

MOLNÁR GÁBOR¹**Britain's Defence Strategy and her Home Defence Forces
between the 17th and 19th Century****Brit védelmi stratégia és honvédelmi erők a 17–19. században****Abstract**

The main goal of this study is to introduce Great Britain's unique defence strategy and her empire's militia type home defence forces. In the following, this paper introduces the British Empire's strategic position, her international relationships and in this context her armed forces' proper military organization, which was different during this era in many aspects compared to other nations.

Keywords: strategy, recruitment, expeditionary capabilities, expeditionary forces, militia forces, volunteer forces, colonial forces, auxiliary troops

Absztrakt

Jelen tanulmány célja Nagy-Britannia egyedi védelmi stratégiájának és a birodalom milícia típusú honvédelmi erőinek ismertetése. Bemutatásra kerül a Brit Birodalom stratégiai helyzete, nemzetközi kapcsolatai, valamint ezzel összefüggésben sajátos hadszervezete is, amely ebben az időszakban több tekintetben különbözött a többi országtól.

Kulcsszavak: stratégia, hadkiegészítés, műveleti képességek, műveleti erők, milícia erők, önkéntes erők, gyarmati erők, segédcsapatok

PROLOGUE

At the beginning of the 17th century the Kingdom of England was barely considered to be a real great power. Although kings of England hold the title of king of Scotland and Ireland as well, kingdoms of the British Islands was not unified, and their connection based on loose personalunion only. During that century, there were many internal conflicts in the British Islands and because of that, the England-led personalunion – or under the Cromwell era the Commonwealth (1649–60), which was a short attempt to establish a united but republic form of government in the British Islands – the state's foreign affairs was of secondary in

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importance to internal security. During these years the latter defined the former. Although the Commonwealth and later the restored kingdom took part in many wars usually successfully, yet the rise of the British realm began truly in the 18th century. At the end of the Seven Years' War (1756–63) Great Britain obviously became the most powerful realm on Earth. During the mentioned conflict she managed to consolidate her internal affairs and successfully ended the colonial struggle with France for a while. The French supported Scottish and Irish independence movements ceased, while in the colonies Britain conquered many of former French territories. Although the American War of Independence (1775–83) was a failure for Britain, it didn't mean that she lost her international leading role. After the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792–1815) Britain's power further increased and it seemed, only in the last third of the 19th century to began appearing realms, that might have had enough power to challenge her. In the following, this paper analyzes Britain's strategic position, her home defence forces and their role in the British strategic thinking.

THE GEOSTRATEGIC POSITION OF BRITAIN

Britain has always been a maritime power. The realm's core territory, the British Islands did not have neighboring countries on land. The island's population between 1648 and 1815 was far lower than their rival's, except Prussia, and the British had the smallest field force. (Table 1.) The first line of defence was the Royal Navy, but its hegemony was not cleared up to the 18th century. On sea, Britain's main strategic goal was to secure the Low Countries from the French influence. The French Navy was a threat for Britain in itself, as the French coasts lied close to the British Islands and the French field forces were more numerous, so in case of a great invasion it could have been difficult to resist on land. Though before the end of the 1670's, for colonial and maritime trade reasons, the Dutch Republic was Britain's main rival, and the two had fought three wars against each other, the French expansion in the Lower Rhine region was a common threat for both countries. Thus, they made a mutual defense pact against France, and after 1689, when the Dutch stadtholder, William of Orange became the ruler of the Three Kingdoms of the British Islands, the two country developed an even closer alliance. The Lower Rhine region and the Low Countries were also important for the British because in 1714 the North German Hannover dynasty inherited the throne, and this region acted as a communication line between the British Islands and Hannover. This was even more important if we take into consideration that, Britain often hired mercenary and auxiliary forces from the Northern German states during her wars, so it needed to use these lands as a marching line. Though later, during the American War of Independence (1775–83) the two countries' relationship worsened, they remained allies afterwards, and when the French forces occupied the Low Countries in the late 18th century, the Dutch resistance was supported by Britain. Finally, the establishment of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815 as a neutral state, was also a highly

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supported plan by the British, because its neutral status guaranteed the security of this region.²

		1648–1789	1790–1815	1816–1866	1870's
Russia	a.	1–5,5 million	5,5–10,5 million	10,5–19 million	41 million
	b.	10–190 000 (1–3,4%)	190–250 000 (3,4–2,5%)	140–210 000 (1,3–1,1%)	401 000 (1%)
France	a.	20–28 million	28–40 million	29–38 million	36 million
	b.	72–175 000 (0,3–0,6%)	175–600 000 (0,6–1,5%)	240–350 000 (0,8–0,9%)	490 000 (1,3%)
Austria	a.	7–24,5 million	24,5–30 million	30–37,5 million	36 million
	b.	20–240 000 (0,2–1,2%)	200–250 000 (0,8%)	220–250 000 (0,6–0,7%)	280 000 (0,7%)
Russia	a.	14–30 million	30–48 million	48–77 million	82 million
	b.	130–195 000 (0,9–1,1%)	295–800 000 (1,1–1,6%)	800–600 000 (1,6–0,7%)	532 000 (0,6%)
Great Britain	a.	7,5–14 million	14–18 million	18–30 million	31 million
	b.	10–50 000 (0,1–0,4%)	50–130 000 (0,4–0,9%)	80–145 000 (0,4%)	184 000 (0,6%)
a.		population			
b.		army strength (compared to population %)			

Table 1: population and (peacetime) army strength of the Great Powers³

The other important regions in Europe for the British were the Iberian Peninsula and the Baltics. In the Peninsula Britain's main ally was Portugal. Their trade relationships had its origins in the Middle Ages, but from the 17th century they made military treaties as well. Britain had the right to use Portuguese ports, and after the occupation of Gibraltar in 1704, she could establish a permanent Mediterranean Fleet in the region. Later the British conquered some other islands in the region, for example Malta, which made possible for them, that they could to take part in the Mediterranean conflicts and to open new fronts against the French if necessary.⁴ In the Baltics, Britain did not need to occupy territories, as

² Turcsányi Károly – Bán Attila – Hegedűs Ernő – Molnár Gábor: Haderők és hadviselés az előlőttő fegyverek korában. HM Hadtörténelmi Intézet és Múzeum, Budapest, 2015, 26–29.

³ Molnár Gábor: A személyi kiegészítés fejlődéstörténete azállandó hadseregek korától a tömeghadse-regek kialakulásáig. III. rész. *Hadtudományi Szemle*, 2017/3. (78 – 106.) 100.

⁴ *Ibid.* 30–32.

the most powerful realms in this region were her allies, or at least were neutrals. The region's importance based on its resources, as most of the essential goods for shipbuilding were transported from there.⁵

Though the British defence policy primarily depended on the Royal Navy, and after the end of the 17th century Britain was the leading power on sea, to defend her homeland and her colonies, she needed to establish and maintain an adequate field force as well. Therefore, Britain was constrained to increase the number of her field forces disproportionately during wars, but as usual, it was not enough, so generally it became necessary to hire foreign mercenary and auxiliary forces. Besides, the easiest and probably the cheapest solution was to keep up militia-type forces throughout the Empire. Consequently, local militias existed in every part of the realm, in the British Islands and in the colonies too. These militias, though could not be sent to serve outside their localities without their agreement, still played a vital role in the defence of the realm, as they were very useful in garrisons and in law enforcement, which meant, that Army units during wartime could leave their dislocation, and in this way it became possible to increase the strength of the expeditionary forces.⁶

HOME DEFENCE FORCES AND THEIR ROLES

England's oldest military force was the English militia. Its origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages, to the ancient military institution of the Anglo-Saxon tribes, the so-called fyrd. In principle, under this system, every freeman could be mobilised to defend their local community against invaders. In reality, the fyrd was an ad hoc-type military institution, which means it did not exist in peacetime, and only formed in case of emergency, when attackers threatened the security of the country or the local community. In later centuries this system was improved by the English kings. During the reign of Elisabeth I (1588–1603) the largest cities already had quasi semi-professional militia units. These units were called to be *trained bands* as they already had administrative units, commanders and their members had to assemble at particular times to muster and drill. The military recruitment was based on conscription, although volunteers also served in these units. The role of militias did not change, and their main task remained to defend their own settlements and territories, so they worked as a territorial defence force, since sending militia units abroad was unstatutable.⁷

Roughly similar militia systems existed in the colonies, but these were directly under the command of the local colonial government not the Crown. Therefore their inner organizati-

⁵ Ibid. 35–37.

⁶ Black, Jeremy: *European Warfare 1660–1815*. University of Durham, London, 1994, 106 – 113.

⁷ Clode, Charles M.: *The Military Forces of the Crown; Their Administration and Government*. London, 1869, Vol. I. 31–32.; Fortescue, John: *A History of the British Army*. Vol. I–XII. Macmillan and Co., London, 1899–1930, Vol. I. 5–6., 12., 16.; Manning, Roger B.: *An Apprenticeship in Arms. The Origins of the British Army, 1585–1702*. Oxford University Press, 49., 55., 127–128., 131–132.

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on was a bit different as well as their recruitment. In the colonies there were many native and non-freemen (originally slaves or servants), whom could not serve in militia units, but sometimes were obliged to do forced military labor, support service or used as scouts. In general, only free white European colonists served in militia units, and as it was in England, service could either be compulsory or voluntary. The colonial militias had the same function as the English militia.⁸

During the English Civil War (1642–51) militia units were used primary as recruitment pool for the newly established first English professional army, the so-called New Model Army. As its leader, Oliver Cromwell backed by his army, later established a dictatorial government, after the Restoration English politicians thought that, a standing army threatened the freedom of people and parliamentarism, so they were opposed to maintain it and they preferred the militia instead. At the same time, England already had many colonies overseas, and if she wanted to retain her international status, maintaining of a permanent army was inevitable because the Royal Navy alone wouldn't have been adequate for this. Finally, the House of Commons recognized this, and they authorized to establish a small permanent army, thanks to William of Orange's (1689–1702) authority.⁹

During the second half of the 17th century, though the militia system functioned and there were some reforms within its organization, after the turn of the century for almost six decades it wasn't used as military force, so it existed mostly on paper. In these times the Royal Navy and the Royal Army seemed to be sufficient to defend the realm, although Britain was forced to hire tens of thousands of foreign mercenary troops and auxiliary units into her service in every conflicts.¹⁰ The only militias which actually took part in military operations in these times were the colonial militias, as the British armed forces did not have enough men to deal with every foe in Europe and in the Colonies at the same time.

Changes occurred during the Seven Years' War (1756–63) when the men supply problems was getting critical for the British. More and more British and foreign mercenary soldiers were needed in the war on foreign soil, but without them, it was impossible to keep up the British Islands' internal security and home defence system. Hence, in 1757, the Parliament decided to mobilize the English militia in order that it would take over some duties from the Royal Army. According to contemporary sources that meant patrol, guard and garrison duties. The bills and laws from this time established a new regular militia system. The rank and file of the units were conscripted by ballot, and in principle every freeman was liable to serve, except the nobles, officials, and those who had a special profession or more than a certain number of legitimate children. Initially only protestants were

⁸ Hummel, Jeffrey Rogers: *The American Militia and the Origin of Conscription: A Reassessment. Journal of Libertarian Studies*, 2001/4. (29–77.) 32–34.; Sheppard, Ruth (ed.): *Empires Collide. The French and Indian War 1754–63*. Osprey Publishing, 2007, 27.; Stewart, Richard W. (ed.): *American Military History. Vol. I. The United States Army and the Forging of a Nation, 1775–1917*. Washington, D. C., 2005, 30–32.

⁹ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 36–37.; Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. I. 257., 385.; Manning: *ibid.* 266–268., 288–289.

¹⁰ Black: *ibid.* 106–109.

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conscripted but later this rule was abolished. Despite the conscription, the militia units did not recruit under the idea of the universal military obligation, as balloted men had the opportunity to pay a fee or provide a person as a substitute. The militia units' commanders were local nobles appointed by the Crown. The militia force consisted exclusively of infantry units.¹¹

This reform came into force just in England and Wales at first, whereas in Scotland and Ireland the Parliament found it too dangerous to arm the populace and create a conscripted militia force. At the same time, both of these countries' had other kinds of territorial defence forces. For example in Scotland, from the Seven Years' War the Crown allowed Scottish gentlemen to recruit volunteers at their own expense and raise so-called Fencible units in war time. These had the same tasks as the English militia, but they did not have a peacetime organization, so these units existed only in time of wars, and after that, their rank and file were discharged.¹² In Ireland there were neither an English type militia nor Fencibles, but only small local watchmen and constable units in the cities and some Protestant Militias which were rather used as a police force. During wars and especially during the American War of Independence (1775–83) when it was thought, there would be a French invasion, many irregular Volunteer units were raised by local landholders not just to keep up the order in Ireland but also to defend it against the French.¹³

During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars Britain's militia system improved a lot. The government extended it to Ireland (1793) and Scotland (1797) as well, and in the early stages of the war many Fencible units were raised again. The militia units became more mobile, as many of them were sent to other parts of the British Isles, so they did not only serve in their recruitment districts. At the same time, the militia became one of the Army's main reserve force. The Government authorized, that specified portion of militiamen to volunteer from their own militia unit to a particular army unit to serve, and also let entire militia units to join while keeping their own structure within the Army.¹⁴ As the militia was used as a quasi reserve force during this war, besides their traditional role, it became necessary to establish a new truly territorial defence force. Thus, the Government allowed its citizens to raise volunteer units – these were the Volunteers which consisted of infantry and artillery and the Yeomanry consisted of cavalry units – similarly to the French National Guard, and a new militia force was also established in 1808. This latter was the Local Militia, as the above mentioned militia then was called to be Regular Militia thanks to that, it was mobilized for years and its Army reserve role. The Local Militia was truly local, as its mem-

¹¹ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 39–41.; Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. II. 301–302.

¹² Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. III. 294.; Scobie, I. H. MacKay: *An Old Highland Fencible Corps. 1794–1802.* William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1914, 2–3.

¹³ Connolly, S. J.: *Divided Kingdom. Ireland 1630–1800.* Oxford University Press, 403–404.; Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. III. 294–295., 300–301.

¹⁴ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 284–285., 296–297.; Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. IV. 209–201., 640–642., 888–889.; Linch, Kevin: *Britain and Wellington's Army. Recruitment, Society and Tradition, 1807–15.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 57.; Scobie: *ibid.* 1–7.

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bers were trained in their home county, and had to leave it to serve other parts of the empire in times of danger, and were only sent abroad in very exceptional case. Their recruitment based on voluntary enlistment, but if there were not enough volunteer, conscription by ballot was legal as well. This method also became common in the Regular Militia by this time.¹⁵

After 1815, a relatively long peace began in Europe, so the British Government demobilized most of these forces, even the Regular Militia. The only home defence units which continued their service were the Yeomanry, but even they were rather used as police and not as a military force. In the 1850's, Regular Militia and Volunteer forces were „born again” and began their amalgamation with the Army unit sin the early 70's.

<i>country</i>	<i>army (peacetime)</i>	<i>army reserve</i>	<i>territorial reserve forces</i>	<i>total</i>
Germany	401 700 (31,2%)	528 900 (41,2%)	353 000 (27,5%)	1 283 600 (100%)
France	490 300 (28,3%)	659 700 (38,1%)	580 000 (33,5%)	1 730 000 (100%)
Austria	280 300 (27,6%)	473 700 (46,7%)	259 800 (25,6%)	1 013 800 (100%)
Russia	531 500 (29,8%)	734 200 (41,3%)	512 000 (28,8%)	1 777 700 (100%)
Great Britain	184 000 (31,8%)	110 000 (19%)	283 000 (49%)	577 000 (100%)

Table 2: The five great power and their reserve forces during the 1870's¹⁶

Territorial military districts were formed and every Army infantry brigade within these had two Army, two Militia and one or two Volunteer battalions. These so-called linked battalions were trained and drilled together, which further increased the fighting skills of these territorial defence forces. The Militia's primary function remained to serve as a garrison force in Britain and in the Mediterranean, but there was a special Militia Reserve which in case of emergency was liable to serve anywhere with the Armies. The militiamen were called out to drill and train from three to eight weeks annually. The Volunteers's tasks were roughly the same but they had to serve only within the borders of the Kingdom and their drill time per

¹⁵ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 311–319., 323–332.

¹⁶ Upton, Emory: *The Armies Europe & Asia: embracing official reports on the armies of Japan, China, India, Persia, Italy, Russia, Austria, Germany, France, and England. 1878, 146–148., 161–162., 191–192., 235., 250–255.*

year was less. The Yeomanry cavalry was the same, but they functioned further as a military police force.¹⁷

EMPLOYMENT OF HOME DEFENCE FORCES IN MILITARY OPERATIONS

During the 17th century there were many internal conflicts in the British Islands. Naturally, militia forces were also involved in these and on every side we can find militia units which supported one or other side. As the combatants this time usually tried to establish regular forces on their own side, thus they used militia units primarily as auxiliary forces or as a recruitment pool for their regular forces. First of all, auxiliary service for a militia unit meant supporting and securing supply lines and march routes of the armies, raiding and attacking the enemy's rear and supply lines, scouting, fighting irregulars, and serving as garrison force. From the 1630's to the end of the century there were several armed conflicts when militia forces played crucial role in military operations. For example during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (1639–51) England, Ireland and Scotland used militia based armed forces against each other and only England had enough money to establish a real regular army later, while the other two fought their wars with their own militia. From these times it would be very difficult to mention a campaign in which militiamen did not take part as Ireland's and Scotland's armed forces consisted of almost exclusively militiamen, while the English regular New Model Army also often used militia units as auxiliary force, or recruited soldiers from their rank and file.¹⁸

Though after the Restoration (1660) the militia system in every Kingdoms of the British Islands declined, they still played very important role during the Glorious Revolution (1688–89) when William of Orange, the Dutch stadtholder conquered the British Islands and after that in his Irish Wars (1688–91). In Protestant England and Scotland there was not great resistance, but in Catholic Ireland a very bloody fight began. On the Jacobite Catholic side, Irish irregulars, the so-called rapparees caused many problems for William's forces. They constantly attacked their rear, their supply lines, decimated their forces and did important reconnaissance duties. Probably the best-known example is the siege of Limerick (1690), when the famous rapparee leader, „Galloping” Hogan led the Irish Jacobite forces' military leader, Patrick Sarsfield and his troops against a Williamite siege train. After the successful skirmish the attackers were forced to begin the siege only with field artillery and finally, after serious casualties, they had to lift the siege. It is important to note here, that Williams's forces was one of the best in Europe, as the Dutch soldiers were famous for their courage and their skills, yet they could not fight against rapparees as successful as the local

¹⁷ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 282–283., 305–311.; Raugh, Harold E.: *The Victorians at War, 1815–1914. An Encyclopedia of British Military History.* ABC-CLIO, 2004, 237., 275–276., 297–298., 333.

¹⁸ Carpenter, Stanley D. M.: *Military Leadership in the British Civil Wars, 1642–1651.* Frank Cass, 32., 36–42.; Wheeler, James Scott: *The Irish and British Wars, 163 –1654: Triumph, Tragedy and Failure.* Routledge, 2002, 29., 57., 96.

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Protestant militias, that supporting William did. The latter knew the land, the foe, and their way of warfare and tactics much better.¹⁹

During the years of the Glorious Revolution and the above-mentioned militia reform in 1757, the lack of adequate militia force caused many strategic problems for the British, especially during the Jacobite Risings (1715, 1719, 1745). Because there were loyal local militia forces that the Government could mobilize against the enemies, they were forced to use regular units to deal with them, but as the Royal Army's number was very low, these deployments had their cost. Important garrisons had to be left without sufficient forces, but even that was not enough, so it became necessary to call local people to arms, which was just an ad hoc measure. When number of the regulars was insufficient during the Seven years' War, the Government finally decided to establish a permanent militia system. This proved to be a successful plan, as the British, thanks to their new militia system, managed to increase the strength of their expeditionary forces without the problem, that it would weaken the home defence capabilities.²⁰ Though before the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792–1815) the militia's top priority was to substitute the Regulars in garrisons and to keep up peace within the realm, yet they saw action against foreign enemies too. During the American War of Independence (1775–83) the French two times attempted to invade the island of Jersey on the English channel. Both times the local Jersey Militia played important role in the defence. During the first invasion that occurred in 1779, the Jersey Militia fought as a coastal guard beside the regulars, while during the second in 1781, they took part in a close quarter combat against the French, who had earlier successfully embarked on the island and occupied the market square of the island's capital.²¹

The age of French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792–1815) was a very important period in the history of home defence forces. During this conflict the Irish and Scottish Militia were established, the Volunteer forces and the Yeomanry, and the Militia became the most important reserve force of Britain. According to contemporary statues, militiamen could volunteer to Army units as individuals, but whole militia units or sub-units also served abroad with the Army, if members of a militia unit above a particular proportion agreed to be sent on foreign soil. As individuals, whereas militiamen had the option to choose in which Army unit they wanted to serve, they usually volunteered to light infantry regiments. Especially the 95th regiment was very popular, which recruited so many militia volunteers, that it became necessary to create an additional battalion for the regiment.²² It is not surprising, because in militia units the training was not on the same level as in the Army. Army soldiers had to fight in higher formations with other combat arms, while militia units were drilled on company or on battalion level, so their members were more suitable to fight in loose tactical formations as the light infantry did. On the other hand, as they were

¹⁹ Conolly: *ibid.* 179–191.; Manning: *ibid.* 382–399.

²⁰ Clode: *ibid.* Vol I. 38–43.; Roberts, John L.: *The Jacobite Wars: Scotland and the Military Campaigns of 1715 and 1745.* Polygon, 2002, 7., 25., 106–109.

²¹ *London Gazette*, 4 May 1779. 2–3.; *London Gazette*, 13 Jan. 1781, 1.

²² Linch: *ibid.* 71–72., 97.

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deployed generally in riot control and in *petite guerre*, therefore they had some experience in that way of warfare. According to the famous British military historian, John W. Fortescue, the history of the regular British light infantry actually began within the rank and file of the North Riding Militia of York in 1795.²³ Strictly speaking, during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars British militiamen could be found everywhere within the World as so many of them volunteered to foreign service. TABLE

Of course, home defence forces' main task remained the territorial defence of the British Islands. They played active role in the Battle of Fishguard (1797) when a small French expeditionary force landed on Welsh territory, and in the next year in the suppression of the Irish Rebellion. During the latter conflict not just local Irish militias and Yeomanry took part in actions, but many English as well, as the Parliament had authorized, that 10 000 militiamen from the English Militia could volunteer to serve in Ireland against the rebels.²⁴

After the peace home defence forces were demobilized, except the Yeomanry cavalry which was kept up as a riot force or as a military police in peacetime. During and after the Crimean War (1853–56) the British Government mobilized the Militia and Volunteer forces again, and from this time they remained, though renamed later, integral part of the armed forces. The practice, that home defence forces could volunteer to serve abroad continued. Approximately 30 000 militiamen volunteered to serve in the Crimea, while at the end of the century many Volunteers and Yeomanry did the same and chose to fight in South Africa in the Boer Wars.²⁵ Similarly the practice of recruit men for light infantry regiments from the Militia and the Volunteer units continued. In the 1880's every Army infantry regiment already had a particular military district, from where they recruited men. An infantry brigade belonged to each district, which composed of Army and Militia battalions and local Volunteer units. Only the true light infantry Rifle Regiments and the elite Foot Guards did not have own recruiting district, but the former usually recruited volunteers from other districts' Militia and Volunteer units.

EPILOGUE

Early in the 20th century the British Militia renamed as Special Reserve, while Volunteers and Yeomanry as Territorial Force. Though after the Great War they were disbanded, but shortly thereafter reconstituted as a Territorial Army and Militia. In reality, just their name changed, but their function did not. Today the Army Reserve of the United Kingdom proudly claims these home defence forces to its predecessor. Interestingly, it seems that, the 17–19th century British strategic thinking and their military system is becoming a mainstream these days. This is due to the fact that, the security challenges of nowadays need special

²³ Fortescue: *ibid.* Vol. IV. 917.

²⁴ Clode: *ibid.* Vol. I. 284., <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofWales/The-Last-Invasion-of-Britain/>

²⁵ Norfolk, R. W. S.: *Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteer Forces of the East Riding 1689–1908.* East Yorkshire Local History Society, 1965, 39–40.

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solutions. The danger of total wars is minimal, and for NATO members and great military powers the most important factor is to have adequate expeditionary forces in order to they can deal with armed conflicts worldwide. For this, it is necessary to keep up a small, but technically modern and mobil force with highly skilled men, which is suitable to operate on foreign soil. Besides, it is also important to establish and maintain a proper reserve force, which can be used as a territorial defence force. It is important in many aspects. First, territorial reserve units can support the expeditionary forces as auxiliary troops, since their limited yearly service time do not make possible that, they take part actively in military operations abroad. Second, tendencies show us, it is more and more important to use militia type territorial defence forces in law enforcement and in homeland security because of the threat of terrorism. As a result, modern western states' geostrategic position is getting to be similar to the 17–19th century British, since they have to fight their armed conflicts as if they were also an „island country”.

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