up this very issue several years

In spite of these initial conflicts, the successes and widespread praise for the Legion paved the way for a great deal of legal integration as well, with the Duke of Cambridge bestowing on its officers permanent ranks in the British Army. This Royal Proclamation was not only a show of support from the Royal Family, which was a constant, but an indication of their increased respect and appreciation from the Army at-large, who thought them worthy enough to be considered (even nominally) as British soldiers.⁶⁰⁸ When this proclamation was put to debate in the winter of 1812, the MP and former divisional commander General William Stewart, showed his overwhelming support for the men of the Legion, many of whom had previously served under his command. On the floor of the Commons, he proclaimed

the Germans had so eminently distinguished themselves in the peninsula... that upon the continent there was but one feeling among the British army upon this subject, and as to the general merits of the German Legion... Such was, indeed, the impression they made, that if the British army could be canvassed... he had not the slightest doubt that the grant of permanent rank to the officers of that Legion would have been universally approved of...⁶⁰⁹

Parliament's acquiescence to this proclamation was a tacit acknowledgment of the Legion's value, and was a departure from previous instances, which were done on a case-by-case basis, and predominantly for high-ranking men serving in the American theatre, or more distantly, for Huguenot officers. The effects of this proclamation were mainly ceremonial, but represented another significant alteration of the Act of Settlement, whereby these men were on the same terms with their British colleagues, with one provision – broken several times already – that they could not command independent forces in Britain. Though the real impact was

later, during his arguments against the Legion's officers being given permanent ranks in the British Army. John Mills, *For king and Country, The Letters and Diaries of John Mills, Coldstream Guards, 1811-1814* edited by Ian Fletcher (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1995), pp. 150-1.

⁶⁰⁸ The Royal Proclamation, approved by Parliament five months later, in August of 1812, read: 'In consideration of the King's German Legion having so frequently distinguished themselves against the enemy... the officers who are now serving with temporary rank in several regiments of that corps, shall have permanent rank in the British army from the date of their respective commissions.' In Beamish, *History of the King's German Legion*, vol. 1, p. 86. For the debate in the Commons, which pivoted on the legality of such a bestowment, see: Hansard, 'Motion Concerning the King's German Legion,' vol. 12, esp. cc. 240-69.

⁶⁰⁹ Hansard, 'Motion Concerning the King's German Legion,' vol. 12, cc. 262-263

nominal, the granting of permanent ranks was a major point of pride among the recipients, and would (despite the assurances of the Legion's supporters) result in them being permanently placed on half pay at the war's conclusion. But long before this debate began Hanoverian officers would often command large portions of Britain's fighting forces, with a prime example being General Charles von Alten, who towards the end of the Peninsular War commanded the famous 'Light Division', the jewel of Wellington's Army, purported to have 'the finest infantry in the world.'⁶¹⁰

The unprecedented unity between these foreign soldiers and the native British did not end at the conclusion of the war. In the decades after the cessation of hostilities, honours and medals were steadily granted to particularly laudable combatants, and the British government would support the Legion's veterans through pensions.⁶¹¹ The British Army represented a great economic security for those German soldiers who had become accustomed to its higher pay and better provisioning, and the prospect of being without this income led to a significant letter-writing campaign shortly before – and long after – the war's conclusion.⁶¹² Though entitled to such honours, given their status as British officers, the ephemeral nature of the Legion itself led critics to call for the suspension of such privileges with the disbandment of the corps. Yet these dispensations persisted – again owing a great deal to the influence of the royal family. At the time when Ministers were pondering reducing these payments, Prince Adolphus wrote to Secretary of War Bathurst to plead their case, especially for his friends among the high-ranking officers:

I am assured that Your Lordships feelings of National Pride, would not be a little pained, at seeing, a Brave & distinguished Officer, still entitled to wear the Uniform & to appear in the Character of a British General,

⁶¹⁰ The placement of the Legion's light infantry and 1st Hussars among this prestigious corps put them along side the pantheon of more popular British regiments of the day (such as the 95th Rifles), a vivid indication of the respect these soldiers had in the estimation of their commanders and peers. See Lt. Colonel Willoughby Verner, *A British Rifle Man: The Journals and Correspondence of Major George Simmons* (London: A& C Black, 1899), esp. Introduction.; Frazer, *Letters*, p. 107.

⁶¹¹ In all, 503 medals were awarded, never posthumously, to KGL soldiers in the two decades following the war. See, D.D. Vigers, *The Hanoverian Guelphic Medal of 1815: a record of Hanoverian Bravery during the Napoleonic Wars* (Salisbury: D.D. Vigers, 1981).

⁶¹² Gray, 'The Services of the King's German', p. 361. For letters written, see WO: 3/372 fol. 459, WO 1/428 fols. 55-100, WO 1/659 fols. 241, 253, 267.

unable, from the pittance granted, in remuneration for having shed his Blood & passed his best Years in the service of the British Nation, to provide Himself with those comforts, which advanced age and Infirmity require.⁶¹³

Thus, the main argument for the utilization, promotion, and support for the men of the King's German Legion, was their status as 'British' soldiers – which indicates an impressive degree of assimilation, both in the bureaucracy of the War Office, and the sentiments of their fellow soldiers. This is not to say that the Legionaries were the only German soldiers to receive such compensations, as those men from the Hompesch regiments or the Brunswick forces also received similar stipends, yet Hompesch's men earned them through fighting in permanent British regiments, and in the case of the Brunswickers, theirs were given as a consequence of their close association with the Legion and did not have the same longevity.

The degree of emotional assimilation into the British Army was helped further by the successes of the Legion, and their status as capable and effective soldiers – which became more of a unifying element than any dynastic connection. The fact that portions of the Legion would be counted upon to perform various functions that the British soldiers were incapable of, had a salubrious effect on any lingering tensions, and probably went a great way in reducing the types of conflicts over promotion and rank that were present in the earliest days of the KGL's founding. This favourable opinion would help the Legion stand out among the foreign corps, and would separate it, if not officially than unofficially, from the Black Brunswickers who served along side them for several years during the Peninsular War.⁶¹⁴

⁶¹³ In the end, the proponents of the Legion won out, and the wounded veterans and officers would receive pensions and half-pay, in some cases for decades after the secession of hostilities, with the War Office going so far as to maintain agents in Hanover for the efficient distribution of these sums. WO 1/428 fols. 55-59, Adolphus Frederick to Earl Bathurst, March 7th, 1816.; NAM MS 35694, Manfred Bresemann, 'The King's German Legion 1803-1816 and the British Traditions', p. 15.; WO 246/111 fols. 3-23.

⁶¹⁴ In the first days of Wellington's invasion of Southern France, many foreign soldiers in the British Army were reprimanded punished, and many hanged for marauding and acts of revenge towards the French citizenry. In the case of the Brunswick-Öls corps, a series of hangings were ordered in an attempt to restore order. Yet, as August Schaumann recalls, there was a deal of favouritism for the Legion, which could get a way with more than their fellow German soldiers. 'Lord Wellington... came upon the 1st German Hussars... and as he was standing talking to... [its] officers, one of the men of the regiment came riding up with a bleating sheep which he had stolen. The moment Lord Wellington

In other ways, the KGL followed many of the trends common among all Anglo-German formations. The acceptance, and even the celebration, of the King's German Legion sets it apart from the less remarked-upon battalions of the Royal Americans, Scheither's unfortunate recruits, and even the various German corps serving in the British Army contemporaneously. Nevertheless, as in other instances, it was increasingly reliant upon foreign-born officers for its creation and recruitment, and owed a great deal to the Hanoverian Army and Dynasty for its origins, motivations and preservation. The royal influence was crucial for continuously endeavouring to keep the Legion afloat, when it encountered innumerable problems in maintaining its numbers, especially at a time when various foreign corps had been depleted and disbanded. Similar to previous integrated units, the Legion was reliant upon a closely connected group of officers and influential men (such as Decken) for their continued success and maintenance. Part of the successful integration of the corps, was the presence of a strong professional-minded officer class, who through this period were integrated both militarily and socially with British officers – a factor that had a great deal of impact on the acceptance of the Legion, and what set it apart from other previous instances of Germans within the British Army. This long-standing relationship between career fighting men, foreign and native, would be the strongest bond uniting the Legion and the army at large.

****Anglo-German Interactions in the KGL****

As the King's German Legion became more structurally integrated into the British Army, the German soldiers that comprised the Legion's majority were in continuous contact with their British comrades in arms. In general, the relations between the British and German soldiers were amiable, and this cordiality lasted well after the

saw the man, however, he only smiled and turning his back on him, pretended not to have noticed anything, although the officers at his side were shuddering with fear.' Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 395.

Legion's disbandment in 1815-6.⁶¹⁵ This prolonged association allowed for various forms of interaction and a heightened awareness of differences and commonalities between the soldiers of these respective polities, which is evident in the numerous diaries and correspondences written during the wars, and the prolific quantity of memoirs composed after the cessation of hostilities. The increased enthusiasm for the conception and consumption of these soldier-narratives has resulted in the preservation of a sizeable collection of contemporary opinion, which makes this period unique in comparison to previous generations, and which provides key insights into the multiethnic character of the 'British' Army in a broad array of theatres.⁶¹⁶ These personal writings have all the same benefits and drawbacks as in previous generations, with the proviso that there was an increasing market for such diaries and journals, and the memoirs written after the conflict could be biased or geared towards making an entertaining story along the lines of those accounts already published. Yet within this prolific quantity of writings there is nevertheless very little variation between that which was written contemporaneously and the accounts written decades later: the sentiments – though not always the style – are very much in concert. This means that inaccuracies rarely penetrate the authors' opinions of the cultural and social differences between Briton and German, and in cases where exaggeration is evident, it is in the recounting of the battlefield exploits of the Legion's cavalymen, who successfully captured the imaginations of the memoirists, and their audiences.

Among this stockpile of narratives are many accounts of soldiers and officers who, in some capacity, encountered the men of the King's German Legion, though they only represented a small percent of the men in the British Army. Not all writings from the Peninsular War contain references to such interactions, since, as in previous conflicts, there were serious barriers that hindered frequent encounters.

⁶¹⁵ Ludlow Beamish's *History* owes its creation in part his friendships with soldiers of the Legion, some of whom he was in direct correspondence with. See: Beamish, *History*, esp: 'Introduction'

⁶¹⁶ For other uses of these sources, see Ian Fletcher (ed.), *Voices from the Peninsula: Eyewitness Accounts by Soldiers of Wellington's army, 1808-1814*. (London: Greenhill Books, 2001).; Brett-James, *Life in Wellington's Army*.

Fortunately, the sheer scale of writing has helped to counteract these age-old problems, giving us a much clearer image of these interactions than for earlier wars.

Despite the usual inhibitors born out of distance and language, interactions between Briton and German were common within the Army, both in professional activities, and in private functions. Again there is little variance between the zones and manners of interaction here and previous conflicts save for the frequency of these encounters, and the willingness of soldier-authors to comment upon them.⁶¹⁷ The battlefield, where we find most references to the KGL, fraternizing was – not surprisingly – infrequent, and the resulting accounts are usually comprised of commendations or consternations based solely on the soldiers' performance in combat. Collectively, there is little to be gleaned from these recollections, except that the prevailing view amongst British soldiers of the abilities of the Legion in combat was positive. In a similar light, where in previous allied-armies, German and British soldiers would often march separately – sometimes at great distance from one another – the integrated nature of the Legion often lead to encounters on the long arduous routes that so characterized the Peninsular War. Though again not an ideal zone of interaction, marching and campaigning did nevertheless create episodes where soldiers would happen upon one another, or in the case of the Legion, their notoriously large baggage trains.⁶¹⁸ While such episodes prevented conversation and fraternization, they did on occasion spark commentary regarding the appearance, bearing and behaviour of soldiers.

There are some mentions of the Legion in various military duties, but in general, this discourse provides an incomplete picture, given that a discussion of the quotidian routines of the soldier was rare if those soldiers performed in the manner required of them. Therefore, it is the social contacts in and around army camps that permits a better glimpse into the associations of these soldiers, as it was here that cultural mannerisms and idiosyncrasies were prevalent. Certainly for the officers,

⁶¹⁷ The journal of William Webber, an artilleryman, shows how important proximity was in dictating the frequency of discussions of the German forces within the Army. William Webber, *With the Guns in the Peninsula, the Peninsula War Journal of 2nd Captain William Webber, Royal Artillery*, edited by Richard Henry Wollocombe (London: Greenhill Books, 1991), pp. 97-110.

⁶¹⁸ National Army Museum, 6807/71 Lieutenant John Ford, 'Military Scraps from the Note Book of Lieutenant John Ford, 79th Regt. or Cameron Highlanders', 1809-1814, fol. 43.

there was a healthy social life to be had, especially during the lulls between campaigns. Ernst Poten recalled of his time in England, that he often took part in 'breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, suppers, balls, garden parties, walks, driving and riding, shooting, hunting, and fishing,' often accompanied by British comrades.⁶¹⁹ Busy schedules such as this were less common once the Legion moved from the tranquillity of Kent to subsequent posts. While on campaign, especially in the Peninsula, it was bivouacking in the countryside or billeting in cities and towns which provided an arena for interactions between these 'brother-soldiers.' Camps, or more specifically campfires, were certainly a popular place for comingling. An officer of the Brunswick-Öls cavalry fondly recalled a tradition whereby Britons, Hanoverians, and Brunswickers gathered around a roaring campfire, drinking and singing songs with such enthusiasm that he claimed on one occasion even touched the cold heart of Lord Wellington who happened to pass nearby.⁶²⁰ Though the nature of these armies made travelling among the camps infrequent, there were nevertheless accounts of Germans and Britons visiting one another. Lieutenant John Ford recalled that, 'if Bread Fowls or Brandy were wanting they were to be purchased on most occasions in the German Camps.'⁶²¹ Certainly, such visits served a specific function, but there were similar gatherings for purely social reasons. From bits of evidence and testimonies of various soldier-authors, we know that Legionaries and British soldiers would often encounter one another in taverns, wine houses, and other habitués, though such interactions were only recounted in personal writings when they were particularly noteworthy or eventful.

Another popular sphere of interaction was the officers' mess, 'an institution which the English consider more important than any duty.'⁶²² To this characteristically British tradition, the Hanoverians soon became quite fond. It was here, that officers of these diverse and disparate forces could eat, drink, and

⁶¹⁹ Quoted in, G.E. Lanning, 'The King's German Legion in Dorset (1803-1805)' *Somerset Notes and Queries* vol. XXXII March 1989 Part 329, p. 754.

⁶²⁰ German Cavalryman, *Wider Napoleon*, vol. II, p.37.; Brett-James, *Life in Wellington's*, pp. 36-37.

⁶²¹ Ford then added, in regards to the Legion's encampment: 'I have often heard it jokingly called a Camp of Sutlers.' NAM 6807/71 'Military Scraps from the Note Book of Lieutenant John Ford,' fol. 43.

⁶²² Quoted in: North, 'Raising and Organizing of the King's German Legion', p. 182.; Schwertfeger, *Geschichte*, p.43.

socialize.⁶²³ And for those gentlemen with less money to spend, an invitation to a mess with a British battalion meant a welcome square meal as well.⁶²⁴ Formal dinner-parties were likewise common. After arriving in Sicily, one Hanoverian and his fellow officers had received an invitation to dinner from English officers serving in a Sicilian regiment, within hours of their arrival.⁶²⁵

Generally speaking, most social gatherings required less formality and consisted of an impromptu gathering in tents or at an officer's billet. From the letters of the artillery officer Augustus Frazer, we get a picture of how lively such informal events could be: 'You would be dinned with the noise of the room in which I write' he wrote to his family, 'German, Portuguese, Spanish and English, all talking at once [and] a smoking and wine shop below.'⁶²⁶ Location was important, and several diarists made note of who had the best quarters in specific towns, as often they became the gathering point during periods of leisure.

The most remarked upon manner in which the Legionaries and British officers interacted was at parties, dances and balls. Predominantly affairs for higher ranking military men, the very nature of such events were special, as they were one of the primary means through which the officers of the Legion could bond with their British colleagues, especially those who would not have seen one another on a regular basis. In a manner most fitting for the international character of the profession, these parties were usually polyethnic affairs. While stationed in England and Ireland, the officers of the Legion became quite popular for their refined manners, comical accents, and excellent dancing ability.⁶²⁷ In the Peninsula, the

⁶²³ Schaumann, like most Hanoverians, greatly enjoyed this English custom, though he was not fond of the rather bawdy stories told by the English officers. Schaumann, *On the Road with Wellington*, 360.

⁶²⁴ In England, Christian Ompteda wrote that, 'we dine in English style at a general mess, where we get an excellent dinner.' Likewise, in the town of Athlone in Ireland, an anonymous Hanoverian officer was 'invited to join the mess of the English officers, but for which act of courtesy, on their parts, our fare would have been indifferent. As it was, however, we did exceedingly well, especially with respect to wines, which they had procured of first-rate quality.' Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Soldier*, p. 174. Anon. *Journal of an Officer in the King's German Legion* (London: Henry Colburn, 1827), p. 64.

⁶²⁵ Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, p. 267.

⁶²⁶ Such was the scene at the billet of the Legion's Artillery commander, Colonel Hartmann, who was a good friend off Frazer, and the two worked alongside one another for the majority of the Peninsular War. See, Frazer, *Letters*, pp. 104-105.

⁶²⁷ G.E. Lanning, 'The King's German Legion in Dorset (1803-1805)', p.755.

better-known officers of the Legion usually frequented Wellington's social gatherings, and a veteran such as Frederick Arentschild could be described as a regular.⁶²⁸ The Germans could play host as well, as, for example, when Colonel Stapleton visited an outpost and attended 'a most gay Ball' hosted by the 1st Hussars.⁶²⁹ In many cases invitations were given as a matter of professional politeness, and therefore not an accurate reflection of personal sentiment. Yet from many accounts of these festivities we have evidence that strong friendships were accrued and maintained through such gatherings. In the days before Waterloo, in 1815, Cavalie Mercer recalled his experiences of attending such a party, where old friends from the Peninsula had congregated. 'It was my good fortune to sit between Colonel Sir. F[rederick] Arentschild and another no less celebrated officer of the German Legion, Lieutenant Strenuwitz [sic]', he wrote, recalling that later on he was 'pinned in the corner' by the Duke of Wellington, and his 'favourite old hussar', Arentschild.⁶³⁰

The integration of the Legion into the social life of the British Army's officer class was helped in no small part by the Legion's bands, which became a feature in most parties and social events from the early days in England, to the last campaigns a dozen years later.⁶³¹ One Hanoverian's recollections from a sea voyage give us some indication as to the popularity and demand for these musicians:

The captain of our convoy-ship planned... a little fete on board his vessel, for the celebration of which he requested the assistance of our band, at

⁶²⁸ At another party of Wellington's, Augustus Frazer recalled that he 'talked to Colonel Arentschild till we were both ready to' go to sleep, 'and before we broke up, heat, good cheer, and champagne had made us all drowsy and stupid.' Frazer, *Letters*, pp. 107-108.

⁶²⁹ Page, *Intelligence Officer in the Peninsula*, p. 150.

⁶³⁰ Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 120-122.

⁶³¹ When the majority of the Legion was still in England, they were very popular, among military men and the local populace. As Lanning explains: 'Every evening during the summer the band of the 1st Dragoons played on the esplanade for "the amusement of the royal family and the public." The music played by this band was of a particularly high standard because the trumpeters of the Hanoverian Life Guards had transferred to it en masse... These bands were very popular with the local civilians because they played not only at parades and on marches but also at dances, at open-air concerts and at the request of civic authorities. On one occasion, for instance, when the governor of Weymouth was returning from a successful court action in London, he was met at the turnpike by his supporters and conducted back to the town in a huge procession, headed by the band of the 1st Light Dragoons.' Roger North concurs, stating that the members of the Legion's 'particular love of music... contributed largely to the friendly feeling shown to the Legion by the public in England.' See G.E. Lanning, 'The KGL in Dorset,' p. 752.; Roger North, 'Raising of the King's German Legion', p. 182.

the same time inviting the officers of the legion, and specifying, by way of temptation, that he had several ladies on board, who had consented to honour the party by joining in the dance.⁶³²

It is fairly evident then, that some social advantages were garnered from maintaining such 'beautiful' and 'fine' bands: wherever the bands went, so too went the officers, as a *quid-pro-quo*. But it was not only in private functions to which these bands contributed. German musicians brought a certain atmosphere to camp life as well:

The different bands, all good, continued playing until after dusk, which we enjoyed sitting in the willow hedge smoking our cigars. The scene was remarkably pretty. Groups of men scattered about amongst the little tents, some preparing supper, etc.; the bands, with officers in picturesque costumes hovering about them.⁶³³

Just as the professionalism displayed by the soldiers of the Legion made them endearing and noteworthy, so did the proficiency of their musicians greatly add to the notoriety of this foreign corps, and in doing so they provided a means by which Briton and Teuton could interact.

Singing, like regimental bands, was a source of frequent commentary, and this variance was one of the great continuities in the comments of British and German soldier-authors in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶³⁴ As George Gleig explains:

There was another striking difference in the two brigades of cavalry which I remarked. The English rode on, many of them silent, some chatting of a thousand things, others whistling or humming those tuneless airs in which the lower orders of our countrymen delight. The Germans, on the contrary, sang, and sang beautifully, a wild chorus... [with] different persons taking different parts, and together producing the most exquisite harmony. So great an impression did this make upon me, that I caught the air, and would note it down... were I sufficiently master of the art of notation.⁶³⁵

⁶³² Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, p. 256.

⁶³³ Mercer, *Journal*, pp. 209, 369.

⁶³⁴ Brett-James, *Life In Wellington's Army*, pp. 36-7. Lindau, *Erinnerungen*, p. 33.; Anon, *Wider Napoleon* vol II, p. 37.

⁶³⁵ Gleig, *The Subaltern*, p.188.

This difference also provided chances for fraternizing. On one occasion, Friedrich Lindau and his fellow Legionaries were accosted on the way back from the local tavern by English soldiers who appealed to them to sing some 'German songs' offering them more and more alcohol until they were well over 'the limit.'⁶³⁶ John Malcolm of the 42nd Regiment seemed to greatly appreciate the atmosphere provided by the singing of their foreign troops. Indeed his account of camp life in southern France in 1814 provides an idyllic view of these interactions in Wellington's Army:

Our time [there] was unvaried, and unoccupied by any thing better than morning and evening parades, and short excursions to the rear. The most picturesque scene that our camp exhibited, was the space occupied by the German light troops, who, during the twilight, sate [sic] in groups before the doors of their tents, canopied in clouds of tobacco smoke, chanting together their native airs and anthems. They seemed to be more at home in the field than our soldiers, and had the art of making up a very palatable mess out of the simplest materials. During this period of inaction, we formed frequent little convivial parties in our tents, though we had then little else than our rations to subsist upon... At these festivals, the first course generally consisted of soup, made of beef boiled to rags – course second, beef roast – course third, beef stewed – course fourth, beef steaks.⁶³⁷

Other means of entertainment and relief created memorable episodes of association, but not on the scale of the formal parties. Gambling, horse races, and sport (many Hanoverians learned English games while encamped in Kent and Dorset) allowed light-hearted settings for genial association.⁶³⁸ Yet not all interactions and observations were cordial affairs. In a rare moment of intertwined narratives, the vitriolic commissary August Schaumann and contemplative English cavalymen Edward Cocks created a furore in their competition for the love of a

⁶³⁶ Friedrich Lindau, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten aus den Feldzügen der königlich-deutschen Legion* (Hameln, 1846), p.33.

⁶³⁷ John Malcolm. *Reminiscences of a Campaign in the Pyrenees and South of France* (Edinburgh: Constable's Miscellany, vol. XXVII, 1828), p. 263.

⁶³⁸ Norbert Lansheit, who was friends with Legionaries though he was never apart of the KGL, recalled a similar process at this same time within the 20th Dragoons, where the British soldiers taught the foreign troopers how to play English sports. NAM 35694 Bresemann, 'The King's German Legion 1803-1816', Gleig, *The Hussar*, p. 87.

young Spanish girl – to the great disapprobation of the town’s inhabitants.⁶³⁹ Though no accounts of duels between British and German officer have emerged – partly due to the secrecy around such actions – there were some who recalled men preparing for such events.⁶⁴⁰

Less ritualized manners of fighting and infighting remained, though they were uncommon. One evening in 1808, Christian Ompteda, the colonel of the KGL 2nd Infantry Battalion, reported that in ‘a narrow street in front of a tavern’ there was ‘a drunken riot between the men of the 57th Regiment and ours’ and that ‘Bayonets and side-arms were used on both sides, and half a dozen were wounded of both corps, but not dangerously.’⁶⁴¹ A graver incident transpired in the early months of 1804, where a dragoon was killed by an English sailor in one of the many ‘drunken revels’ near the KGL barracks in Dorset.⁶⁴² Though such instances suggest there were some serious disturbances between the two groups, it appears that in most cases, fights that broke out between Briton and German were spurred by alcohol, not enmity.⁶⁴³ Yet, there is some indication of quarrels between ethnic groups as Edmund Wheatley’s diary begins with an interesting passage: ‘Mutiny between the Germans and the Irish. Sided with the Germans and seized the ringleaders.’⁶⁴⁴

Be it drunken brawls or sophisticated dinner-parties, the evidence is clear from the writings and reminiscences, that although interactions between German and British soldiers were not universal to all members of the army, they were common enough to instigate a formidable amount of commentary. Likewise, it becomes apparent from such recollections that the officers (and to some extent

⁶³⁹ Schaumann’s 1st Hussars and Cock’s 16th Dragoons were brigaded together, and coincidentally, these two men fought over this young Spanish girl, who, as if plucked from a Jane Austin story, was to marry a man she did not love. See Page, *Intelligence Officer*, pp. 139-40.; Schaumann, *On the Road With Wellington*, p. 319.

⁶⁴⁰ Hathaway, *Gentleman Soldier*, p. 180.

⁶⁴¹ Ompteda was often at the middle of Anglo-German conflicts, on occasion serving in the capacity of translator for the Legion’s courts-martial. Ompteda, *Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 199. WO 71/202 Trial of Frederick Weber, July 1805.

⁶⁴² Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, p.52.

⁶⁴³ One of the earlier courts-martial for the Legion was for a quartermaster, who had repeatedly misapplied funds and for his drunkenness at a Portsmouth coffee house, where verbally abused both fellow soldiers and citizen alike. Yet such events do not appear to be anything unique to the Legion’s men. WO 71/202, Trial of William Reusch, July 1805.

⁶⁴⁴ Hibbert, *The Wheatley Diary*, p.1.

soldiers) of the Legion had successfully inserted themselves into the social and cultural life of the British Army at-large. One of the most remarkable things about these anecdotes is that they showed how careful authors were to note the presence of men from the Legion, and likewise that many German accounts describe their first or most memorable interactions with British fighting men. This was in part due to the notoriety created by difference, and it is to those real and perceived differences to which we now turn.

****National Character****

The impressions made from encounters between Briton and German, often initiated discussions on the inherent traits of these soldiers, which, as we have seen in Chapter II, usually included some musings upon the national character of the participants. This epoch is invaluable, in that the opinions of the soldiers themselves permit a testing of the predominant characterizations perpetuated throughout the course of the previous century. Infused in this discourse were the deepening senses of nationalism in both Britain and Germany, and among many would-be military theorists within the army: a growing interest in martial character.

Just as in prior conflicts, the army was a symbol of national identity, and a manifestation of national character. This could be seen with the British Army in the Iberian Peninsula, which was extremely cautious to act with civility and not to cause offense, in part so that it would not reflect poorly on Great Britain. In this processes of adhering to and enforcing this policy, the concept of an 'English' officer implied a behaviour and a manner that was to be contrasted with both the French enemy, and military men native to the Iberian Peninsula. As discussed in previous chapters, the relationship between national character and the ability and quality of the soldier was something in vogue with military theorists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Before becoming the co-founder of the King's German Legion, Johann Friedrich von der Decken wrote a short book, *An Essay on the English*

National Character, in which he heaped praise upon England and the qualities of her soldiers. Amongst other laudatory statements, Decken proclaimed 'in regards to courage', that 'the English warrior is surpassed by none', and that they have 'above all a stronger tendency towards personal valour.'⁶⁴⁵ Decken's assertions differ little from previous discourses by soldiers and theorists, yet his conclusions were no doubt reinforced by his experiences fighting alongside the British soldiers in the Low Countries in the 1790's. And just as his experiences amongst British soldiers inspired his *Essay*, interactions with the men within this foreign corps he helped create, would lead others to formulate similar opinions.

In the context of the relationship between the King's German Legion and the British Army, most commentaries on national character begin with a discussion of soldiering itself. Once again professional and national distinctions blur, which was a strong trend among soldiers and officers arriving in the Peninsula in the latter stages of the war. One example, John Malcolm, focused on the German light infantry that he fought alongside, and concluded that the skill and experience of these warriors was something unique to their character, not a result of training or philosophy. 'In this species of warfare, the German troops appeared to me to excel all others,' he stated, as a preface to his musings on the inherent abilities and characters of the soldiers of various nations. And just in discussions of national character, Malcolm places the British within two extremes: 'the courage of British troops... seems to be a happy combination of the impetuosity of the French, and the stubbornness of the Germans'.⁶⁴⁶

The British soldiers who reflected on the martial qualities of their brother-soldiers in the Legion conveyed in their writings a great respect for the discipline displayed by these men. 'The German troops are superior to any I ever met with for strict attention to duty' and 'are determined, brave, and cool in the hour of battle,' went one glowing recollection.⁶⁴⁷ As in the descriptions of Hessian soldiery, the

⁶⁴⁵ Decken, *englischen National-Character*, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁴⁶ These German soldiers would advance undaunted in the face of 'the most galling fire, neither quickening nor relaxing their jog-trot pace. One cannot help wondering how such troops should ever have been beaten.' Malcolm, *Reminiscences*, p. 272.

⁶⁴⁷ Quoted in: Gray, 'Service of the KGL', p. 73.

Legion's Germanic soldiers benefited from an innate 'stubbornness' and 'stern' demeanour, and 'dogged and phlegmatic courage,' which contrasted them from British or French fighting men, yet were seen as great benefits to their profession.⁶⁴⁸ Physical attributes, especially the height of soldiers, were often commented upon, as were their strength and endurance. 'The Germans bear excessive fatigues wonderfully well,' remarked the Englishmen, Edmund Wheatley, having observed while serving within the Legion that 'a German will march over six leagues [about eighteen miles] while an Englishman pants and perspires beneath the labour of twelve miles.'⁶⁴⁹ Strength and steadiness were common themes, and harkened back to previous conflicts, as did the German's reputation for slowness, so prevalent in weighted descriptions of Hessians in the American War. Christian Ompteda recounts in a letter to his brother Louis

The English sometimes say in a good-humoured, half-reproachful, half-praising, jocular way, "The Germans are slow, but sure." That we are the former no national vanity can permit us to deny. May it prove that the English have not overdone the praise in the latter quality – a thing which, judging by their character, is not likely to have been their intention.⁶⁵⁰

Thus the stereotype of slowness, one that was reasonably justified in certain contexts, was nevertheless perpetuated on into the nineteenth century. Though it did not share the implicit connotations as for the Germans in the American War, it was in any case still a prominent feature in descriptions of German national character, as defined by contact with the men of the King's German Legion. The discourse on the soldiering capabilities of these German soldiers often led to an examination of their traits as officers, which receive less praise than the rank and file. In a lengthy passage, where he describes the national skills and proclivities of the French, British, and Spanish, Edward Cocks approaches the issue of Germans, with a less than glowing conclusion:

Germans have... a pride from the high consideration a soldier enjoys in Germany. Usually ill-educated, their minds are confined to their profession, they are not liable to false alarms, but they know too much

⁶⁴⁸ Malcolm, *Reminiscences*, p.272.

⁶⁴⁹ Hibbert, *Wheatley*, p. 8.

⁶⁵⁰ Ompteda, *A Hanoverian-English Officer*, p. 254.

how to estimate the dangers of their situation and sometimes discover disheartening difficulties which might be concealed from other troops. They make capital subalterns and captains, but know too much for power and their views are not sufficiently enlarged for high command.⁶⁵¹

This was perhaps not the typical impression of German soldiers, and though Cocks is reinforcing the prevailing stereotype of German dullness, he is nevertheless condemning the idea of educating men in the ranks for fear of making them bad soldiers, an idea that would not sit well with other theorists in the army, like Decken. The cautiousness of German soldiers however was indeed a long-held tradition, contrasted by the impetuosity of English soldiers, which Decken would proclaim as one of their chief attributes.⁶⁵² Furthermore, while most discussions of natural characteristics were regarding the rank & file, as opposed to the more homogenized officer corps, Cocks' statements suggest that natural characteristics were not merely for the average soldier, and that officers, despite the transnational character of their profession, could likewise be susceptible to the apparent idiosyncrasies of their own ethnicity.

Prolonged association with these soldiers also resulted in distinctions between peoples from the various German-speaking states, and here the effects of the Dynastic Union were noticeable, and for once, quite positive. Hanoverians were viewed differently in comparison to other Germans, thanks in a large part to these dynastic ties, but more importantly, as a tribute to their laudatory behaviour in combat. Wellington did not hesitate to make clear his preferences, proclaiming to the Duke of York that, 'it is impossible to have better soldiers than the real Hanoverians.'⁶⁵³ While this view towards Hanoverians is owed, in part, to contrasts with the deserters from the French Army that would surround them, many men from the Electorate in fact joined the British ranks through this latter course. The French Hanoverian Legion, the counterpart to the British model, was notorious for

⁶⁵¹ Cocks does make rather dramatic partitions between those who make up officers and the common soldiers, such as in the case of the English, whose 'courage is more corporeal and results from a sort of prepossession that they are superior to every other nation. This feeling is more proper to the soldier than the officer and hence I think our soldiers are proportionally braver than our officers.' Page, *Intelligence Officer*, p. 129.

⁶⁵² Decken, *englischen National-Character*, p. 35.

⁶⁵³ Gray, 'Services,' p. 199.

desertion, and by 1813, August Schaumann gloated that 'almost the whole of this Legion [had] ultimately deserted to our side.'⁶⁵⁴ This exodus of soldiers to the KGL in many ways increased the sense of foreignness, but also reinforced favourable impressions of the Hanoverians within this foreign corps. Once again we turn to cavalryman Edward Cocks of the 16th Dragoons to summarize this division:

Though I have not a very high opinion of the infantry belonging to the German Legion, yet I must bear the most unqualified testimony to the courage, skill, zeal and marked good conduct of the cavalry – the fact is, the first are foreigners of all descriptions and exactly the same species of troops except being finer men, as the French armies – the cavalry of the old Hussars, almost all Hanoverians, and many of them of great respectability... are perfectly to be depended on⁶⁵⁵

Eventually, the British commanders in the Peninsula were given the task of sifting through the various regiments to collect what Hanoverian soldiers they could find for service in the Legion's battalions.⁶⁵⁶ This variance from the 'Pragmatic Army' of the 1740's – where the British first served with the Hanoverians and suspected them of being cowards and thieves – could not be greater. In this last incarnation of a British-Hanoverian force, men from the Electorate received widespread praise and were seen as a better mould from which to make a soldier.⁶⁵⁷

Regarding the German view of British national character, the overall sentiments remain remarkably constant with previous descriptions of British soldiery, and so were the criticisms of their arrogance and overbearing nature that so displeased their German allies. Yet the testimonies of men in the Legion show far more contempt for naval officers and seamen than soldiers, and the majority of

⁶⁵⁴ This distinction between Hanoverians and other Germans grew greater once the British Army returned to Flanders, to fight alongside Prussians and other German corps – including the newly formed Hanoverian levees. Quote from: Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 304.

⁶⁵⁵ Page, *Charles Cocks*, p. 63.

⁶⁵⁶ Gray, 'Services,' p.199.

⁶⁵⁷ Even in the early 1800's, some of the old prejudices remained, mainly in Parliament and the public, but also among the ministry. In assigning a specific task to an officer of the Legion, J. Hines tried to assuage Lord Palmerston's reluctance: 'though your objections might apply to most Hanoverians, I do not think they would to' Colonel Linsingen, 'of whom I have a very high opinion.' In the first decade of the nineteenth century, it was William Cobbett and his opposition members in Parliament who were able to rouse old-fashioned anti-Hanoverianism through speeches and Cobbett's journal, the *Political Register*. WO 3/610 fol. 269-270 'J Hines to Lord Palmerston, Paris, 16th December 1815'; Nick Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire, 1700-1837* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 116-132, 253-256.

comments, if they embark on any critiques, are positive. In fact, some of the most negative critiques of English national character, came from the English themselves. As Moyle Sherer wrote of his countrymen in the Peninsular War,

The English are admired... over all Europe, as a free, an enlightened, and a brave people, but they cannot make themselves beloved, they are not content with being great, they must be thought so, and told so. They will not bend with good humour to the customs of other nations, nor will they condescend to soothe (flatter they never do) the harmless self-love of friendly foreigners. No: wherever they march or travel, they bear with them a haughty air of conscious superiority and expect that their customs, habits, and opinions should supersede or at least suspend, those of all other countries through which they pass.⁶⁵⁸

Here we see the virtue of interaction with foreigners abroad providing this one Englishman a better impression of his own peoples' idiosyncrasies – even if they did not paint a rosy picture.

As with the German forces, there were some distinctions to be made among the British in the minds of Legionaries. Where Englishmen received praise for their specific virtues, other opinions emerged for the Scots, Welsh and Irish – groups that received more attention from the Legion's authors than from previous generations.⁶⁵⁹ Common were negative opinions of the Irish (a 'notoriously bloodthirsty and predatory crowd') perhaps due in part to religious reasons, but as we have seen, there was a history of friction and infighting between the two groups as well.⁶⁶⁰ Alternatively, the Welsh soldiers camped near the Legion's 2nd Battalion, in the spring of 1805, received strong praise from its colonel, Christian Ompteda. Despite there having been 'some inconvenience in making room for us, the friendly relations which had arisen between us have in no way suffered,' and the Hanoverian nobleman declared,

⁶⁵⁸ Sherer, *Recollections of the Peninsula*, p. 36.

⁶⁵⁹ These differences were of course commented upon by Englishman as well, such as William Tomkinson who said of his fellow Scots: 'where great steadiness, coolness, and obedience to orders is required, I should select the Scotch. In... any service where quickness is required, and immediate advantage to be taken of any sudden change, I do not think they are equal to others.' Tomkinson, *The Diary of a Cavalry Officer*, p. 280.

⁶⁶⁰ Though many Legionaries enjoyed their time in Ireland, this was perhaps due to the friendship of the local gentry more than the populace at large. Schaumann, *One the Road*, pp. 23-24.; Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, pp. 62-3.

What I have seen of the natives of that part of England, in thus and other neighbouring regiments from the same land [Wales], had confirmed and increased my good opinion of this genuine old remnant of the original Britons. They seem to possess the English magnanimity, candour, sense of honour, and hospitality to a marked degree.⁶⁶¹

Though there are such distinctions between the various components of Britain's soldiers, the term 'English' remained a catchall, and could signify any combination of Irish, Scots and Englishmen. All these declarations of real or supposed difference were not exclusive to Englishman or German alone, and would often include the French, Spanish and Portuguese, and occasionally soldiers from other nations.

Such commentaries were part of a long-standing discourse, clumsily probing for differences and attributing nurture to nature. Yet there was some caution in making judgments regarding national character from interactions with their soldiery. Edmund Wheatley, an English officer serving in the Legion wrote:

Respecting the Germans among whom I have now lived a twelfthmonth, I can only judge sparingly, for to presume giving an opinion on an entire nation from an experience gained by a few months' intercourse with a company of soldiers, would be judging by supposition and rendering doubtful every assertion connected with national peculiarities or original characteristics. What respectability I have found among my brother soldiers, when supported by a good education and urbanity of manners, I cannot distinguish from that always natural to a British Gentlemen and which renders society so pleasing and acquaintance so valuable.⁶⁶²

Here can be seen the effects of a transnational gentlemanly culture which united the officer corps of these respective polities, and in the mind of this officer, made these foreigners in many ways indiscernible from his own countrymen. Though Wheatley often uses his diary more as a platform to vent his own frustrations with both his commanding officer (the 'bullying Captain Nöttig') and his 'brother soldiers' ('these heavy, selfish Germans'), his statements here and elsewhere attest to an important struggle he and others shared: that of trying to find and articulate difference in the

⁶⁶¹ Ompteda, *A English-Hanoverian Officer*, p. 173-174.

⁶⁶² Hibbert, *The Wheatley Diary*, p. 7.

face of a demeanour and conduct so agreeably familiar.⁶⁶³ And while Wheatley was hesitant in making such sweeping generalizations, others were not so reserved. In the end however, the similarities seem to have outweighed the differences, and as we shall see, national character and identity could be blurred or shed, especially in the face of so many years of cultural exchange and interaction.

****Identities****

The King's German Legion, despite its position within the British Army, was in many ways a German institution, yet within it lay sentiments and behaviours that were unquestionably English. The Legion was itself a dichotomy, as it was very much a part of the nascence of German national identity, and the adulthood of German integration in the British Army. For many of the men from the defunct Holy Roman Empire, entrance into the KGL was a means of fighting for the 'Fatherland' and entering into service in this foreign army ironically, an act of patriotism. For the Hessen-born Heinrich Dehnel, the 'English-German Legion' offered 'the extraordinary benefits of the British service', but the main reason for his enlisting was 'patriotic considerations'.⁶⁶⁴ For many who wished to see Germany liberated from the French yoke, their first choice was not necessarily with Austria or Prussia – the latter being called 'Pseudo-Germans' by one Hanoverian officer disgusted by their frequent pro-French policies.⁶⁶⁵ It was only the British who seemed truly determined to deter French hegemony, and therefore in 1809 when the Brunswick-Öls Hussars and the remnants of Major Ferdinand von Schill's freikorps were trying to determine the best army to join to continue to fight against France, they both chose the British Army.⁶⁶⁶ Fighting for Britain was in many ways a means of

⁶⁶³ Hibbert, *The Wheatley Diary*, pp. 5, 7-8.

⁶⁶⁴ Heinrich Dehnel, *Erinnerungen deutscher Officiere in britischen Diensten aus den Kriegsjahren 1805 bis 1816* (Hannover: Carl Rümpler, 1864), p. 2.

⁶⁶⁵ Schwertfeger, *Der Königlich Hannoversche Generalleutnant*, pp. 51-2.

⁶⁶⁶ Lindau, *Erinnerungen eines Soldat*, pp. 14-5. For the motives of the men in Schills' Regiment, see: Cavalryman, *Wider Napoleon!*, vol. I, p. 247-8.; Mustafa, *Schill*, p. 82.

celebrating or preserving one's Germanness by continuing to defy the French, and the KGL became a magnet for like-minded men serving willingly or by force in the French Army, some of whom enlisted with the hopes of later joining the British in the Iberian Peninsula. This patriotic fervour had a significant impact on how the Legion and its soldiers were considered and remembered. Absent from commentaries of the Legion were the mercenary stereotypes that plagued generations of German soldiers serving within or alongside the British Army. In spite of a mounting number of former prisoners of war and men of dubious loyalties who found their way into the ranks, collectively the Legion was seen as being motivated by professionalism and patriotism – not materialism. The effects of this on perceptions of the Legion, and its acceptance within the British Army, cannot be underestimated.

From the German perspective, even the name of this foreign corps was treated as unifying agent. Though it was often referred to as the King's German Legion in English, in the Legion, 'German' – not 'King's' – was the operative word, as serving the monarch took a backseat to attachment to their homeland. In their mother tongue, the corps was commonly referred to as the *englische-deutsche Legion* – and therefore this multi-national force is particularly representative of the name 'Anglo-German' which has been used throughout this thesis. The naming of the Legion in this manner implies a hybridization of polities, and though it was mainly a clarification with other German Legions in Europe, contemporaries and scholars in later generations utilized this title to reinforce a shared history and common cause.

Once recruits into the Legion entered the British Army, they naturally began to adopt the manners, and customs of their host army, in a manner that has its parallels and precedents in the various other forms of British-German coalition or integrated corps throughout this era. By 1815, and the last campaign against Napoleon, the King's German Legion had become something far different from the Hanoverian Army from which it was founded. In many ways, they had become an 'English' force, and the men of the KGL were seen and regarded as equal to British soldiers. When campaigning along side other foreign corps this unity became even

more pronounced, for most records, muster sheets, and casualty lists deem them 'British' as opposed to the compartmentalized 'foreign corps' and allies.

Alongside this bureaucratic assimilation, a great deal of cultural exchange and blending transpired between the soldiers of the KGL and the Britons within the army as well. For the English side, those serving in or alongside the Legion adopted many mannerisms and customs, with the eschewing of the more popular cigars for pipes as one such change.⁶⁶⁷ However, the most glaring Teutonic influences were in dress and appearance. The moustache, especially those of formidable size, long a feature in caricatures of Germans and German soldiery, slowly appeared (as facial hair is wont to do) on the faces of British cavalymen who brigaded with them. This sometimes led to confusion and mistaken identities, as in one case where a London mob attacked a squadron of British hussars on account of their whiskers, a not-so-gentle reminder of the differing opinions between the public and military towards these foreign soldiers.⁶⁶⁸ The same was true abroad, where Cavalie Mercer was mistaken to be a German soldier by equally hostile French citizens who feared that he was dead-set on plundering their village: 'As the English nowhere inspire terror, these people must have taken me for a Prussian hussar' he recalled, attributing their mistake to his 'pelisse and enormous mustache.'⁶⁶⁹ In the commons debate on the Legion, so rich a source for the rhetoric of the day, Lord Folkestone was outraged by such trends, or so it was recorded: 'When he had seen our young men and officers adopting German dresses, and Germanizing themselves as much as possible, undertaking every thing German, and so attached to the fashion of the day as in deference to it to cast off every thing English, he felt disgust at it.' His friend Mr. Whitbread concurred and drew the House's attention to

the affectation which so generally and ridiculously prevailed of imitating the dress of foreign soldiers. All characteristics of English regiments, especially in the cavalry, were completely obliterated. From the known

⁶⁶⁷ Hibbert, *Wheatley Diary*, p. 74.

⁶⁶⁸ One German recruit in London, had to be taken to private room in an inn to keep him from hostile locals. Anon. *Erinnerungen eines Legionärs, oder Nachrichten von den Zügen der Deutschen Legion des Königs von England* (Hannover: Helwing'schen Hof-Buchladung, 1826).; Gareth Glover (ed.). *From Corunna to Waterloo: the Letters and Journals of Two Napoleonic Hussars* (London: Greenhill, 2007), pp. 98-99.; Tomkinson, *Diary of a Cavalry Officer*, p. 286, footnote and editors comments.

⁶⁶⁹ Mercer, *Journal*, p. 286.

predilection for this dress in a certain quarter, our troops were so Germanised... in their appearance, that the most serious consequences were to be apprehended. In more than one instance, this mischievous apish imitation had proved fatal⁶⁷⁰

Yet despite such protestations, the adoption of German appearances continued in both uniforms and – if the Victorian Age is of any indication – in the profundity of facial hair adorned by British cavalrymen.

While the ‘Germanization’ of British soldiers remained primarily superficial, the sense of Englishness among the German soldiers was deeper and more profound. From the beginning the Legionaries were indoctrinated into their new-found status by various formalities, beyond the mere swearing of oaths. One such tradition, which had parallels in previous wars, was the serving of a typically English dinner when first joining the British, on land or at sea, and which in most cases included a large quantity of beef. On the journey to England, new Hanoverian recruits aboard transport vessels were often treated to an Englishman’s repast: ‘in order... that the meal might be characteristic of his country, the captain regaled us with roast beef and its usual appurtenances: and as the recruits were now considered in the light of English military, they received... the customary allowances of bread butter and rum.’⁶⁷¹ What was a novel fare to these soldiers at the commencement of the war was by the end considered their right, for example when regiments of the Legion demanded ‘English’ provisions on their return to Hanover and subsequent disbandment, and in Italy in 1815, a commissary was flogged for trying to pass off inferior bread to a KGL battalion.⁶⁷²

Through the course of the Peninsular War, the Legionaries often saw themselves in an English light. No better example of this can be found, than the case of August Schaumann, who oscillated between being a commissary for KGL and English regiments. Though extremely proud of his own Germanness, to local inhabitants and the French enemy he donned the mantle of ‘Englishman’, a means of

⁶⁷⁰ House of Commons, ‘Motion Concerning the King’s German Legion,’ December 10, 1812, cc. 266, 270-1.

⁶⁷¹ Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, p. 18.

⁶⁷² Bresemann, ‘King’s German Legion’, p. 12. Anon, *Adventures of a Young Rifleman*, p. 340.

heightening the esteem of others, and contextualizing many of the mannerisms and habits that he had adopted while a soldier in the British Army. Whenever he wanted to emphasize his more virtuous qualities (which were few), he reassured those in doubt that he was 'a chivalrous English officer.'⁶⁷³ Other Legionaries acted in a similar way, changing their manners and behaviour to such a degree, that upon returning to Hanover, these veterans carried on in the manner of Englishmen for many years after, and the Hanoverian Army maintained several English military institutions, such as the officers' mess.⁶⁷⁴

Gestures of unity were particularly strong among the officers, who may have served alongside their British colleagues for years. Throughout the history of the Legion, there was a greater degree of social integration as well a structural assimilation into the British Army – something which contrasts this formation with other foreign corps and a long line of auxiliary forces. Of course, both a military fraternity, as well as genteel society further aided this, and were both crucial in breaking down boundaries created by cultural and linguistic barriers.

Yet despite the assimilating nature of this relationship, the Legion did not become completely English. Some external factors played an important role. There was a continuous reminder of the German soldiers' foreignness, which not only emerged from their own actions, but from encounters with the Germans serving willingly or unwillingly in the French Army. This occasionally led to 'volleys of insulting language, as well as shot' to be exchanged between the co-nationals on both sides, and though it certainly had its comical side, it was the bitterness and sadness of such events which stood out the most, and what persists in many of the memoirs.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷³ In one of many such instances of self-proclaimed Englishness, Schaumann recalls, 'the fact that we Englishmen ate so much meat, drank so much wine and so little water, were constantly on our legs, and never slept after the midday meal, and yet remained fresh and healthy withal, struck the Spaniards with horror and amazement, and was always a riddle to them.', Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 206. For other examples, see *Ibid*, pp. 73, 181, 212, 301, 319, 326.

⁶⁷⁴ Bresemann, 'King's German Legion,' pp. 5-13.

⁶⁷⁵ Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of the Eventful Life of a Soldier* (Staplehurst, 2000), pp. 122-123. Schaumann, *One the Road*, p. 250.; Hathaway, *A True Gentleman Soldier*, p. 204.

For others, Englishness was not their aspiration, because they had no intention of shedding their own identity, and instead revelled in those actions and activities – games, songs, foods, etc. – that reminded them of the lands from which they were now exiled.⁶⁷⁶ In the case of others, any predominant sense of Englishness withered away as the possibility of peace and the liberation of their homelands reawakened their Hanoverian or German identities. To these men, as the Legionary officer Julius Hartmann later explained,

the peace of 1814 marked a very special turning point. Up till then [these Hanoverians] had lived in complete isolation from their home country and its special interests and completely within the interests of the English Army and had to a certain degree felt themselves to be English. From this point on, all the ties which bind them to Hanover increase in strength once more and little by little alter the nature of their relationship with the English Army. However, all retain that deep feeling of camaraderie, of belonging to the English comrades in arms, the preference for their institutions and customs and the eager readiness to jump to their defence against anyone who fails to hold them in the highest esteem.⁶⁷⁷

Thus in spite of its ephemeral nature, a feeling of Englishness did prevail among the warriors of the Legion – an affection that certainly owes a great deal to the close relations with the native British. But Hartmann’s comment also belies an equally important theme: an attachment to the ‘English Army,’ which did not necessarily equate to the British nation. Although there was often respect and admiration for Britain and her institutions (the monarchy, the ‘free press’, etc.), it was the army with which they identified themselves, and which fostered not a sense of nationalism, but institutionalism.⁶⁷⁸ This difference was apparent at various times, with one striking case being London after the defeat of Napoleon, and their

⁶⁷⁶ This was perhaps more prevalent in the Brunswick Öls Corps, which served for less time, and did not have the historical and dynastic bonds as the Hanoverians. See: Anon, *Wider Napoleon*, vol. II. chaps. 1-3.

⁶⁷⁷ Wheatley claimed there was already some eagerness among the soldiers following the liberation of northern Germany in 1813: ‘The Legion appears anxious to return to Germany after nine years’ tedious absence. Even the short period I have been absent from England appears treble the time.’ Certainly the inconclusive nature of the war for the first decade added to these feelings, and that a return to Germany was ‘so anxiously desired, and for a while so little expected.’ Bresemann ‘King’s German Legion, p.7.; Hibbert, *Wheatley Diary*, p. 29.; Anon. *Journal of an Officer*, p. 326.

⁶⁷⁸ Ompteda, *English-Hanoverian Officer*, pp. 190, 254.

realization, that though they could share victories with their comrades in the army, there was a sense of separation and isolation from the British public.⁶⁷⁹

****Imagining the King's German Legion****

This close association and the unique character and function of the legion would in the decades after its disbandment create a legacy that was celebrated, on occasion, to the point of hyperbole. Nick Harding has stated that 'most histories of the Hanoverian legion have been eulogic,' and it is in many ways true, for when not overlooked by the histories written after the wars, the Legion did receive favourable commentary in both the memoirs of the participants and the histories written by subsequent generations, and it does so here as well.⁶⁸⁰ As we have seen, the successes by various contingents within the Legion did a great deal to increase the whole corps' reputation, where previous German auxiliaries or allies might be dragged down by the lowest common denominators within their ranks.⁶⁸¹

The particular abilities of the Legion's cavalry greatly impacted the remembering, and the imagining, of the King's German Legion. The cavalry charge outside Garcia Hernandez, where the Heavy Dragoons ('huge men on huge horses') made 'a brilliant charge' and broke through three French infantry regiments in square formations, was repeatedly applauded, including being hyperbolized as 'one of the most gallant charges recorded in history.'⁶⁸² That it deserved such proclamations will not be disputed here, but certainly its treatment as an uncommon feat was part of a broader retrospective regarding the Legion's cavalry,

⁶⁷⁹ '500,000 people were said to be present. And in all this crowd I felt that I stood alone, known to nobody, heeded by nobody – a feeling of pathos of which defies description!' Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 414.

⁶⁸⁰ Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire*, p. 253.

⁶⁸¹ The Legion itself received some public support. August v.d. Busche-Ippenbunrg recalled on one occasion, shortly after disembarking from foreign duty and making his way towards Hull, that 'a lot of people followed after us on the way to the inn, crying exultantly "King's German Legion."' Schwertfeger, *Königlich Hannoversche Generaleutnant*, p. 73

⁶⁸² B.A. Fitchett, (ed.), *Wellingtons' Men: Some Soldier Biographies* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1912), p. 74.

especially the Light Hussars, who were sometimes given credit for acts they had no part in.⁶⁸³

Such was the praise and glorification of the light cavalry in particular, that they received compliments and were portrayed as tireless warriors, with unmatched perceptive skills, keen understanding of terrain, and empathic bonds with their animals – characterizations eerily similar to descriptions of native American warriors. ‘The men of the 1st German Hussars would often observe with the naked eye a body of the enemy which was scarcely discernible through a telescope, so practiced were they and watchful,’ wrote captain Harry Smith.⁶⁸⁴ Similarly their relationship with their horses, received this same manner of exaggerated acclamation. Looking back on his encounters with these horsemen, Harry Ross-Lewin wrote, ‘I have often seen these men lying on the ground, fast asleep, while their horses stood between their legs, and, though the animals were tormented by flies and constantly stamping, their masters never apprehended an accident from them.’⁶⁸⁵ So impressed were Britons with these Hussars’ relationships with their mounts, and the care that they showed for them, that it was far and away the most prevalent topic in their personal writings.⁶⁸⁶ Robert Gleig, writing after the war (with prose worthy of the weekly journal for it was initially written) declared that ‘an Englishman, greatly as he piques himself on his skill in farriery, never acquires that attachment for his horse which a German trooper experiences... and the noble animal seldom fails to return the affection of his master, whose voice he knows, and whom he will generally follow like a dog.’⁶⁸⁷

Certainly these qualities and the reputation of the Legion’s cavalrymen earned them a great deal of respect, with one officer claiming that ‘if we saw a British dragoon at any time approach at full speed, it excited no curiosity among us,

⁶⁸³ Such was their fame, that some feats that were performed by the heavy dragoon regiments, such as the one above, were attributed to them instead. See editors comments in: Michael Glover (ed.). *A Gentleman Volunteer: The letters of George Hennell From The Peninsular War 1812-1813* (Heinemann: London, 1979), p. 31.

⁶⁸⁴ Smith dedicates a sub-chapter of his memoir to discussing the 1st Hussars. Smith, *Autobiography of Harry Smith*, esp. p. 26.

⁶⁸⁵ Ross-Lewin. *With ‘The Thirty Second’*, p. 304

⁶⁸⁶ Mercer, *Journal*, p.44.

⁶⁸⁷ Gleig, *Subaltern*, p. 138.

but whenever we saw one of the first hussars coming on at a gallop it was high time to gird our swords and bundle up.’⁶⁸⁸ Their skill at outpost duty lent to them a mystique, and others saw them as the guardian angles of the army. Captain John Patterson memorialized them in saying that with the German hussars ‘entrusted with outposts, the camp may sleep in safety, and in full assurance of being vigilantly watched.’⁶⁸⁹ It is testimonies such as these that helped the Legion persist for some time in popular memory as a special, if not supernatural force, a part of why it had such a long impact in both military policy (as in the German Legion in 1855) and the memoirs of those who fought alongside these men. Throughout these discussions, national character – or more specifically martial character – was a key theme, and in fact reached new levels, far surpassing discussions by previous generations of British soldier-authors.

The exaggerations prevalent in these accounts are owed, in part, to the nature of the commentary. Here, the focus on military duties and capabilities created narratives that seem to have far more potential for hyperbole than discussions of cultural differences or social interactions. Yet another explanation for this variance, or at least the attribution of such exceptionalism, was that it was a way of admiring these German soldiers favourably, without being overly harsh to their fellow Englishmen. In such circumstances, it was easier to attribute such traits to natural character than admitting that British soldiers were not equally desirous of doing their duties, especially, given that their memoirs and autobiographies were geared towards a British audience.

Conversely, in some many accounts, especially among those who were keenly interested in the soldiering profession, these contrasts were designed deliberately to impugn the abilities or the efforts of British soldiers. Just as the contrasts between the cultures and mores of these German soldiers helped inform concepts of Englishness and Britishness, so did these contrasts help determine areas in which the British soldiers excelled, or on the contrary, where they had ‘inefficiently

⁶⁸⁸ Brett-James, *Life in Wellington's Army*, pp. 36-7.

⁶⁸⁹ John Patterson, *The Adventures of Captain John Patterson, With Notice of the Officers, etc. of the 50th or Queen's Own Regiment, from 1807-1821* (London, 1837), p. 357. Gray, *The Services of the King's German Legion*, p. 73.

performed various important duties' and 'betrayed much ignorance of the profession.'⁶⁹⁰ Whether the authors' intentions were to throw condemnation upon British warriors, or to heap praise on their German comrades, the Legion was a continuous beneficiary of both hyperbolic and well-deserved praise. Their professionalism greatly increased their reception in the British Army, and the memory of the corps at large – even if the men responsible for such admiration only made up a fraction of the Legion as a whole.

****Conclusion****

The diaries, correspondence and memoirs from the Peninsular War offer a striking contrast to previous conflicts, not only for the sheer quantity, but because so many of their authors went to great lengths to describe the environment around them, their activities beyond the battlefield, and crucially, their views towards the behaviours and abilities of the foreigners within their own army. Discussions of German national character were far more common in this particular conflict than for any other, and reveal many of the attitudes reflective of this brief era, but also indicative of the sentiments that had existed among British soldiers for the last seventy-five years, or more.

Scheithers' recruits were perhaps the best example of the structural integration of Germans within the British Army, however in terms of social and psychological assimilation, the Legionaries were unsurpassed. This warm reception and glowing recollections of the men in the KGL came from three sources. Firstly, these soldiers appealed to the professional sentiments within the army, where competence in the duties of soldiers and ability in battle were stressed more than any other characteristics. The effectiveness displayed by most KGL formations earned them increasing respect from their brother-soldiers, as it appealed to the

⁶⁹⁰ Ross-Lewin, *With 'The Thirty Second'*, p. 306.

professional minded within the army, while at the same time, other foreign corps were being condemned for their inabilities and indiscretions.

Secondly, through the duration of this decade-long conflict the men of the Legion adopted many of the British customs and mannerisms, and the English language as well, which served to make them more familiar and eased coordination and interaction within the army at large. Furthermore, both British and German soldiers shared an equal care for the cause for which they fought, and though the British did not view them purely motivated by the interests of Great Britain, there was an understanding that the better sorts within the Legion were fighting for their Hanoverian Elector, and more importantly, for the liberation of Germany. This joint cause was something rarely shared with other instances of Anglo-German associations, such as the Hessians in the American War, whose motives were scrutinized even when they displayed an unquestionable zeal in fighting the rebels. As for the Legion's soldiers, particularly the Hanoverian core from which it was founded, they maintained a patriotic and not mercenary comportment.

Lastly, the various idiosyncrasies of the Legion on account of its foreign nature appealed to the more romantic side of soldiers' opinions, and this image of a chivalrous 'other' was both novel and endearing – especially in the age of romanticism. Though the Black Brunswickers were the chief beneficiaries of an idyllic portrayal – in the form of the Millais painting – it was the Hanoverians who would dominate the writings of the soldier diaries. The men of the Legion were adopted into the army, and considered 'British' by their fellow soldiers, but only to a certain degree, for their most endearing aspect remained their foreignness and the differences in manners and methods when compared to British soldiers. These behaviours were reinforced by the unique nature of the Legion, which was compounded by discussions of national character within the army, as they became an embodiment of Germans and Germanic soldiery from whom the British could contrast themselves.

Collectively, these elements all contributed to the successful integration, and fond recollection of the King's German Legion. No finer example of this can be found

than a passage from the memoir of Lt. John Cooke, who fondly recalled an episode of camaraderie and friendship while at camp along the river Agueda in Spain in 1813:

The German hussars rode up, smoking their pipes and singing some delightful airs, their half squadrons joining in chorus at intervals. We heard that the Hussar Brigade was going... to act with our Division, so the whole of us left our canvas and lined the road to greet our old friends and companions of outpost duty. The hussars became so much affected by our cheering that tears rolled down many of their bronzed faces. 'Oh!' said they, 'we are always glad to see the old lighty division, who will ever live in our hearts.'⁶⁹¹

Here, those elements of joint service, charismatic difference and social familiarity – one might say extreme fondness – combine in a scene the likes of which is not found in previous episodes in the long history of Anglo-German military interaction, and reveal just how 'brotherly' these soldiers had become.

⁶⁹¹ Hathaway, *A True Gentlemen Soldier*, p. 179. Brett-James, *Life in Wellington's Army*, p. 37.

CONCLUSIONS:

The capacious Royal Gallery in the Palace of Westminster contains two forty-five foot long paintings, both displaying a celebrated triumph of British arms, and each standing as a testament to the skill and exactness displayed by their creator, Daniel Maclise. One wall bears the fresco entitled 'The Death of Lord Nelson', a celebration of the British Navy at the Battle of Trafalgar and the passing – turned martyrdom – of Britain's most famed admiral, Horatio Nelson. The centrepiece of the painting is the dying admiral himself, surrounded by sailors representing all manners of men from the British Navy, from regions all across Great Britain and Ireland. It is a sombre painting to be certain, but one revelling in a triumph of the British Navy – and the glory is theirs alone. The mural on the opposite wall tells a different story. Like the 'Death of Nelson', it is a commemoration of British forces: the men of Wellington's Army after the Battle of Waterloo. Throughout the solemn landscape portraying the aftermath of battle, are gathered men epitomizing soldiers from all across the United Kingdom. But they are not alone. The centrepiece of this painting is the handshake between Britain's most celebrated general, Lord Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington, and Field Marshal Gebhard Liebrich von Blücher, the commander of the Prussian forces, surrounded by an entourage of his most important lieutenants. Whereas the triumph of Britain's Navy was one unaided, victory by land was a joint-venture, and in the painting, the sign on the inn behind these two generals, *La Belle Alliance*, provides a symbolism relevant not only to this battle, but to this one hundred and twenty five year period, where the British Army's salient victories on the continent and beyond were the result of a number of military partnerships, most notably with the German states of central Europe.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹² When Charles de Gaulle visited Westminster Palace to give a speech in front of both Houses of Parliament in 1960, these two paintings were covered up. This is a strange reminder, that the relations between Britain and Germany one and a half centuries after Waterloo, were far different from the one and a quarter centuries before. For the decline in Anglo-German relations in the nineteenth century, see: Paul Kennedy, *The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1980).

This thesis began with two key objectives: to highlight the importance and characteristics of Anglo-German armies in Britain's struggles with France in the long eighteenth century, and to discuss the opinions and associations of British and German soldiers within these coalitions. As a conclusion to this work, we will examine the evolution and key features of these relationships once more, as well as the most common trends and important themes.

From the wars against Louis XIV to those against Napoleon, the role that German soldiers played in Britain's anti-Gallic military endeavours remained a constant, yet this thesis has shown that several key changes transpired. The first sixty years of this relationship remained largely unchanged, with three wars each cantered on a British Army operating alongside Dutch and Austrian forces in the Low Countries, aided by a large number of German auxiliaries. While the 'Diplomatic Revolution' of 1756 saw a shift in these alliances, Britain's reliance upon German allies and hired troops remained unaltered, if not augmented. Nevertheless, the Seven Years War saw some important evolutions, as it was the first time that German manpower was utilized in the American Colonies, and the only time a British-led coalition on the European continent was composed of an exclusively Anglo-German force. As discussed in Chapter V, from 1756 onwards German forces began appearing in ever-greater numbers within the British Army (particularly within the colonial operations), although never matching the scale of allied or auxiliary forces. While the Seven Years War was the high-watermark for Britain's use of subsidy troops, the American War of Independence was certainly the highest profile, and represented the last prolonged usage of German auxiliaries. From this point onward, Britain began incorporating more and more foreign soldiers into various regiments on the British establishment, while maintaining a policy of subsidizing foreign armies to meet the requirements needed to challenge Napoleonic France on a pan-European scale.

This survey of Anglo-German armies should not suggest that there was an exclusive relationship between Britain and the various states within Germany, as France maintained equally enduring relationships with several states within the Empire. The Bourbons, and Napoleon especially, mobilized greater numbers of

German soldiers within the French Army throughout the century, and unlike Britain, several German regiments remained permanent parts of her armed forces. In fact, wherever British soldiers were to encounter French forces, there was a likelihood of encountering Germans within the French Army as well. Likewise, other European Armies, particularly the Dutch, came to rely upon German manpower, but similarly, each European nation would contain a large number of foreigners, not just from central Europe, but from throughout the continent. These considerations are not highlighted to undermine the importance of an Anglo-German military relationship, but rather to stress the multination, and at times transnational nature of these early modern armies. Such institutions, founded solely for the advancement of their respective state or prince, were not always reflective of the nationality or motivations of the men who composed them. In such circumstances, the importance of the soldiering profession in providing community and identity was vital.

This leads us to the second question at hand: the relations between British and German soldiers, and their opinions of one another. Generally speaking, British soldiers' relations and perceptions of their German allies reflected the independent and usually disjointed nature of these coalitions, where infrequent interactions lead to an incomplete picture of how these forces related with one another. Frequent infighting among the commanding generals certainly impacted the overall tenor of these associations in a way that was not replicated in other forms of Anglo-German military cooperation. Yet, it should be remembered that these did not arise purely from differences in national affiliation, as similar disputes were just as common between men in the British Army and Navy.

Relations with auxiliaries were much clearer, better documented, and generally more favourable. Yet the comportment within these hybridized forces was very much dependent upon other dynamics, chiefly the dynastic or contractual relationships that bound these forces together. For example, when George II took command of the Pragmatic Army in 1743, British and Hanoverian forces squabbled like angry siblings while their prince commanded the army, and these resentments died down with his departure. Similarly, an overemphasis on the quality and ability of Hessian soldiers in the American War was indicative of the mercenary origins of

Britain's 'allies' in the rebellion, and commentaries were geared towards addressing this relationship more than in accounts involving other auxiliary forces.

Integrated corps were the most variable in terms of their rapport with British soldiers, as those who were directly recruited into the army rarely appear in the contemporary writings, and those instances we have of conflict often originate with courts-martial documents, which we cannot assume provide us a balanced picture. However, the sentiments between native Britons and the foreign corps in the Napoleonic Wars reveal steadily improving relations, no doubt a product of greater cohesion between these forces, and a familiarity resulting from years of campaigning. Though these foreigners within the army became the embodiment of a German 'otherness', one of the salient topics within soldiers' diaries and memoirs, the tone was generally more positive than in observations of the more distant allies.

Delving into the interactions of British and German soldiers, we can also find some patterns. Firstly, unlike the evolutions in the structure and nature of these military relationships, there are minimal changes over time in how the soldiers interacted, and the most dramatic variances owe more to the confines or the context in which they transpired. In each campaign, the first encounters were usually the most problematic and susceptible to disturbances. This was certainly the case in the mid-century wars, and the change that took place in how these soldiers related with one another is best exemplified in the case of the British and Hanoverian forces in the War of Austrian Succession, as discussed in Chapter III. But not all change was for the good, and the generally more positive relations in the Anglo-German forces in the American and French Revolutionary Wars, show a gradual cooling of relations over the course of several years, owing primarily to the lack of success that characterized these conflicts. The foreign corps serving in the Peninsular War, especially the King's German Legion, would stand as the pinnacle of Anglo-German relations, yet in each conflict there are hints and anecdotes of a cordial relations between Britons and their German counterparts. To be certain, conflicts and infighting were ever-present, yet, if we are to exempt 1743-44, the enmity between these forces never matched the rhetoric that was a recurring theme in the public debates prevalent during each war, and which increased in volume with every

foreign subsidy. Overall, the relations between British and German soldiers leaned towards cordiality rather than contempt. Certainly a number of negative impressions have been provided within this thesis, but as discussed in Chapter III, the most universally derogatory comments, were reserved for their Dutch allies.

True to the professional fraternity that separated armed forces and non-combatants, the greatest rifts existed between soldiers and civilians. It was in these interactions where the clearest acts of religious disdain can be found – whereas there are no substantive references of such sectarianism between Britons and Austrians, or for another example, with the Catholic auxiliaries who joined the British Army fighting in the Colonies in the 1770's. While there were tensions over supplies and rations, they never matched the bloody riots that broke out between British soldiers and Flemish traders in the early days of the Pragmatic Army in 1742-3.⁶⁹³ The difficulties overcoming the language barrier within the army rarely matched the frustration shown by soldiers trying to communicate with non-combatants.⁶⁹⁴ Finally, those writers who questioned the loyalties and motivations of their German auxiliaries would find their comments pale in comparison to the condemnations of Dutch, Flemish, Spanish, Portuguese, or even German civilians, who only rarely seemed in the eyes of these soldier-authors, to warrant the protection they were being granted, or to contribute in a way that these commentators found adequate.⁶⁹⁵

As for British soldiers' opinions of German soldiery, the two case studies provide a contrast between how these men would describe their German brother-soldiers from one generation to another. From focusing primarily on professional ability, and couching these assertions in reference to Hessian martial ability, accounts emerging from the Peninsular War described the German redcoats very much in terms of their national character and natural ability. Beyond the unique contexts of each episode, there were several reasons for this shift, and the growth in

⁶⁹³ BL Add MS 36252 Diary of Joseph Yorke fol. 12.; CKS Amherst Papers U1350 01/1 fol. 20.

⁶⁹⁴ Campbell, *Memoirs*, pp. 52-3.; Gomm, *Letters and Journals*, pp. 71-2.; Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 73.

⁶⁹⁵ Schaumann, *On the Road*, pp. 72-3.; Hamilton, *Hamilton's Campaign*, p. 36.

nationalism and an increasing focus on differences in national character were certainly at the forefront. That the soldiers of the KGL represented men from throughout Germany was certainly another explanation. Yet, the institutional division (or lack thereof) was a fundamental cause for this change in the contextualization. In the American War, when Hessian soldiers acted in a certain manner, British soldiers could ascribe these acts in reference to the foreign army in which they served. Yet, once these foreigners donned the trappings of British soldiers, the barrier that had divided these groups was worn away, leading to descriptions being attributed to their national character. Put succinctly, where a difference in institution was not provided, the discussion turned towards national or ethnic dissimilarity. This reveals the durability of national or ethnic division within these armies, something that service in the same army could not always overcome. If one considers the interactions between English, Scottish and Irish soldiers in the British Army, this should come as no surprise.

Throughout this era, national character was present, even if not explicitly addressed in soldiers' writings, and not just for foreigners serving within the British Army. There was a continuous interplay between popular stereotypes and the impressions that emerged from prolonged interaction with these foreign contingents: from stereotypes regarding German pace, demeanour, and reliability, to assertions that they were naturally better light infantrymen, were preferable for tasks such as outpost duty, or even that they were naturally less susceptible to various faults among British soldiers, such as excessive drinking. Furthermore, this conflict between national character and professionalism was not confined just to the writings or sentiments of soldiers, but manifested in the relations between these polities. No better example of an implicit conflict can be seen than with the Pragmatic Army, which was marked by divisions and rancour between Hanoverians and Britons in 1743. Over the course of the next two years these points of contention faded and a professional respect emerged, largely contributed to by shared experiences, on and off the battlefield – and certainly the Battle of Fontenoy appears to be the watershed moment in the creating of a solidarity between these particular forces.

As revealed throughout this thesis, professionalism impacted the attitudes of soldiers and regularly pushed other themes predominant to discussions of national character to the background. There were those within the army, who did specifically address issues of national character, such as Charles Cocks, the 'intelligence officer' serving in the Peninsular War. Cocks filled his letters and diaries with discussions of these themes, no doubt influenced by his readings of Henry Lloyd's *History of the Late War in Germany* that he read while on campaign, and which provided the template regarding martial character that he contextualized with his own experiences.⁶⁹⁶ Similarly, there were a number of British soldiers in the American War who portrayed the Hessians in a manner that reflected the language found in the press, particularly in regards to their value as 'mercenaries'. However, these were exceptions to the rule, as most impressions were influenced primarily by soldier's own experiences. In fact the primary stereotype, that of Hessian plundering, did not emerge in London, but from the colonies, where their frequent marauding led to exaggerated characterizations that were the product of a discourse within the British Army. In discussing martial or national character, some views of soldiers borrowed from popular norms, but the majority diverged greatly, if they followed them at all, both in the subjects they chose to focus upon and in their conclusions: dwelling less on what was British and what was not, and focusing more on what was soldierly and what was not.

Much of this thesis has sought to highlight this divide between popular and soldierly opinion, especially as our understanding of the subject is reflective more of the former, to the neglect of the opinions of those within these armies. With much of the current scholarly attention being placed on the press and popular attitudes, it is important not to lose sight of the experiences of those who actually participated in these military enterprises. For example, after 1744, and for the remainder of the War of Austrian Succession, Hanoverian soldiers remained a bugaboo in the press long after relations between the respective armies had improved. A decade later, when the Hanoverian and Hessians forces were encamped in England in what was

⁶⁹⁶ Page, *Intelligence Officer*, p. 131.

portrayed by a vociferous opposition as a second Saxon invasion, aspiring young officers like James Wolfe were flocking to their camps to learn their techniques and socialize with their officers. While the German commanders of 'His Britannic Majesty's Army in Germany' were accused of dithering away British blood and fortune, there was amongst the British Army an unflinching faith in their commander, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, and cordial relations with all members of the predominantly German army.⁶⁹⁷ These are some examples of a host of similar divergences, and yet the public attitudes regarding these issues are well known, while the opinions of the participating soldiers have been largely forgotten or ignored. While the writings of soldiers are by no means neglected, we cannot say the same for their opinions on these well-documented issues. Hopefully future scholarship can reveal more about what these men had to say about their allies, enemies, and the foreign civilian populations with which they so often interacted.

This thesis began with a discussion of the self-reflection of British officers and soldiers, initialized by their interaction with foreigners, both civilian and military. Indeed, one of the most compelling aspects of the diaries, correspondence and memoirs of soldiers were these moments of introspection. While German allies and auxiliaries were a common subject, quite often these descriptions would lead to discussions of British national and martial character. In most conclusions, the British fared quite favourable – which should come as no surprise. Yet others revealed certain criticisms, most of which were in fact couched in terms of British, or more commonly 'English' traits. Certainly in a period of growing national identities, these discussions reveal the degree to which soldiers underwent this process in their own unique manner. Obvious were the *esprit de corps* and feelings of patriotism that reinforced this self-identification, but there were others, like Lord

⁶⁹⁷ Such was this confidence, that when the German Prince publicly humiliated their own commander, George Sackville, for his failings at the Battle of Minden, no one among the British forces seemed to bat an eye. Lord Holderness made this point clear to Sackville, warning him not to fault Ferdinand, stating that: 'The Prince stands so high in reputation both with the King & the People that any degree of charge against him would be ill received.' Anon. 'Battle of Minden, 1 August 1759'. *JSAHR*, 7 (1927), pp. 127-8.; BL Egerton Papers Eg MS 3443 fols. 247-8, Holderness to Sackville, August 14th 1759.

Wallingford, who also gained an appreciation of their own identity through pensive reflection, and perhaps even in the act of writing their letters or journals.

From interactions with German soldiers, the British realized several key themes, not only regarding their martial ability, where they were particularly celebratory of their courage and ability in battle, but also other aspects of soldiering, from which they could make even greater contrasts. The primary area of difference was in their 'benevolence.' As the eighteenth century progressed, Britons within the army became aware that their treatment of civilians, either in Europe, or in Colonial America, was far superior to the manner in which German forces treated these same non-combatants. Though there were admissions to their lack of discipline or shortcomings in certain military matters, from the 1770's onwards, the British soldier, for all his numerous vices of drinking and cursing, was far more reticent to inflict bodily or financial harm upon civilian populations, even hostile ones. This was the key point of contrast with other contemporary armies, and those Germans who became redcoats themselves, were often careful to highlight their conversion to an 'English' manner of conducting warfare.⁶⁹⁸ This was indeed a laudable trait, and one that echoes the winning of hearts and minds by armed forces in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While this was a point of pride and unity for British soldiers, it created rifts between them and foreign armies, revealing that a professional solidarity had its limits, when sympathy towards civilians contrasted the more empathetic Britons with apathetic Germans, especially when the latter were the chief perpetrators. Interactions with German soldiery may have provided British soldiers a better perspective and appreciation of their German allies, but they were also given a new insight into their own identities. Perhaps it is no surprise, that they were quite happy to be Britons.

⁶⁹⁸ The best example again being August Schaumann, a commissary during the Peninsular War. When a captured French officer complained of the poor quality of provisions provided for him, Schaumann replied: 'I pointed out to him somewhat resentfully that, unlike the French army, we English did not live on spoil and plunder, and that an English soldier could not therefore be expected with his ration to entertain a chasseur colonel to a meal.' Schaumann, *On the Road*, p. 301.

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