

child during the last ten years of the war, and his account of this period is confined to three episodes, describing respectively how his family were killed by soldiers when he was five, how he became first a soldier's boy and then a piper in an Imperialist regiment, and how after four years he deserted to become a miller's apprentice. His style is anecdotal, including colourful details and direct speech to re-create the atmosphere of the moment, suggesting that his text is a written version of tales often told orally by the author. In this it has parallels to Anna Wolff's account, written in the 1660s but describing the siege and capture of her town, Schwabach, near Nuremberg, by Imperialist troops in 1632. Wolff, a young miller-woman at the time, avoided possible rape by hiding for five days in a dovecote, and later she hid the mayor and his wife from the occupying forces for several weeks. These experiences left their mark on her, as indicated by her impulse to record them in dramatic and emotional terms, with frequent religious references and appeals or thanks to God, some 30 years later.

Two other Englishmen also wrote memoirs describing their experiences during the Thirty Years War, although dealing more extensively with their later careers. Thomas Raymond, a younger son of minor English gentry, served for a little over a year, 1633 to 1634, as a soldier in Pakenham's regiment, campaigning in the Low Countries and on the German border near Maastricht. Although a gentleman, Raymond enlisted as a common soldier – 'in his company I traile a pike' – and he gives an account of his military experience from this standpoint (Ry.35). Sir James Turner's memoirs record his service with the Swedish army in Germany from 1632 to 1639, and afterwards in the wars at home, but he also published a substantial military treatise, *Pallas Armata*. In this he describes armies and the conduct of war as he had seen it in Germany, thus providing a more detached and professional but nevertheless eyewitness record of the conflict.

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3 Military Perspectives

(Military Life)

Military life

The armies that marched, fought and looted their way endlessly across Germany were mainly mercenaries. Gustavus Adolphus brought a core of Swedish and Finnish troops with him when he invaded, but even then his army was already a cosmopolitan one comprising individuals and regiments from many countries. Recruitment in Germany and enlistment of prisoners during campaigning compounded the original diversity, although some regiments did maintain a degree of national or linguistic homogeneity, but only a small proportion of the troops described for convenience by contemporaries and historians as Swedes would ever have seen Scandinavia. The Imperialist armies were little different, including not only troops from all parts of the Empire but many from outside it. Vincent sums this up in describing the notorious Croat horsemen: 'The tenth part of them are not of that Country: for they are a miscellany of all strange Nations, without God, without Religion, and have onely the outsides of men, and scarce that too' (V.29).

Recruitment had to be a continuous process. 'Where a War is of any long continuance, that Armies mouldring away, either new Regiments must be levied, or the old recruited', says Turner, describing how the recruiting officers 'invite by Trumpet and Drum all to take employment, whom either the desire of honour, riches, booty, pay or wages may encourage' (T.166, 165). Sheer financial necessity was an influential recruiting sergeant, and Poyntz states plainly that 'my necessitie forced mee, my Money beeing growne short, to take the meanes of a private souldier' (Po.45). Raymond is no less frank about his own reasons for serving: 'I had noe greate fancie to this kynde of life, but seeing no other way to make out a fortune, being a younger brother ... I buckled my selfe to the profession' (Ry.44).

Getting paid once enlisted was another matter, and a constant source of friction and discontent in the armies. Money was always scarce, and the wise commander knew how to turn an occasional issue of pay to advantage, almost as a reward rather than an entitlement, 'knowing well how hungry

men could be contented with little, in time of neede', as Monro says of Gustavus Adolphus (Mo.II. 86). Those who joined up expecting to get regular pay were doomed to disappointment. Turner sardonically comments that the soldiers were called mercenaries, 'but if you will consider how their wages are paid, I suppose, you will rather think them Voluntaries, at least very generous, for doing the greatest part of their service for nothing'. Rates of pay in the emperor's army, he adds, were 'fair enough', but 'they got not three months Pay of twelve in a whole year' (T.198, 198-9). On more than one occasion armies effectively went on strike, and in the spring of 1633 Monro reports the Swedish army settling itself into camp for three months, 'resolving to enterprise no exploit or hostility against the Enemy, till such time as they should know, who should content them for their by-past service' (Mo.II. 178).

Turner takes a pessimistic view of the likely possessions of a common soldier: 'Suppose he hath a couple of Shirts, a pair of Stockins, and a pair of Shoos in his Knapsack, (and how many Souldiers have all these?)' (T.276). Vitzthum, a Saxon colonel, confirms this, noting the poor condition of the soldiers in one of the regiments: 'Hardly a man had a pair of shoes, so they went mostly barefoot, and there were many youths among them' (Vi.305). Hagendorf's finances followed the fluctuations of pay and military fortune; he was sometimes well off and at others almost destitute, once lamenting that 'this time I was completely finished, as I had no more than four taler left'. On occasions he had enough cash to buy a horse, although on his discharge he had to settle for a donkey, while another time 'I was forced to sell my horse, which was worth 24 gulden, as I was in need of money here' (Ha.93, 99).

The compensation for lack of pay was the opportunity for plunder, which was seen not as an abuse but as a recognised part of the system. Poyntz, the jocular soldier of fortune, comments that 'wee might bee our own carvers, for we had no other pay', while during his service with Mansfeld they had 'nothing from our Generall but what we got by pillage which as the Proverb is lightly come as lightly goes' (Po.127, 51). Hagendorf is matter-of-fact about plunder, noting when he did particularly well and wryly commenting after being seriously wounded at Magdeburg: 'That was my booty.' In Durlach he looted shirts: 'I was well off again' (Ha.47, 62). In Landshut he got '12 taler in cash, and plenty of clothes and liner', in Magdeburg his wife looted 'bed-clothing ... and a large pitcher holding four quarts of wine, as well as finding dresses and two silver belts', and at Le Câtelet in France she acquired 'a ball gown made of taffeta' (Ha.59, 47, 75). Plundering was also a standard part of battle and looting the enemy's baggage was common practice, although Monro sarcastically reports that at the battle of Breitenfeld supposed friends were as acquisitive as foes:

And all this night our brave Camerades, the Saxons were making use of their heeles in flying, thinking all was lost, they made booty of our wag-gons and goods, too good a recompence for Cullions that had left their Duke, betrayed their country and the good cause. (Mo.II. 67)

The fortunes of war sometimes intervened. Monro notes that Swedish booty at Neu-Brandenburg was the proceeds of previous looting by Imperialist troops, 'who though they gathered the whole money of the Country, yet they had not the wit to transport it away' (Mo.II. 15). Fritsch escaped from a lost battle in 1638 while his accumulated wealth fell prey to the enemy troops, but despite such setbacks the war provided scope for professional soldiers to gain promotion from the ranks and to enrich themselves, among them Wallenstein's principal murderer, Colonel Butler. Poyntz too knew how to take his chances, rising to the rank of captain in the Saxon army, 'but beeing taken Prisoner by the Imperialists I lost againe all that I had' (Po.125). Making the best of a bad job he changed sides, and finding favour with his captor, the selfsame Butler, he was able to rebuild his career and finances:

But I beeing come to this height got to bee by Count Butlers favour Sergeant Major of a Troop of 200 horse but I was to raise them at my owne charge ... for I had then 3000 £ which I carried into the field with mee besides that I left at home with my Wife. ... And I made good use of my place for I could and did send home often tymes Money to my Wife, who it seemes spent at home what I got abroad. (Po.125-6)

There was little difference in principle between allowing soldiers to find their own remuneration through booty in lieu of pay and the organised exploitation imposed on allied, neutral or enemy territory alike by the generals and colonels. Nevertheless the line was a fine one. Hagendorf's boy 'took a horse, a white one' in Durlach in 1634, and soon afterwards he 'led a fine cow out with him. It was sold for 11 taler at Wimpfen' (Ha.62, 63). In 1633 though, also in an Imperialist unit, a soldier was 'shot by the cavalry captain himself, because he had taken a citizen's horse' (Bü.29). Monro reports the disciplinary measures against unlicensed plundering which were taken by the Swedish army, as when men slipped away in 1631, 'and staying behinde did plunder, and oppresse the Boores, for remedy whereof, the Souldiers being complained on, accused and convicted, they were made, for punishment to suffer Gatlop, where they were well whip't for their insolency' (Mo.II. 47).

If pay, plunder and promotion were unreliable hopes rather than safe expectations, provision of food and accommodation was only a little better. In garrison the troops had sometimes to buy their own food, and at others they were billeted on hosts who had to provide for them. On the march there might be an issue of army bread, sutlers might have supplies for sale, or the troops might have to go foraging. Turner discusses rations with a healthy awareness of likely reality:

The ordinary allowance for a Soldier in the field, is daily two pound of Bread, one pound of Flesh, or in lieu of it, one pound of Cheese, one pottle of Wine, or in lieu of it, two pottles of Beer. It is enough, crys the Soldiers, we desire no more, and it is enough in conscience. But this

allowance will not last very long, they must be contented to march sometimes one whole week, and scarce get two pound of Bread all the while, and their Officers as little as they. (T.201)

Hagendorf regularly experienced both extremes: 'On Good Friday we had bread and meat enough, but on holy Easter Sunday we couldn't get even a mouthful of bread.' When times were good they seemed very good: 'Baden. Here we lay in quarters, guzzling and boozing; it was wonderful.' He could even afford to be fussy: 'In the land of the Cashubians ... we didn't want to eat beef any more; we had to have goose, duck or chicken' (Ha.43, 42, 43). He mentions hard times more often, noting once that 'bread was really scarce in our camp this time', and adding soon afterwards: 'Here the bread and meat were hung on the highest nail again because of the large number of soldiers.' One Christmas he complains: 'Stayed put for 14 days; celebrated Christmas with water from the Danube and didn't have a bite of bread' (Ha.65-8, 69, 87). Hungry soldiers sought their own salvation: 'At this time there was such a famine in the army that no horse in the stables was safe from the soldiers. They would stab a horse in the chest with a knife and then creep away, leaving it to bleed to death. Later they would eat it' (Ha.69-70).

Vincent encountered 'Italians and Spaniards, which had been at the skirmish at Nortlingen, ... so blacke and feeble through hunger, that had I not given them part of my provision, I thinke they had rent mee in pieces, and eaten mee' (V.36). Hunger did more damage than the enemy during the Imperialist invasion of France in 1636. Fritsch was at Metz when the armies confronted one another; there was no battle but both sides dug in for three months, suffering greatly from famine 'right into the autumn, until it froze bitterly hard and many thousand soldiers and horses perished and died. When we couldn't hold on any longer because of hunger we marched back out of Lorraine again' (F.150). Poyntz gives a graphic account of the French retreat:

All their Bravery which they showed at their comming was gone, we could see at their parting nether scarlet Coats nor feathers, but sneaked and stole away by little & by little from their Camp. And it seemes most of their brave horses were eaten or dead for few we could see at their departure nor heare so much neighing of horses as when they came. (Po.120-1)

Hagendorf often did well with billets and hosts: Johannes Strobel, a shopkeeper, in Regensburg; Apollonia, a court clerk, in Braunau; Hans Brunner, a brewer, in Ingolstadt. On one occasion he was billeted in a tavern and on another with a wine-seller, good lodgings for a man who was fond of a drink. He stayed a long time in some of them, four months in winter quarters in 1637, three months in 1638, five months in 1645, and from February

to September in 1647. Usually his wife was with him, and some of his children were born in these billets. On the other hand accommodation in camp was rough and ready, as Raymond describes:

Wee had at this leagure a full plenty of all provisions ... and soe longe as money lasted wee had a merry life. As for my selfe I only wanted a good bed and sheetes. Parts of an old tent, which I had provided my selfe of one for my bed, being stuffed with straw, and ther, my pillow layd upon boughs supported with 4 cruches 2 foote from the ground, lying in my wascoate and drawers and stocking, covered with my cloathes, my cloake being the coverlett, sleeping excellently well, and in this leagur pretty free from lice. (Ry.38)

On the march conditions could be much worse:

These 3 dayes was a very hard march, for we were end of day very wet, and came soe and late to our quarters, lying 2 night *sub dis*, haveing only the panopie of heaven to cover us. ... I had nothing to keepe me from the cold wett ground but a little bundle of wett dried flax, which by chance I litt on. And soe with my bootes full of water and wrapt up in my wett cloake, I lay as round as a hedgehog, and at peep of day looked like a drowned ratt. (Ry.39-40)

Seventeenth-century armies were accompanied by a large train of relatives, servants and providers of services of all kinds. Bürster reports General Aldringer moving to relieve Constance in 1633 with 'some 30 000 soldiers, but including the baggage train around 100 000 people' (Bü.17). Turner describes the system acidly: 'The great number of Coaches, Waggons, Carts, and Horses loaded with baggage, the needless numbers of Women and Boys who follow Armies, renders a march, slow, uneasie and troublesome. And therefore the Latins gave baggage the right name of *Impedimenta*, hinderances' (T.274). He calculates that by Swedish standards a modest army of 5000 horse and 9000 foot would require 1800 wagons, not counting those of the artillery but including 220 sutlers. In addition to wagoners, traders and soldiers' families this train included personal servants, even the common soldier often employing someone, perhaps a boy, to look after his horse or carry his booty. Turner notes that 'a Gudget or Boy was allowed to serve two Soldiers, *inde* for 10 000 Souldiers, 5000 Gudgets, the very Vermine of an Army' (T.275). He is more circumspect about women:

As woman was created to be a helper to man, so women are great helpers in Armies to their husbands, especially those of the lower condition; ... they provide, buy and dress their husbands meat when their husbands are on duty, or newly come from it, they bring in fewel for fire, and wash their linnens; ... especially they are useful in Camps and Leaguers, being permitted (which should not be refused them) to go some miles from the Camp to buy Victuals and other Necessaries. (T.277)

couldn't take this fortress at Helfenstein by gunfire, but we got up to it with approach trenches and saps, right into their fortifications. Then they made an accord. They also had nothing left to eat, as they had eaten horses, dogs, cats, saddles, the lot' (Ha.79-80). Wagner mentions hides being cooked and eaten in blockaded Augsburg in 1634, and that 'the soldiers shot dogs and cats, so that little more was seen of these animals in the city' (Wa.56). Walther describes the survivors of one of the most protracted sieges, that of Breisach in 1634, when they reached Strasbourg after the surrender: 'It was an awful sight to see these poor, miserable, starving men, who looked more like ghosts and phantoms than living people. ... The whole city ran out to see these pathetic creatures' (Wl.35).

Accord terms varied considerably. At best the garrison might be allowed to march away with full military honours, perhaps taking a specified number of cannon and quantities of ammunition and supplies with them, while in less favourable circumstances they escaped with little more than their lives, the soldiers usually being forced to enlist with their captors while the officers might be held for ransom. Monro cites three cases during 1631. At Landsberg 'Colonell Hepburne being advanced towards the Skonce, tooke it in on accord, and the Souldiers were made to take service, and their Officers made prisoners'. The Imperialist garrison of a castle near Demmin were in a weak negotiating position, and 'fearing to be blowne up by a Mine, entred in treatie, and were content to take service under his Majestie, and to render their Colours' (Mo.II. 39, 18). On the other hand the garrison at Demmin itself secured good terms:

Major Greeneland an English Cavalier then serving the Emperour, was sent out to make the accord with his Majesty, pledges delivered by both, the accord agreed on was subscribed; where it was concluded, the Governour should march out with flying Colours, and Armes, and with two peeces of Ordinance, with bag and baggage, and a convoy to the next Emperiall Garrison, providing the Governour should leave behinde him all cannon, being threescore peeces of Brasse, all store of Amunition and victuall, and all spare Armes, and to march forth precisely the next day by 12 of the clocke. (Mo.II. 19)

Armies were obliged to recruit continuously to make up losses, and after Breitenfeld Monro petitioned Gustavus Adolphus to let his regiment have all the 'Britaines and Irish' that were among the three thousand captives; he found only three, but soon afterwards at the surrender of the castle at Halle 'we did get 50 old Souldiers that tooke service under our Regiment' (Mo.II. 73). Such recruits were undependable. Hepburn enlisted nine companies of Italians, 'putting them in good Quarters till they were armed and clad againe. But their unthankfulnesse was such, that they stayed not, but disbandoned all, ... for having once got the warme ayre of the Summer, they

were all gone before Winter' (Mo.II. 92). Vitzthum also illustrates the risk presented by such unreliable recruits: 'When the captured soldiers saw that our *armada* was approaching they said straight away: that is my troop; the other one is from my regiment. If the commandant won't make an accord we will break his neck ourselves' (Vi.334).

Surrender terms were not always honourably observed, and Fritsch was reluctantly involved in a breach of accord. In 1636 he besieged a force of French and German troops in a strongly-defended church, and with his colonel's approval agreed terms for their surrender. A more senior officer intervened, decreeing that 'we will keep no accord with them; they must all die'. As the defenders emerged the French and Germans were divided and ordered to lay down their weapons; 'At this the French sergeant shouted: "That is against the accord", whereupon Major General Schneder ordered that the sergeant should be hanged' (F.153). The unfortunate Frenchman was duly executed and the German lieutenant was shot. Fritsch was allowed to conscript the German soldiers but his objection to the killing of the French was overruled.

Hagendorf's change of sides to the Swedes resulted from a broken accord. In 1633 the Imperialists surrendered Straubing and marched away, but they were followed and recaptured: 'I thought that they would let us withdraw, as it said in the accord, but after five miles they ordered: "Dismount, hand over whatever you've got..." We all had to enlist with them.' It is a comment on the general acceptance of changing sides to order that Hagendorf was immediately appointed to a position of responsibility 'as a sergeant in the Red Regiment' (Ha.54-5, 55).

Poyntz first joined the Spanish side when his money ran out in the Netherlands, but he was quickly captured and changed sides. He then served the Protestants, first under the Earl of Essex, later under Mansfeld and eventually in the Saxon army. Somewhere between Breitenfeld and Lützen he changed sides again, claiming to have been disillusioned by the elector of Saxony's treachery: 'When I found that hee was false to the Emperour, my heart was always from hym ... and would faine have got away from hym but I could not come of handsomely.' The more prosaic truth is that he was captured and held to ransom; unable to raise the money he wrote to the elector, asking him 'to pay my ransom or els I must starve in prison, or serve the Emperour (which is the custome on both sides in those German Warres) and I could never get any answeare from hym of my Letter' (Po.75, 75-6).

Hagendorf was a fortunate - or cautious - soldier, perhaps the secret of his survival for almost 25 years during which he only once mentions being wounded, at Magdeburg in 1631:

On the 20th of May we attacked in earnest and took it by storm. I entered the city quite unhurt in the assault, but inside, at the Neustadt Gate, I was shot twice through the body. ... Afterwards I was taken back to the camp,

bound up, because I had one shot through the belly from the front and the second through both shoulders, so that the ball lodged in my shirt. The field surgeon tied my hands behind my back so that he could use a chisel. That's how I was brought back to my hut, half dead. (Ha.47)

Poyntz was wounded at the siege of Breda, 'where it was my fortune to escape with life, but to be hurt on the right side with a pike', and at Lützen, where 'I hurt under my right side and in my thigh' (Po.46, 126). Fritsch was wounded in 1626 at the siege of Göttingen, 'shot in the knee and slashed across the hand'. In 1632 at Hildesheim he was hit three times by musket fire, 'so that the balls lodged in my head, in my leg, and above my eye, from which I ... suffered great pain'. This must have been less drastic than it sounds; the town surrendered three days later, and Fritsch was so quickly cured, 'through God's mercy', that he could leave ten days afterwards with his unit (E.115, 133, 133). In 1636 he was wounded again, hit in the eye with a stone and then shot in the arm during an attempt at storming Paderborn. Monro too was wounded three times, at Oldenburg in 1627, at the siege of Stralsund in 1628 and at Nuremberg in 1632.

The risks of battle are central to the soldier's profession, and Raymond describes coming to terms with them at his first taste of action: 'At my first coming before the towne my courage began somewhat to faile me, and, being younge and never being on such an employment, wrought the more upon me. I remember I had an aorange tauny feather in my capp, and at first I thought that every great gun that was discharge towards our quarters had been aymed at it.' He soon became bolder: 'But within few dayes I tooke my selfe to be a very gallant fellow, and had noe more dread of danger then if I had been in a fayre' (Ry.38). For Raymond the dangers of battle were easier to bear than the privations on campaign, which he sums up in a sharp view of a soldier's life as seen from the ranks:

And truly, by what I have seene and felt, I cannott but thinck that the life of a private or comon soldier is the most miserable in the world; and that not soe much because his life is always in danger – that is little or nothing – but for the terrible miseries he endures in hunger and nakednes, in hard marches and bad quarters, 30 stivers being his pay for 8 days, of which they could not possibly subsist, but that they helpe themselves by forraging, stealing, furnishing wood in the feild to the officers, straw, some are coblers, taylers & c. (Ry.43)

4 Civilian Perceptions

If for the soldier the war was in the last analysis his livelihood, the civilian was ultimately the paymaster. The princes who employed the armies had neither the resources in their own territories to pay and maintain them, nor the machinery of the modern state needed to marshal such means as they had. Instead all parties fell back upon the expedient of making the citizenry of occupied territories, whether nominally friend or enemy, pay the cost of the campaigning. The opportunity of booty was a thinly disguised way of making the soldier responsible for finding a large part of his own pay, just as units in the field were made responsible for finding a significant proportion of their own food by foraging. This solved only part of the problem for the military authorities. The troops had to be given at least some pay and rations, and cash was necessary for other military supplies. These needs were met by contributions, a euphemism for the extortion of resources in cash or kind from civilians to support the armies. In practice the military themselves organised and managed this system, rather than the princes, ministers or court bureaucracies supposedly controlling them. Delegation was necessary, and raising contributions became a responsibility of every officer with an independent command. Methods varied correspondingly, ranging from relatively systematic imposition of taxation on communities to kidnapping prominent citizens and holding them to ransom. The eyewitnesses report many approaches.

Civilian accounts of these experiences tend to be variations on a common theme. The south-west, spared the war until 1637, felt its full impact in the following two years as the Swedes advanced to this furthest corner of Germany, contested control with their Imperialist opponents and then hastily withdrew northwards to regroup after Nördlingen. In their accounts, particularly of this period, Mallinger, Zembroth and Bürster, reporting respectively from Freiburg, an important city, Allensbach, a walled village, and Salem, a large monastery in the open countryside, describe experiences typical of other places and times as recorded by eyewitness diarists.