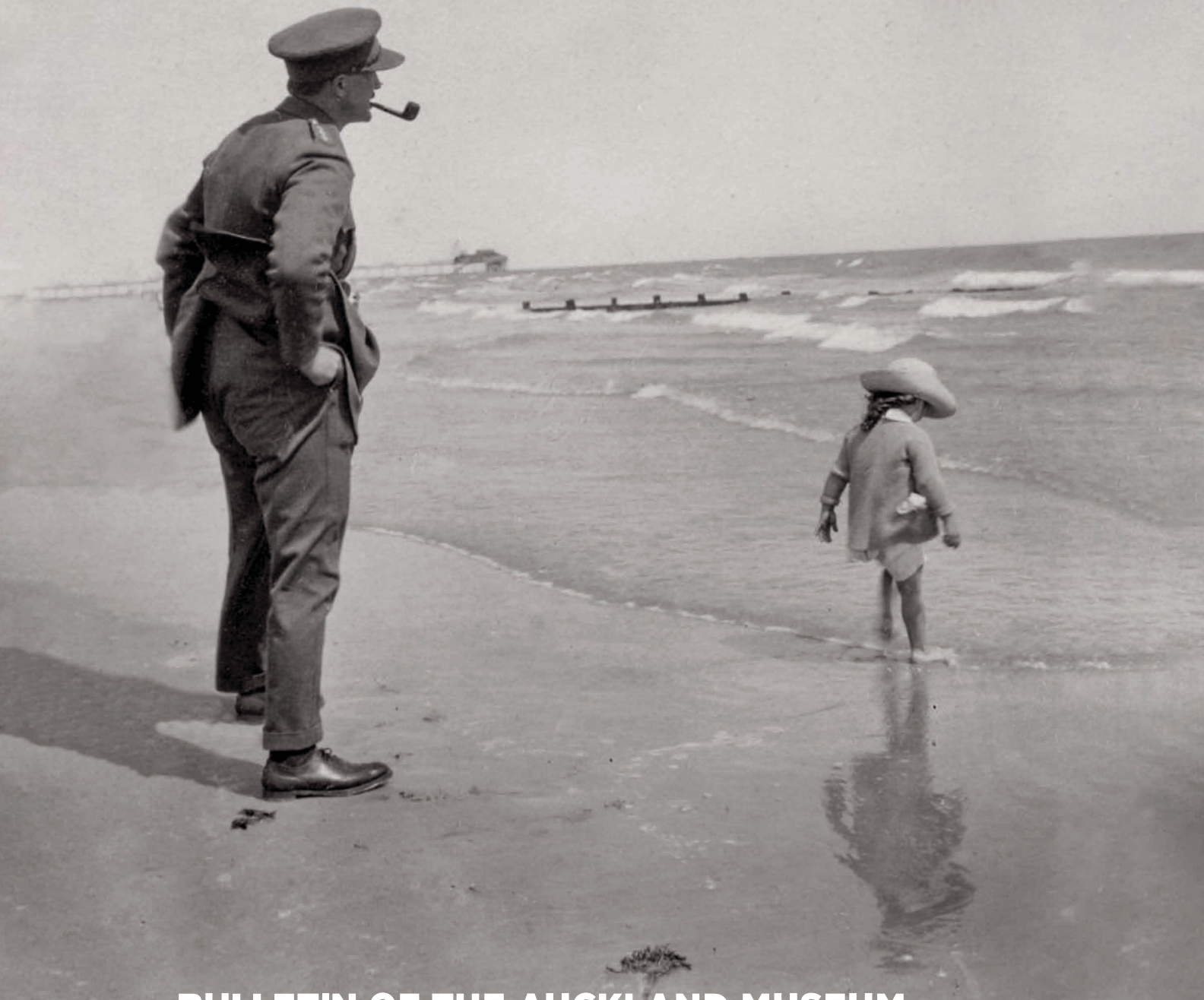
THE ENDURING IMPACT OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A collection of perspectives

Edited by
Gail Romano and Kingsley Baird



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Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum

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The *Bulletin* contains the results of original research dealing with material in the collections of Auckland Museum, and research carried out by Museum staff members and research associates in their particular subjects. All papers are refereed. The *Bulletin* is distributed, largely by exchange, to libraries at about 250 academic institutions throughout the world. Proposals for exchange agreements should be addressed to the Auckland Museum Library Manager.

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Cover image: Captain W. J. (Bill) Knox M.C. (13th Field Artillery, A.I.F.) on his last leave with his daughter, Diana, on Bognor Regis beach, England, June 1917. Courtesy Kate Baillieu.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum

Volume 21 | 2020

Table of Contents

Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum

Foreword

Auckland Museum has long been in the business of initiating, supporting and disseminating original research on a range of contemporary and historical topics. Facilitating the deep interrogation of an issue from multiple perspectives and providing a platform for discussion are core functions for the museum to deliver. It is our hope that greater understanding and inspiration will come from well-informed debate and illuminating little-known facts. The museum's collections serve as evidence for this research activity and, along with knowledge and expertise that surrounds them, they are an increasingly global resource.

The collection of articles in *The Enduring Impact of the First World War: A Collection of Perspectives* is a rich gathering of insights reflecting on a pivotal year in world history a century later and were all drawn from *The Myriad Faces of War* symposium held in 2017. This successful international symposium was conceived and led by the War, History, Heritage, Art and Memory Research Network (WHAM), in partnership with Massey University, Auckland War Memorial Museum, The University of Auckland and Manatū Taonga, Ministry for Culture and Heritage. The examination of conflict and its impact, the subject of the symposium and this Bulletin, is central to the Museum's identity as a war memorial and is facilitated through its war galleries, online Cenotaph database of New Zealanders who have served historically, and through its programming.

David Reeves

Director, Collections & Research
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira
22 February 2020

Acknowledgements

The Enduring Impact of the First World War: A Collection of Perspectives comprises eighteen peer-reviewed articles developed from selected papers presented in the international symposium, The Myriad Faces of War: 1917 and its Legacy, held at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in 2017.

The editors thank Maartje Abbenhuis, Neill Atkinson, Louise Furey, Glyn Harper, Rebecca Johns, Ian Proctor, David Reeves, and Euan Robertson for their contributions to the collection and the peer review or editing processes.

Introduction

Gail Romano Auckland War Memorial Museum
Kingsley Baird Massey University

'The European nations had dug themselves into a war trap', wrote David Stevenson, 'and on one level the story of 1917 is of their efforts to escape it'.[1] Over a century after the war's end, it is not only the nations of Europe who are coming to terms with the impact of events of 1917. That year the conflict's global reach expanded as the United States, in no small part due to Germany's campaign of 'unrestricted' submarine warfare, and others—including China and Brazil—joined the Allied side. On the battlefield combatants experienced victory and loss from Passchendaele to Cambrai on the Western Front, at Caporetto on the Austro-Italian Front, and Beersheba and Ramadi in the Middle East.

Post-war political and social changes were signalled with the imminent collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, and Russia—in the midst of revolution—withdrew from the war. The Balfour Declaration pledged Britain's support for a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine; India was offered 'responsible government' by Britain; suffragettes in Washington were arrested as they picketed the White House; and conscientious objectors from New Zealand were shipped to the Western Front in an attempt to force them to join the war effort. The United States and Japan signed the Lansing-Ishii Agreement, which acknowledged that the latter had 'special interests' in China. Within the British Empire, the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission was established to build cemeteries and memorials for the commemoration of the war dead, and an imperial war museum was founded to record both military and civilian experiences and to honour the sacrifices of war. In cultural life, Marcel Duchamp redefined art with the *Fountain* urinal; De Stijl was formed in the Netherlands; the art and literature review *Dada* was published in Zurich; and soldier poet, Wilfred Owen wrote *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. In medicine, Queen's Hospital (later to become Queen Mary's Hospital) opened, and there Harold Gillies and his colleagues developed many techniques of plastic surgery, operating mostly on soldiers with facial injuries.

The narrative of 1917 and its legacy is characterised by a multitude of perspectives, practices, cultures, histories, locations, and expressions. It is the richness and diversity associated with this year that inspired a significant international symposium in 2017 during the centenary of the First World War, *The Myriad Faces of War: 1917 and its Legacy*.[2] While 1917 has been the subject of a number of events, publications, and even a recent feature film directed by Sam Mendes and simply titled *1917*, their focus has tended to be on major events directly related to the First World War. The focus of the symposium, on the other hand, was three-fold. Firstly, to concentrate on what happened in that year irrespective of whether or not it was directly related to the war. Secondly, to explore not only the events of 1917 but also their legacies, some of which continue to be felt today in political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and technological spheres. Thirdly, to draw together many of these diverse facets into a shared conceptual space to gain something of a holistic impression of the year 1917. In this way, *The Myriad Faces of War: 1917 and its Legacy* symposium examined this single year, 1917, and expanded outwards to reflect on the significant impact of the Great War and associated events, and the way in which particular actions contributed to a reordering of global structures that have reverberated through the intervening century to the present.

Ensuing from the symposium was a publication, *The Myriad Legacies of 1917: A Year of War and Revolution* in which thirteen scholars reflected on the myriad legacies of the year 1917.[3] As one book could not fully represent the richness and diversity of the research presented at the *Myriad Faces* symposium, it was always the intention of the organisers to seek an opportunity to publish more material presented at the event. This *Bulletin of the Auckland Museum* fulfils that objective. The peer-reviewed publication, comprising articles

1 David Stevenson, *1917: War, Peace, & Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 9.

2 *The Myriad Faces of War: 1917 and its Legacy* was held at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington between 25-28 April 2017. The organisers of the event were WHAM (War History Heritage Art and Memory) Research Network, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Massey University, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and The University of Auckland.

3 Maartje Abbenhuis, Neill Atkinson, Kingsley Baird, and Gail Romano eds., *The Myriad Legacies of 1917: A Year of War and Revolution*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 1–4
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/intro
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/1

developed from symposium papers and emphasising previously unpublished research, continues two of the major themes established by both the symposium and *Myriad Legacies* publication: a diversity of perspectives and the legacy of events of 1917.

The diversity of the articles' topics underlines how the war—and, in particular, the year 1917—had a global impact that transcended the First World War's geographic reach. The range includes visual art, forms of commemoration and national identity, education, conscription, historiography, trade, diplomacy, social unrest and ethnic division, law, propaganda, visual and material culture, museum collections and contrasting manifestations of masculinity. The authors represent a diversity of backgrounds and reflect perspectives from Australia, Argentina, Germany, New Zealand, UK, and US.

Paul Gough and Marcus Moore explore contrasting aspects of creative practice. Gough's article is concerned with how artists of the First World War period attempted to 're-remember' the conflict. The sensitivity of portraying the victims of war is exemplified by the British government's 1917 edict banning depictions of dead British and Allied troops in officially sponsored war art. Gough discusses how artists have negotiated—and continue to do so—this challenge from the First World War to the present, focusing especially on Stanley Spencer's oil painting, *The Resurrection of Soldiers* (1928–29). For Moore, war is not the explicit topic of the artworks featured in his article. Instead he considers how the conflict forced the 'exile' of two artists; one from his native country (in the case of Frenchman, Marcel Duchamp) and the other from his country of adoption (in the case of American painter, Marsden Hartley). Moore uses the apparently accidental juxtaposition of Duchamp's sculpture, *Fountain* (1917), and Hartley's painting *The Warriors* (1913) in Alfred Stieglitz's 1917 photo as the starting point to compare the two artist's wartime trajectories and commonality of experience as exiles.

Commemoration, national identity, and the mythology of war are themes explored by a number of authors. Kingsley Baird discusses the return of New Zealand's unknown warrior from a First World War military cemetery in France in 2004 against a backdrop of the establishment of the Imperial War Graves Commission in 1917 to care for the graves of the British Empire's fallen. Baird argues that the unknown warrior continues to be enlisted in New Zealand's national identity narrative of overseas wars and sacrifice. The unknown warrior's tomb is the focus of the beginning of Steve Watters's analysis of the development of his Ministry for Culture and Heritage education programme at New Zealand's National War Memorial. The aim of the programme for school students is to achieve a balance of empathy and emotion, along with critical thinking in the practice of commemoration.

While war memorials are obvious subjects for the study of national identity and patriotism, Paul D. Turner's topic focuses on the role of singing and the official introduction of songs composed by New Zealanders into public schools during the war. Unlike some of their stone or bronze counterparts, Turner argues these patriotic musical forms have not successfully transcended their immediate wartime use. Myths of the war, particularly those emanating from the Western Front, persist despite evidence to the contrary as Alexander Mayhew's article testifies. Mayhew describes how themes of futility, mud, and incompetent command still have currency in popular memory despite not being representative of a soldier's experience. Revisiting who, what, and how we remember have been constant themes of investigation during the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War. The old certainties and the perpetuation of myths as revealed by Mayhew, the patriotic songs discussed by Paul Turner, and the lack of criticality behind glib sentiments such as 'they died for us' which Steve Watters's education programme aims to complicate, are no longer fit for purpose.

Emanating from the 100 Stories project, Bruce Scates and Rebecca Wheatley explore the tragic outcomes of war for three Australian soldiers and their families, and how, even today, some stories are considered too raw for public consumption to be included in officially sanctioned commemorative projects. Scates and Wheatley contribute to this volume a 'counter narrative' to Australia's dominant First World War commemoration story. In contrast, the preferred narratives are those of war heroes whose status is recognised officially by the bestowal of medals of bravery. Unlike the tragic stories recalled by Scates and Wheatley, Lieutenant Albert Jacka's heroic profile, described in Bryce Abraham's article, is readily made available for public consumption, thus contributing to propaganda that stokes recruitment and supports the nation's wider war effort. Drawing parallels between military and sporting prowess, Abraham joins a line between official promotion of 'martial heroism and military celebrity' during the First World War and the use of contemporary decorated soldiers—healthy and sporting Anzac heroes—for the same ends. John Crawford also relates a success story of an individual soldier, New Zealander Herbert Hart. With particular emphasis on 1917, Crawford tracks Hart's upward trajectory: he had a 'good war during a bad year'. Again, unlike the tragic protagonists in Scates and Wheatley's article, Hart's war experience—on the surface at least—sets him up for a successful post-war life.

Two articles focus on visual and material objects in museum collections. The acquisition and display of these objects reveal wider institutional imperatives, including what stories collections are intended to tell. Kirsty Ross's discussion of the correspondence related to the acquisition and exhibition of photographs of New Zealand's Great War medal recipients at the then Dominion Museum[4] reveals the different and overlapping meanings of these photographs in both private and public settings. While Ross continues a

4 The Dominion Museum is now Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

narrative of heroism and masculinity consistent with other articles, Joseph McBrinn reveals how objects can carry multiple and even contradictory meanings. Focusing on a singular object (a casket in the collection of Te Papa) made by a former combatant under the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry (established to provide employment for disabled soldiers), McBrinn reveals how notions of masculinity, disability, and craft were transformed by the First World War.

An international perspective is presented by Thomas Munro in his article concerning the form of a new world order that would determine the structure of post-war international relations. While the previous Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 had influenced the US's role in global affairs, by 1917 it was clear that President Woodrow Wilson had a different vision for the post-war world. María Inés Tato's article also relates to the impact of US intervention in the war, in this case in Latin America. Tato examines the principle of Pan-Americanism and US influence in determining the foreign policies of Latin American states and the decision of most to align themselves with their influential North American neighbour against Germany. However, in Latin American intellectual circles opinions were divided between those who supported American leadership and those who rejected a perceived imperialist intervention by the US. While Madelyn Shaw and Trish FitzSimons's article deals with global matters, their focus is on trade and how the short supply of a vital resource, wool, sought after for military uniforms and blankets, promoted innovation in synthetic fibre technology.

Local conditions in Germany, New Zealand, and United States are examined by three articles. Michael Epkenhans reveals how Germany introduced desperate tactics such as unrestricted submarine warfare as a strategy to force Britain's defeat before the inevitable entry of the US into the war. While victory over Romania and the Russian Revolution appeared to advance Germany's war aims, at home deprivation and shortages were taking a toll on the German population. Internal political tensions, social divisions, and pre-existing contrasting attitudes to the war clearly revealed the nation's seemingly unified front in support of the war was an illusion. In contrast to Epkenhans's national picture, the focus of Laura A. Macaluso's article considering divisions in society is decidedly local. In 1917, while Americans were preparing to enter the war on the side of the Allies, in New Haven, Connecticut, the fraught relationship between the increasingly ethnic town and elitist gown (the Ivy League Yale University) was evident. Macaluso examines the relationship between town and gown in 1917, and how the evocation of the response to an earlier conflict, 'The Spirit of 1776', played a role in fostering a sense of identity in New Haven.

David Littlewood's and Darise Bennington's articles examine matters of conscription and law and order in New Zealand during the war. Severe punishments—including death—were meted out to New Zealand servicemen overseas who did not comply with military discipline and regulations. At home and abroad, the military's treatment of conscientious objectors tarnished the country's First World War record. However, according to Littlewood, the determinations of military service boards, established to determine appeals for exemption from conscription, were more nuanced and measured than their reputation suggests. For the New Zealand government the maintenance of law and order was a primary concern during the war. Bennington relates how war regulations—particularly those that dealt with sedition and 'intoxicating liquor'—were introduced to attend to the particular challenges arising during a time of war as well as the lasting impact of some in contemporary New Zealand society.

Gail Romano is Associate Curator, History at Tamaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum where she works at developing, documenting, and researching the social and war history collections. Exhibition work includes the military medal visible storage section in the Pou Maumahara Memorial Discovery Centre and *Entangled Islands: Samoa, New Zealand and the First World War*. Gail is a board member of the WHAM (War History Heritage Art and Memory) Research Network. She co-edited the collection *The Myriad Legacies of 1917: A Year of War and Revolution* (Palgrave, 2018), following an interdisciplinary international symposium held in Wellington in 2017. She has worked previously at Waikato Museum following an earlier career in IT and business management, and education. gromano@aucklandmuseum.com

Kingsley Baird is a visual artist whose work represents a longstanding and continuous engagement with memory and remembrance, and loss and reconciliation through making artefacts and writing. Major examples of his work in this field are the New Zealand Memorial in Canberra (2001, with Studio of Pacific Architecture), the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (2004, Wellington, New Zealand); the international Nagasaki Peace Park sculpture, *Te Korowai Rangimarie The Cloak of Peace* (2006); *Tomb* (2013) at France's Historial de la Grande Guerre; and *Stela* (2014) at the Militärhistorisches Museum der Bundeswehr in Germany. Memorial investigation continues in current practice with *Odyssey*, a sculpture collection concerned with composing historical and contemporary visual narratives – principally related to conflict – within the three-dimensional 'settings' of cast-bronze First and Second World War helmets. Kingsley Baird is the board chair of WHAM (War History Heritage Art and Memory) Research Network; and is the General Editor of Memory Connection journal. He is a Professor of Fine Arts in the College of Creative Arts at Massey University. www.kingsleybaird.com | k.w.baird@massey.ac.nz

‘That Huge, Haunted Solitude’: 1917–1927 A Spectral Decade

Paul Gough Arts University Bournemouth

Abstract

> The scene that followed was the most remarkable that I have ever witnessed. At one moment there was an intense and nerve shattering struggle with death screaming through the air. Then, as if with the wave of a magic wand, all was changed; all over ‘No Man’s Land’ troops came out of the trenches, or rose from the ground where they had been lying.[1]

In 1917 the British government took the unprecedented decision to ban the depiction of the corpses of British and Allied troops in officially sponsored war art. A decade later, in 1927, Australian painter Will Longstaff exhibited *Menin Gate at Midnight* which shows a host of phantom soldiers emerging from the soil of the Flanders battlegrounds and marching towards Herbert Baker’s immense memorial arch. Longstaff could have seen the work of British artist and war veteran Stanley Spencer. His vast panorama of post-battle exhumation, *The Resurrection of the Soldiers*, begun also in 1927, was painted as vast tracts of despoiled land in France and Belgium were being recovered, repaired, and planted with thousands of gravestones and military cemeteries. As salvage parties recovered thousands of corpses, concentrating them into designated burial places, Spencer painted his powerful image of recovery and reconciliation. This article will locate this period of ‘re-membering’ in the context of such artists as Will Dyson, Otto Dix, French film-maker Abel Gance, and more recent depictions of conflict by the photographer Jeff Wall. However, unlike the ghastly ‘undead’ depicted in Gance’s 1919 film or Wall’s ambushed platoon in Afghanistan, Spencer’s resurrected boys are pure, whole, and apparently unsullied by warfare.

Keywords

Abel Gance; commemoration; remembrance; resurrection; Stanley Spencer; war art; Will Dyson; Will Longstaff

In 1917 the British government banned the depiction of the corpses of British and Allied troops in officially sponsored war art. It was an important shift in the authority once owned by artists to represent the actualities of war. Gilbert Rogers’ painting of the wounded being treated after the Battle of Messines Ridge in 1917, speaks of the impact of this restriction—the British wounded are whole in body and intact; they are being cared for tenderly and with respect, while the enemy dead are presented by the artist as bodily parts—legs, hands, and feet—mere fragments, disembodied and disaggregated, poking out of the pulverised earth.[2] William Orpen RA, another government-sponsored war artist, faced little censorship for his depiction of dead and decayed German troops, while others such as C. R. W. Nevinson earned notoriety for flouting the ban and depicting dead British troops sprawled across barbed wire entanglements.[3] Few records now exist, but the decree is thought to be linked to the government’s fear of ‘war weariness’. Authorities had grown anxious about the corrosive impact of three years of global conflict. It was feared that the population was becoming numbed and depressed; battle fatigue by proxy was setting in.

1 Alexander Stuart Dolden, *Cannon Fodder: An Infantryman’s Life on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Blandford, UK: Blandford Press, 1980), 39.

2 Gilbert Rogers, *The RAMC at Messines During the 1917 Offensive, 1919*, Imperial War Museums London, Art. IWM ART 2757, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/23044, accessed 2 December 2019.

3 C.R.W. Nevinson, *Paths of Glory*, Imperial War Museums London, Art. IWM ART 518. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/20211, accessed 2 December 2019.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 5–10
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It was also a brazen attempt to stage-manage the truth. Here, there are ethical alignments with the situation faced globally by writers, reporters, artists, and photographers intent on purveying the actualities of war. The concept of 'fake news' and 'post-truth' may seem entirely of our own making, but in 1917 the officially appointed painters and photographers who were tasked with recording the facts of war were sometimes forced to re-imagine it through what many deemed transgressive creative acts—collage, montage, the re-arrangement of incidents across different time zones, the use of re-ordered narratives. In short, they dealt with versions of truthful representation, at times they had to 'fake truth' to achieve a greater authenticity; the pursuit of exactitude had to be balanced with the broader sweep of emotional abstraction. Frank Hurley's infamous collaged 'combat' photographs are perhaps the best known, along with those of Canadian Ivor Castle. His vast photo-montage of the taking of Vimy Ridge in 1917 is a fine example of a creative hand trying to overcome the diffuse nature of modern warfare, where incident was sporadic and the motifs almost impossible to condense into a single pictorial incident.[4]

Official Australian historian Charles Bean was deeply troubled by these composite images. He rejected them as deviant distortions of the truth. Forensic by instinct, he insisted on an indexical account of outward appearances. Nothing other would do. Documentary evidence was, for Bean, the only antidote to imaginative speculation.[5] This tension between the indexical and interpretation persists. Despite 80 years of re-imagining the face of war, the issue of retinal authority refuses to go away. In 1994 the Scottish official war artist Peter Howson had a piece of his work refused by the Imperial War Museum in London who had sponsored his commission to the Balkans. Their objection was that the painting, which depicted the scene of a violent rape, had not been 'witnessed' by the artist. Not so much 'fake news' as phoney realism. Its 'exclusion' caused uproar in the press. It brought into sharp focus the rumbling debate about the very role and contribution of a war artist. Commentators probed their value as independent witnesses, questioning the validity of painting 'imaginary' events as opposed to 'factual' records. The debate focused not so much on the abomination itself, but on the right of an Official Artist to pass off such scenes as 'authentic'. Its spectre hangs over the very nature of 'war art' and the pictorial management of truth today. The exclusion of this painting from the permanent collection further polarised two schools of thought: those that felt it necessary to depict the awfulness of warfare using whatever means available to an artist, and those who argued that an artist (and by extension photographer, reporter, writer) must bear witness—ocular not just circumstantial—to a scene of horror before committing it to canvas.

Such a binary divide is important when considering the discourses of haunting that occupied, indeed gripped, many artists, photographers, and writers in the decade 1917–1927. To understand this period requires two complementary optics: the first borrows from Jay Winter's three cultural codes—the visual, the verbal and the social—that encrypt the trauma of war and shape the language of mourning.[6] The second lens proposes that if warfare is characterised by destruction, by dissolution, and by dismembering, then its commemorative aftermath might be understood as a reconstituting of once-broken parts, of putting back together, a visual 're-membering' of shattered limbs, spirit, and members. In pictorial terms this process is best practised through montage, collage, editing, and re-arrangement of episodic incidents. Let us turn now to the language of loss that preceded the spectral decade.

LOSING

In November 1920 over a million people passed by the Cenotaph in Whitehall, central London, in the week between its official unveiling and the sealing of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. To lend a sense of proportion to the nation's loss, it was estimated that if the empire's dead could march four abreast down Whitehall it would take them over three days to pass the monument. The column would stretch from London to Newcastle. This incredible image became a form of truth as endless numbers of returned troops marched past recently erected memorials all over the empire. 'The dead lived again' intoned the *Times*.[7] It was as though the soldiers were the dead themselves 'marching back to receive the tribute of the living'. Think of Eliot's lines in *The Waste Land*:

> A crowd flowed over London Bridge. So many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many.[8]

Across the British Empire it would have been impossible to avoid the intensity of remembrance. It was possibly the greatest period of monument-building since Pharaonic Egypt. Stanley Spencer's painting (1921–22) of the unveiling of the Cookham War Memorial captures an event that was repeated countless times as nations sought

4 Martyn Jolly, 'Composite propaganda photographs during the First World War', *History of Photography*, 27, no. 2 (Summer, 2003): 154–165.

5 Charles E.W. Bean, 'Wilkins and Hurley recommendations', Australian War Memorial, AWM38, DRL6673, item 57 (24 October 1917).

6 Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

7 Cited in Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1995), 24.

8 T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, 1922.

to mourn the common man.[9] The line of young men in haunted white who crowd the foreground of Spencer's painting seem less concerned with paying homage to the dead as vicariously representing their missing villagemen. They are a surrogate army of ghosts returned to their homeland. The poetry and prose, and other forms of cultural encoding, that underpinned these ceremonies evidenced the same tendency to see the dead among the living. 'He is not missing', ran the solemn script at the unveiling of so many war memorials, 'he is here…'. [10]

In the decade after the war, the image of the dead rising from the tortured landscapes of the old battlefields became an integral part of the iconography of remembrance. During the war, artists had created the occasional image of a ghostly figure wandering wraith-like across no-man's-land. There were, of course, the many legendary (and largely apocryphal) tales of 'angels' at Mons, of benevolent phantoms who return to help, warn or merely stand alongside comrades in the twilight hours of stand-to. Such artistic apparitions are an essential element in the spectral turn identified by W.G. Sebald.[11] Transposed to a battlefield setting it conjures immediately the ambience of the ghostly. The worlds Sebald describes are those occupied by the displaced, traumatised, and exiled. These are the very same worlds that confronted artists, poets, and writers during the conflict and in the years after the Great War. Haunted by harrowing experiences they moved through a dystopia cleared of occupants by expulsion and exclusion, saturated with traumatic memory, and rendered nondescript by the impact of sustained static warfare. Ironically, as the soldier-poet David Jones observed, for all its 'sudden violences' and 'long stillnesses' the battlescape remained for many a 'place of enchantment', or as soldier–artist Paul Nash described it, a 'phantasmagoric' domain, outwardly a 'void of war', which was actually not empty at all but crammed with its own emptiness.[12]

RECONNECTING

Many combatants, of the ground war and also the fighting in the sky and underwater, might have found this idea of a crowded emptiness entirely understandable. During artillery barrages soldiers had literally vanished into the air, dematerialised before their comrades' eyes into little more than a small puff of putrid air. Battleships vanished without trace; aeroplanes would disappear into clouds, never to emerge again. Sudden absences, emptiness, and invisibility became the recurring leitmotifs of the war. Despite the scale of post-war commemoration in stone and bronze, many of those who returned to the former battlefields craved some form of spiritual reconnection with their vanished loved ones. In part this explains the upsurge in séances and similar activities in the years after the war. It explains the fascination with battlefield pilgrimage and the need to gather 'mementos' or relics from the same landscapes that had apparently swallowed whole the sons, brothers, and fathers of the massed armies. Official decree had more or less granted permissions for such personal acts: in 1919 after selecting one exhumed body from four to become the 'unknown' representative of the empire's dead, the re-burial party also gathered six barrels of front-line soil to pack out the body in its new grave in Westminster Abbey. From then on, a cross-Channel (and indeed trans-global) transaction of soil, stone, and seed became a mandatory part of post-war pilgrimage as organic reliquaries were gathered in lieu of the dissipated bodies of the dead. Jonathan Vance has covered this botanical transaction in detail in his cultural reading of the Canadian post-war experience, and Australian historian Bruce Scates has written in depth about the arboreal trophies of war that still surround The Shrine in Melbourne. Nature may have provided surrogacy; the bereaved wanted more.[13]

In film, in painting, and in photography the disappeared and the dead could be made to live again. Probably the most dramatic images of the dead rising from the ground are to be seen at the conclusion of Abel Gance's 1919 film *J'Accuse*, when hordes of forlorn French soldiers appear to materialise out of the tortured earth.[14] Such images were the more shocking because, for much of the war, battlefields were outwardly deserted yet densely occupied with a vast community of entrenched soldiers leading troglodyte lives. Many met dreadful underground deaths and huge numbers still remained interred in the boneyards of Flanders.

Just as Gance's ragged army pointed accusatory fingers into the uncomfortable arena of post-war Europe, so images of the dead rising from the earth gained a wider global currency into the 1920s. In 1927 the *Melbourne Herald* published a drawing, *A voice from ANZAC* by Will Dyson, which depicted two spectral soldiers on the shores of Gallipoli, one of them asking, 'Funny thing, Bill. I keep thinking I hear men marching'. That year another Australian artist Will Longstaff had attended the

9 Stanley Spencer, *Unveiling Cookham War Memorial*, 1922, private collection.

10 These were the form of words used by Field Marshal Herbert Plumer at the Menin Gate Inauguration ceremony in Ypres, 24 July 1927.

11 W.G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn* (London: Harvill, 1998).

12 Paul Gough, *'A Terrible Beauty': British Artists in the First World War* (Bristol: Sansom and Company, 2010), 154.

13 Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Raelene Frances and Bruce Scates, eds., *Beyond Gallipoli: New Perspectives on ANZAC* (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2016).

14 Abel Gance, *J'Accuse* [VHS], California, Connoisseur Video Collection, 1937. (125 mins); Van Kelly, 'The Ambiguity of Individual Gestures', *South Central Review*, 17, no. 3 (2000): 7–34.

unveiling of the Menin Gate at Ypres—with its rhetorical message 'the dead are not missing, they are here'—and had painted *Menin Gate at Midnight* by way of reaction and response. It depicts a host of ghostly soldiers emerging from the Flanders battlegrounds and walking as one uncanny cohort towards the massive monument, wading through fields of red poppies. Longstaff wrote that soon after the ceremony at Ypres he saw a vision of 'steel-helmeted spirits rising from the moonlit cornfields around him'. He returned to London and, it is said, painted the canvas in a single session while still under 'psychic influence'.[15]

Its public reception tells us much about the memorialising mood of the time. Reproduced in tens of thousands of copies, the painting was first displayed in London, viewed by Royal Command, then toured to Manchester and Glasgow and finally taken to Australia where, after regional tours, it was exhibited in a darkened, chapel-like space at the National War Memorial in Canberra. For so many, the taut language of representation was comforting and factual; exactitude offered a desired blend of truth and reconciliation. Door-to-door salesmen toured Australia selling copies of the painting, raising money for the new war memorial in Canberra. They were required to memorise a script which contained the phrase, 'He is not missing. He is here'.

RESURRECTING

In London, Longstaff may have been aware of Stanley Spencer's *Resurrection*, *Cookham* (which was on show during early 1927 and bought soon after for the Tate Gallery). This was the first of Spencer's resurrection paintings, created over many months in a tiny studio in Hampstead, London while he was gestating a major painting and architectural scheme to commemorate his time during the war.

As a medical orderly and later an infantry soldier, Spencer had witnessed death in the operating theatre and on the battlefield in Macedonia; in the field ambulances of the Salonika Campaign he had brought succour to suffering and pain, but he had also seen his share of burials. Spencer's magnificent, post-war masterpiece for the walls of the Sandham Memorial Chapel was originated while the former battlefields in France, Belgium, Turkey, and Macedonia were being systematically combed for the dead, their bodies then concentrated into cemeteries.[16] Indeed, Spencer started sketching his ideas for the chapel while staying with a painter friend in Dorset, not far from where the massive limestone quarries in Portland were being gouged out to be chiselled into tens of thousands of headstones that would become the 'silent cities' of the dead. Spencer's unrivalled *The Resurrection of the Soldiers* is a testament to those unknown soldiers whose parts were blown to pieces and who are remembered only in their names carved on panoramic slabs of stone. Through Spencer's vision these unnamed and unnameable soldiers now festoon the extraordinary walls of the chapel in Burghclere, one of the greatest achievements of 20th century commemoration in northern Europe and comparable to Owen's poetry, Sassoon's verse or Britten's *War Requiem.*[17]

In his expansive and fascinating diaries and notebooks about the war, Spencer wrote about achieving a harmonic balance between the 'verbs' and 'nouns' of his own front-line experience; the nouns being the immutable and tangible objects of the lived medical and combat experience—the puttees and helmets, the towels and the tea urns. The 'verbs' were the more elastic and fluid representations of the militarised body, where a skilful distortion of parts played a crucial role in releasing the imagination from the chains of fact.

Spencer's figures emerge from the torn earth whole-in-body and becalmed; so very different from the venomous acrimony of Siegfried Sassoon's post-war poetry populated with 'scarred, eyeless figures deformed by the hell of battle … supernatural figures of the macabre' whom he pitied for the loss of their youth.[18] And so very different again from the homunculi embedded in the Flanders mud as devised by German painter and war veteran Otto Dix. In his apocalyptic canvas, *Flanders*, the dawn may be epic, but the demise of the small troupe of soldiers is tawdry and banal, their bodies enmeshed in a thicket of webbing, wire and waste. Far from emerging intact from the glutinous mud, as Dyson or Longstaff had imagined, the soldiers are immersed in the land, becoming a part of its geology; they are encased in their *totendlandschaft*—a dead and deadening landscape. At least the skyscape holds an element of tentative promise, however ironic.[19]

RECOVERING

Representations of more recent conflicts maintain a link with the crisis of representation triggered in 1917. In Jeff Wall's vast photographic panorama of an

15 Krissy Kraljevic, '*Will Longstaff*', Australian War Memorial, accessed 9 May, 2019, https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/blog/90th-Anniversary-Menin-Gate-at-midnight, accessed 2 December 2019.

16 Philip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil* (London: Leo Cooper, 1967), 103.

17 Paul Gough *et al*., *'The Holy Box': The Genesis of Stanley Spencer's Sandham Memorial Chapel* (Bristol: Sansom and Company, 2017); Richard Carline, *Stanley Spencer at War* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978).

18 Mark Dollar, 'Ghost imagery in the war poems of Siegfried Sassoon', *War, Literature, and the Arts*, 16, no. 1-2 (2004): 235–245.

19 Matthias Eberle, *World War I and the Weimar Artists: Dix, Grosz, Beckmann, Schlemmer* (Princeton: Yale University Press, 1985), 78.

Afghanistan ambush, even the redemptive possibility of a horizon is stripped out.[20] Instead, in the place of Spencer's serene figures, we gaze onto a platoon of traumatised soldiers, isolated and forsaken, tearing at each other, with bulging eyes and contorted faces. While some sit stunned and still, others horse around stuffing their spilled entrails back into their soiled uniforms. Wall's dystopia shares much with Abel Gance's film in which the dead are disgorged from the earth in rotting uniforms with mutilated bodies and torn faces. These abandoned infantrymen appear to bear nothing in common with Spencer's elegiac armies. But in their similar scale, their subdued tonal range, and their powerful sense of camaraderie and *rapport*, there is some shared ground. *Dead soldiers don't talk*. In Jeff Wall's spectral visionary photo-piece they do. In fact it is hard to shut them up. His thirteen slaughtered soldiers cavort around, play with strips of flesh, smile knowingly at each other, or chat from casual slouching positions. What truths are they mouthing? 'It interested me to wonder what citizens would say about the State that they lived in and served—if we could hear what they had to say under these circumstances…. What would people say? How would they feel if they could communicate from across this divide? They have sacrificed for the State, for the plans of their society and now they are in a different relationship to all of that. That sense of the picture occurring on the other side of life was what intrigued me'.[21]

Wall draws his bleak lessons from Goya, whereas Spencer took inspiration from the Italian Primitives. Yet, like Spencer's *The Resurrection of the Soldiers* there is no eye contact with us; no accusation outwards, no one turning blamefully into our world. As Susan Sontag says: 'There's no threat of protest. They are not about to yell at us to bring a halt to that abomination which is war. They haven't come back to life in order to stagger off to denounce the war-makers who sent them to kill and be killed…. Why should they seek our gaze?'[22]

Would this have passed the censorship of 1917? After all there is suffering, but no apparent death. Wall seems to be suggesting, like Spencer and Dix before him, that as mere watchers we are never able to fully empathise, to understand the abject dreadfulness of war, its awful truths. We can only peer in and share something of these momentarily reprieved lives. Yet, where Wall re-creates the Day of Judgment as something horribly Sisyphean, Spencer, like Longstaff, preferred a vision of reconciliation and arbitration, even if the spectral figures in their haunted hillsides appear isolated, disengaged, and even sedated when compared with the livid ferocity of the permanently doomed Russian platoon.

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His books about the arts of war and peace include *Journey to Burghclere* (2006), *A Terrible Beauty: British Artists and the First World War* (2010), and *Brothers in Arms, John and Paul Nash* (2014). He curated *Back from the Front: Art, Memory and the Aftermath of War* in 2015. His edited book on the genesis of Stanley Spencer's memorial chapel at Burghclere, The Holy Box, was created with the support of the National Trust in 2017. Dead Ground: War and Peace – Remembrance and Recovery, a book of essays on 'memoryscapes' of the Great War was published in November 2018. paul.gough@rmit.edu.au

20 Jeff Wall, *Dead Troops Talk (A Vision After an Ambush of a Red Army Patrol, near Moqor, Afghanistan, winter 1986)*, 1992.

21 Jeff Wall, Jeff Wall discussing *Dead Troops Talk* at Tate Modern, London, 1992 . https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/jeff-wall/jeff-wall-room-guide/jeff-wall-room-guide-room-8, accessed 2 December 2019.

22 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003), 128–129.

The Alterity of the Readymade: *Fountain* and Displaced Artists in Wartime

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Abstract

In April 1917, a porcelain urinal titled *Fountain* was submitted by Marcel Duchamp (or by his female friend, Louise Norton) under the pseudonym 'R. MUTT', to the Society of Independent Artists in New York. The Society's committee refused to show it in their annual exhibition of some 2,125 works held at the Grand Central Palace. Eighty-seven years later, in 2004, *Fountain* was voted the most influential work of art in the 20th century by a panel of world experts. We inherit the 1917 work not because the original object survived—it was thrown out into the rubbish—but through a photographic image that Alfred Steiglitz was commissioned to take. In this photo, Marsden Hartley's *The Warriors*, painted in 1913 in Berlin, also appears, enlisted as the backdrop for the piece of American hardware Duchamp selected from a plumbing showroom. To highlight the era of the Great War and its effects of displacement on individuals, this article considers each subject in turn: Marcel Duchamp's departure from Paris and arrival in New York in 1915, and Marsden Hartley's return to New York in 1915 after two years immersing himself in the gay subculture in pre-war Berlin. As much as describe the artists' experiences of wartime, explain the origin of the readymade and reconstruct the events of the notorious example, *Fountain*, the aim of this article is to additionally bring to the fore the alterity of the *other* item imported ready-made in the photographic construction—the painting *The Warriors*. In the context of early 20th century modernity, I seek to demonstrate how Duchamp and Hartley became, in different ways, displaced subjects during the Great War and how Stieglitz's photograph ends up being one record of this fate.

Keywords

Alfred Stieglitz; exiles; *Fountain;* Marcel Duchamp; Marsden Hartley; readymade

> I wonder whether you could manage to drop in at 291 Friday sometime. I have, at the request of Roché, Covet, Miss Wood, Duchamp & Co., photographed the rejected "Fountain". You may find the photograph of some use – It will amuse you to see it. – The "Fountain" is here too.[1]
>
> Alfred Stieglitz to the art critic Henry McBride, 19 April, 1917

> No, not rejected. A work can't be rejected by the Independents. It was simply suppressed.[2]
>
> Marcel Duchamp in interview with Pierre Cabanne, 1967

1 Alfred Stieglitz to the art critic Henry McBride, 19 April, 1917. In William A. Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp / Fountain* (Texas: Menil Foundation, 1989), 34.

2 Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, trans. Ron Padget (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 54–55. These interviews were conducted in 1967 when Duchamp was aged 80. A letter written on 11 April 1917 to his sister Suzanne Duchamp, in Paris, enlists the word 'refuse'. He writes, 'Tell the family this snippet: the Independents opened here with enormous success. A female friend of mine, using a male pseudonym, Richard Mutt, submitted a porcelain urinal as a sculpture. It wasn't at all indecent. No reason to refuse it. The committee decided to refuse to exhibit this thing. I handed in my resignation and it'll be a juicy piece of gossip in New York'. Francis Naumann and Hector Obalk, eds. *Affect Marcel: The Selected Correspondence of Marcel Duchamp* (London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 47. For some interpreters the reference made to a female friend is an early reference to Duchamp's alter ego Rrose Sélavy, for others a reference to one of three possible subjects: Sélavy, or Louise Norton, or Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. It is most likely Louise Norton who physically delivered *Fountain* to the Independents.

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Many accounts of the history of *Fountain* go by this general version: a porcelain urinal selected by Marcel Duchamp, signed 'R. Mutt' with the date '1917', was presented for exhibition at the Society of Independent Artists in New York in April 1917, for which it was rejected. There was no jury. All works submitted with the correct entrance fees paid, would be shown. But *Fountain* was not, voted down by a small majority when ten members of the Society's committee decided its fate two days before the opening night. Eighty-seven years later, in 2004, *Fountain* was voted the most influential work of art in the 20th century by a panel of world experts (Fig. 1).[3]

Figure 1. Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917, photograph by Alfred Stieglitz. © Association Marcel Duchamp/ADAGP. Copyright Agency, 2019.

Marcel Duchamp did not act alone. R. Mutt, the anonymous artist, stands in, arguably, for as many as six individuals significant to the events.[4] Like the form of the thing itself, the author of it was made deliberately ambiguous. The urinal was found behind a partition after the exhibition and taken to Alfred Stieglitz's gallery 291. There Steiglitz took a commissioned photograph of it with the canvas *The Warriors*, painted by the American Modernist Marsden Hartley in 1913 in Berlin, as the backdrop. In remarks quoted at the outset to this essay, Stieglitz makes reference to the object itself almost as afterthought: 'The "Fountain" is here too'. And perhaps Duchamp was also less interested in the fate of a material object, in fact, the urinal itself would be thrown out into the rubbish soon after Stieglitz had photographed it—but Duchamp was absolutely committed to ensure its ideas and very concept entered the public domain. To do this the Stieglitz photograph was published in the second issue of the Society's occasional magazine, *The Blind Man*, with a defence of *Fountain*, explaining why it should not have been 'suppressed' as a work of art, to use Duchamp's term, and giving credence to its merit and value.[5]

Duchamp had left Europe in 1915 because of his changing attitudes toward the artistic milieu in Paris, and because he could no longer abide the patriotic fervour associated with the Great War, and, yet, within two years of arriving in New York he found himself in a growing climate of intense American patriotism.[6] This saw the public display of numerous war posters and many military parades following the President's call to arms on 2 April 1917, and the official declaration of war against Germany on 6 April. Duchamp was associated with the Dada movement, predominantly a group of artists based in Zurich, with satellite activities in other centres including Hanover, Cologne, Berlin, and New York. The New York Dada Group developed, in Michael R. Taylor's words, 'a distinct set of strategies to express their deep-seated antipathy toward the barbaric war in Europe and their opposition to the sacrosanct terms and traditions of oil painting, which they viewed as abhorrent and absurd—a curious conflation

3 Louise Jury, '"Fountain" most influential piece of modern art', *The Independent*, accessed 4 June, 2019, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/fountain-most-influential-piece-of-modern-art-673625.html.

4 These persons include: Walter Arensberg, Joseph Stella, Alfred Stieglitz, Beatrice Wood, Louise Norton, and, potentially, Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. It was crucial to ensure the identity of R. Mutt would remain unknown, and Duchamp could not be singled out by the Independents' Board.

5 The editors of *The Blind Man*, Duchamp, Arensberg, and Norton (Varèse) all helped contribute the text 'Buddha of the Bathroom' for the second issue of *The Blind Man*. An often-cited line reads, 'Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it.' Beatrice Wood also contributed a text, her eyewitness accounts (she both saw and engaged in various heated debates of the Independents' committee) were recorded by her and she later wrote these down in her memoir. These are a major source to inform and reconstruct the unfolding saga. See, Camfield, *Fountain*, 13–60, for a full reconstruction of the events.

6 In interview in 1967, Duchamp states, 'Yes, I left for a neutral country. You know since 1917 America had been in the war, and I had left France basically for lack of militarism. For lack of patriotism, if you wish. Cabanne: And you had fallen into worse patriotism! Duchamp: I had fallen into American patriotism, which was certainly worse'. Cabanne, *Dialogues*, 59.

of politics and painting'.[7] Steiglitz's photograph depicts a readymade urinal *and* an oil painting, encoding the very antithesis of Taylor's observations of the Dada group. In reading each art piece in turn, this article seeks to highlight this seemingly odd pairing, and, in the context of the Great War, demonstrate how Duchamp and Hartley became, in different ways, displaced subjects and exiles away from 'home' during wartime.

* * *

As war escalated on the western front, the 28-year-old Marcel Duchamp left Europe on 6 June 1915. He could leave France relatively freely because he had been declared unfit for military service. Explaining in a letter to his New York-based sponsor, Walter Pach: 'I went through the Medical Board and am doomed to remain a civilian for the entire duration of the war. They said I was too sick to be a soldier. I am not too unhappy about this decision, as you'll well imagine'.[8] If he had no love for war or its nationalistic ideologies, Duchamp's desperation to leave France was as much to get away from the artistic life in Paris. 'I am not going to New York I am leaving Paris', he wrote Pach: 'That's quite different. For long before the war, I already had a distaste for the artistic life I was involved in. It's quite the opposite of what I'm looking for. And so I tried, through the library, to escape from artists somewhat. Then with the war, my incompatibility with this milieu grew. I wanted to go away at all costs'.[9] Leaving Paris was a decision to reject the environment of the Parisian Puteaux Cubists. Calvin Tomkins appraises Duchamp's attitudes to the war which received rebuke from his family and members of the public alike: '[Duchamp's] was not a highly tenable attitude in wartime Paris. Duchamp was "spared nothing in the way of malicious remarks", as he later confided to his friend Robert Lebel. Yvonne Duchamp-Villon, Raymond's wife, took it upon herself to reproach the younger brother for being "behind the lines", and there were occasions when strangers would spit at him in the street'.[10]

While war impoverished culture and the arts in Europe, America was seen as the new beacon of modernism. What Duchamp would unleash there forever altered how the artist's role is to be comprehended and creative acts and gestures defined. In New York, he became affiliated with a group of artists including the French émigré artists Francis Picabia, Albert Gleizes, and Jean Crottie, the Americans Man Ray, Joseph Stella, Beatrice Woods, Morton Livingston Schamberg, and the German artist, Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. The years between 1915 and 1917 were experienced with relative freedom for those in New York art circles.[11] This changed with the declaration of war on Germany on 6 April 1917. Waves of propaganda and strict censorship followed, with recrimination for any individuals renouncing or commenting negatively on the war effort in public. Duchamp soon found his relative ease of living as an artist severely compromised. He was designated (F) for 'Foreigner' and could be drafted into the American military under emergency.

Duchamp sought escape again, leaving New York for the remote Argentinian capital of Buenos Aires. On 13 August 1918, he wrote a short letter to his close friend Henri-Pierre Roché: 'Off I go again', he wrote, 'it's getting to be a habit'.[12] The art historian T.J. Demos provides an analysis of Duchamp's peripatetic existence in his book *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp* which covers in some detail the work Duchamp made in the war-years of 1913–18. Demos contends: 'Off I go again: the French—*Je m'eloigne encore*—is undoubtedly more suggestive than the English translation, expressing a distancing of the self and suggesting an internal mobility that travel may bring in its most transformative capacity'.[13] Demos asserts that Duchamp's 'I'm distancing myself again' offers difference in as much as it 'is an expression that fractures being, divides it into subject and object, implying a crisis of identity in the age of its national consolidation'.[14] Duchamp's decision to leave New York was, according to Demos, bound up in many complex reasons. He cites 'growing fatigue with his patrons, exasperation with the loss of the

7 Michael R. Taylor, "New York Dada", in *Dada*, ed. Leah Dickerman (New York: National Gallery of Art and D.A.P., 2006), 277.

8 Naumann and Obalk, eds. *Affect Marcel*, 30.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp—a Biography* (London: Pimlico, 1997), 140. Raymond Duchamp-Villon was one of Marcel's elder brothers, the other being Jacques Villon. He joined them in Paris in 1904 to study painting, but would later fall-out over their involvement with the decision not to include his work in the Paris Indépendants of 1912. This episode helped fuel his disdain held toward the Puteaux Cubists.

11 'A lively art scene was established in New York from 1914 to 1918 … [in] stark contrast to Europe where salons had been suspended, magazines disbanded, and many galleries closed. There was cause to think that while the Europeans were absorbed by the war, the time had come for America to assume leadership in art'. Camfield, *Fountain*, 16.

12 Naumann and Obalk, *Affect Marce*l, 57.

13 T.J. Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge Massachusetts & London: MIT Press, 2007), 74-75.

14 *Ibid.*

city's carefree energy and social dynamism owing to the encroaching war'.[15] But, 'more than anything else it was the increasing claustrophobic atmosphere of the patriotic environment…. [H]e sought out a "neutral country" unencumbered by the pressures of patriotism, just as he had done earlier when he left France for New York'.[16]

It is from within this period and these geo-political contexts that the most influential work of art in the 20th century emerged: *Fountain*. It is many things to people. As a statement, it is less a work of art than it is a rejection of the retinal aesthetic in prevailing traditions of the cubist traditions after Cézanne. It is as much, in the spirit of Dada, an iconoclastic object to be admired as a declaration of total abhorrence in the faith man placed in technology and machines. And it is an object to test the very definitions of art: later, in the 1970s, it would underpin conceptual art and the Institutional Theory of Art. In 1917 the decision to test the principles of the Society carried with it the psychological displacement of an émigré leaving his home. This did not occur as a subject fleeing war, or being forced into exile, but by being at stark odds with the nationalistic groundswell that emerged in France. To better understand the direct effects of this displacement from Paris upon Duchamp's readymade, we need briefly to consider its origins.

* * *

It all began with a now famous comment made in the autumn of 1912 at Le salon de la locomotion aérienne. A quip, allegedly posed by Duchamp to the Romanian sculptor Constantin Brâncusi while looking at aeronautic designs: 'Painting's washed up,' Duchamp mused. 'Who'll do anything better than that propeller? Tell me, can you do that?'[17]

The propeller Duchamp referenced appealed to him due to its capacity for mechano-morphic representations, an iconography that would soon be developed by Dada artists. Significantly, the comment made to Brancusi would lead Duchamp to examine the everyday world in search of what he would later explain of its selection as a 'rendezvous with readymades', mass-produced objects which become artworks not because they are made by the artist's hand but because they are *selected* by the artist. It is this shift in attribute from technique to cerebral concept which is the most important to comprehend of Duchamp's contribution to modern art and the legacy of the readymade.

Less than twelve months later, Duchamp assembled his own propelling machine of sorts in his Paris atelier when he secured a bicycle wheel and fork and mounted them upside down on a kitchen stool. The wheel could be set spinning. It is still widely regarded as the first readymade even if he had yet to arrive at the term. Duchamp remarked of it in his later life:

> The *Bicycle Wheel* is my first readymade, so much so that at first it wasn't even called a Readymade. It still had little to do with the idea of the Readymade. Rather, it had more to do with the idea of chance. In a way, it was simply letting things go by themselves and having a sort of created atmosphere in a studio, an apartment where you live. Probably, to help your ideas come out of your head. To set the wheel turning was very soothing, very comforting, a sort of opening of avenues on other things than material life of every day. I liked the idea of having a bicycle wheel in my studio. I enjoyed looking at it, just as I enjoy looking at the flames dancing in a fireplace. It was like having a fireplace in my studio, the movement of the wheel reminded me of the movement of the flames.[18]

When it came time to leave Paris, he did not take the *Bicycle Wheel* assemblage with him, but he could travel light with the new fire as a concept.[19] His sister Suzanne Duchamp, overlooking its significance, would later throw the *Bicycle Wheel* out together with another object called *Bottle Rack* (1914), a utilitarian rack found in kitchens used to dry bottles. While the fate of these actions might at first seem problematic, they would soon present opportunities for Duchamp to exploit.

Soon after Duchamp left war-torn Europe, he sent a postcard home, crossing out the familiar image of the Bordeaux bridge, and adding an arrow pointing west to New York and a new life. On the back, he wrote: 'I cannot bring myself to start learning English from my little book. Very embarrassing, Marcel Duchamp'.[20] A small but absolutely honest and critical gesture, for it signalled a self-consciousness about leaving, to be confronted when arriving in New York without a strong grasp of English. Also, importantly, the postcard embodied the catalyst for a course of action; only when arriving in New York that he began to consider the differences in translation

15 *Ibid.*, 75.

16 *Ibid.*

17 This alleged question of Duchamp's to Brâncusi was first printed in the Exposition Catalog, '50 Ans d'Art Moderne', Bruxelles, 1958, and in *Clefs de l'art moderne* (Paris: la Table Ronde, 1955). Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (eds), *Salt Seller: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 160.

18 Arturo Schwarz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2000), 588.

19 The small 'test glass' *Nine Malic Moulds* (1914–15) and a folio containing his notes and drawings for 'The Large Glass' which he would resume work on when settled in New York.

20 Jennifer Gough-Cooper, and Jacques Caumont, eds., 'Ephemerides', in *Duchamp: Life and Work*, ed. Pontus Hultenn (Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993), unpaginated, entry for 8 June 1915.

between French and English, exploiting this as titles for his readymade objects. Hence the passage away from home and Duchamp's acculturation process between 1915–17, for which learning a new language was a critical part, emerges as fundamentally integral to that new arrival of a conceptualist art form in New York. To apply seemingly unrelated words as titles to familiar objects encourages new ways of looking at and thinking about those objects. Naming a urinal *Fountain* necessarily suggests a new way of thinking about that utilitarian object.

* * *

Fountain emerged in April 1917 on the occasion of the first exhibition of the American Society of Independent Artists. The society's purpose was to stage annual exhibitions not unlike those of the Paris Salon des Indépendents. French émigré artists were significant to the establishment of the Independents including Duchamp, Picabia, Gleizes, and Crottie. 'All had made their way to New York each in his way a refugee from the devastating war in Europe'.[21] Calvin Tomkins provides relevant context for the Society's establishment: 'European art had been shut down by the war, Paris was under siege, and any number of artists and critics believed that America, as Duchamp had said in one of his newspaper interviews, was destined to forge the new art of the twentieth century'.[22]

Newspaper headlines were dominated by America's declaration of war on Germany, but 'the Independents secured considerable attention, peppering the public with press releases stressing the democracy, the vast size, and the importance of the exhibition—1,200 artists represented by 2,125 works stretching over almost two miles of panels'.[23] *Fountain* was not one of them. Other means to make it public were to be found. When photographed by Stieglitz it was placed upon a wooden plinth with the original exhibition submission card still attached—damage to this card suggesting at some stage it was re-affixed—and lit in such a way to transcend its utilitarian function to something not unlike a Buddha. For its publication in *The Blind Man*, the work was indeed renamed 'Buddha of the Bathroom' and 'a much larger audience had the opportunity to see *Fountain* and read something by way of explanation and defence of it'.[24]

* * *

> … [T]hose huge cuirassiers of the Kaiser's special guard – all in white – white leather breeches skin tight – high plain enamel boots – those gleaming, blinding medieval breast plates of silver and brass … inspiring helmets with the imperial eagle, and the white manes hanging down – there was six foot of youth under all this garniture … that is how I got it – and it went into an abstract picture of soldiers riding into the sun….[25]

Seventy-two years later, in 1989, William Camfield with Francis Naumann reidentified the backdrop in the Stieglitz photograph as Hartley's *The Warriors* (1913), a work that, unlike the urinal *Fountain,* did survive the Great War (Fig. 2). When seeing the full painting the reader can identify the close formal composition the painting shares with the urinal; Hartley's work also may have been chosen because of America's very recent declaration of war, or because the sense of battle in the painting appropriately reflected Duchamp's test of the Independents committee.

In his authoritative reconstruction of the events, William Camfield writes, 'It seems to have been Stieglitz who elected to place *Fountain* in front of Marsden Hartley's painting with fortuitous visual and intellectual links to that readymade'.[26] The following seeks to corroborate this view and highlight its implications.

Due to its depiction of soldiers astride horses the painting might easily be misrepresented when *The Warriors* was never intended as a celebration of war, nor to depict war favourably. As many historians and commentators familiar with Hartley's work claim, the artist had been drawn to the pre-war pageantry due to its visceral presence in the streets of Berlin, with the painting embracing Kaiser Wilhelm II's pre-war Berlin of 1913 and that centre's widespread tolerance of homosexuality.[27]

Where the metonymical relationships between Hartley's painting and the urinal are analysed by Paul B. Franklin in his essay 'Object Choice: Marcel Duchamp's

21 Camfield, *Fountain*, 14.

22 Tomkins, *Duchamp*, 179.

23 Camfield, *Fountain*, 20.

24 *Ibid.*, 37.

25 Cited in Patricia McDonnell, '"Essentially Masculine": Marsden Hartley, Gay Identity, and the Wilhelmine German Military', Art Journal 56, no. 2 (Summer 1997), 67.

26 Camfield, *Fountain*, 55.

27 McDonnell, '"Essentially Masculine"', 68. She writes, 'As Hartley confirmed in his letters at the time, the imperial guard was in perpetual motion about the city, and their displays were intoxicating for him. He loved the pageantry, but he also loved the show of force and virility. His German paintings capitalise on this quality of Wilhelmine culture and make use of the male power that the military in Berlin extended'.

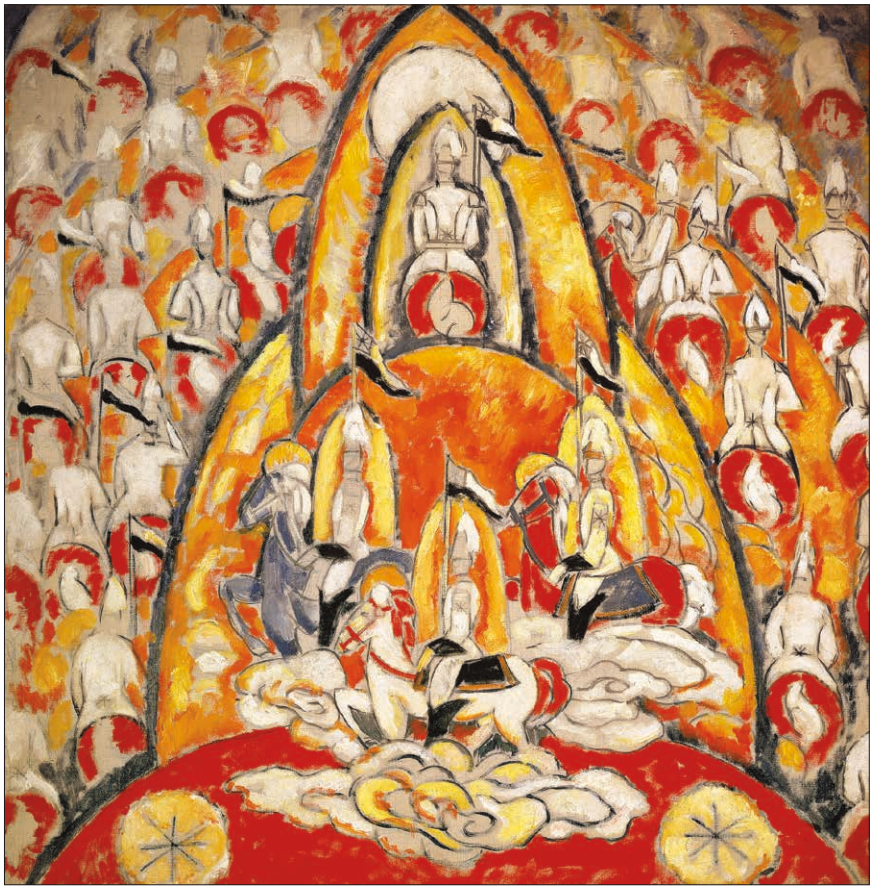

Figure 2. Marsden Hartley, *The Warriors*, 1913. Oil on copper. 121.29cm x 120.65cm. Private collection.

Fountain and the Art of the Queer Art History',[28] my intentions here are to consider how the urinal and the painting are both expressions of displaced subjects in wartime, and represent a contestation of the politics of nationalism in New York Dada of this time. The dual consequences of subjects belonging and being displaced away from home, as complex psychologies and emotions, are bound within the photographic construction of *Fountain* in 1917. On the one hand, Duchamp left Europe to find a home in America, where his quite radical step to nominate a male urinal as a work of art to the Society of Independent Artists' exhibition was suppressed. On the other, Hartley, in leaving America for Berlin, found means to paint a true expression of himself in his art. When, due to the outbreak of war, he was forced to return 'home' to America he rediscovered the pressure to conceal the true nature and subject of himself and his work. These factors were bound-up in the ideologies of American nationalism censoring German culture, and, secondly, the dominant culture suppressing and outlawing homosexuality.

The correspondence between Hartley and Stieglitz in this period is a vital source to shed light on artistic differences. In one letter of early November 1912, Hartley wrote to Stieglitz of his emerging views of the Paris art world; in it he exposed Duchamp as an intellectual and not yet a fully-fledged artist.

> Aside from Renoir and Cézanne there is little else to stir one but Picasso and Rousseau and it is in communion with these spirits that I am working…. Picasso proceeds in his splendid fashion producing always an art product…. There are several new men – Picabia, Juan Gris – Duchamp – who as yet do not show me they are artists. They are all thinkers, but art goes only a certain way with the intellect and then demands the vision. I am working hard and well from the same basic point of view being like them an issue out of Picasso – and yet I believe I shall get – something which is closer to true vision – true art intuition.[29]

28 Paul B. Franklin, 'Object Choice: Marcel Duchamp's Fountain and the Art of the Queer Art History', *Oxford Art Journal* 23, No. 1 (2000): 25–50.

29 James Timothy Voorhies, ed., *My Dear Stieglitz: Letters of Marsden Hartley and Alfred Stieglitz, 1912–1915* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), 39.

These sentiments would appear to be an antithesis of the cerebral conceptions Duchamp sought throughout his career, heightened the moment he arrived in New York. How the two ever ended up in the same image would seem a conflation of polar views, but both men's displacement from home register unequivocally.[30]

Painted in a mixture of Cubist and German Expressionist styles, *The Warriors* exudes masculinity, men on horses are depicted from a rear view, the men and horses are heading away into battle, but the flanks of the horses upon which the men sit are pronounced, repeated in formation throughout the painting. Wherever one casts their eye over the painting, the gaze is returned by rear-end views of men sitting astride the flanks of horses. Patricia McDonnell explains that: 'Hartley's paintings of the German military and its garb play out a network of complicated social, sexual, and gender constructs then strongly contested in imperial Germany. They express Hartley's gay identity as well as his take on the dominating cult of manliness in Wilhelmine German culture'.[31] Before the 1960s gay rights movement, the homosexual aspects of artists' lives were conducted in secrecy and unable to be outwardly celebrated; these dynamics were a subject that became coded into their creative work. McDonnell asserts this as: '[an] invention of codes, of discrete vocabularies that could simultaneously reveal and conceal. Only then could the average viewer pass over gay content without notice, while viewers sensitised to the signs of a gay aesthetic could read it affectively'.[32] She argues that Hartley dropped several of what George Chauncey terms 'hairpins' when depicting German military uniforms in pre-First World War Berlin, professing 'both his homosexuality and his love of the German cult of manliness'.[33] Chauncey's term refers to 'a layered coding' in modernism, an identification of homosexuality easily understood by those in the know, or knowing what to look for. By placing *The Warriors* as backdrop to *Fountain*, Stieglitz's actions make sense when considered similarly as 'dropping a hairpin', alerting those in the know to the coding of homosexuality in art and of its covert reception at this time.

* * *

According to McDonnell, 'the Berlin that Hartley knew in this century was singularly tolerant of gay life…. Shortly after settling there, he reported that he had 'every sense of being at home among the Germans'. He felt at home there because he discovered an essential side of himself reflected in a vibrant and validating gay subculture'.[34] And James Timothy Voorhies writes, Hartley celebrated 'the beauties of the exciting metropolis [where he] would also have found a great appreciation for the city's tolerance of its prevalent homosexual sub-culture…. It was in Berlin that Hartley most revelled in its masculine orientation and dominant military atmosphere'.[35] Hartley, himself, confided to Stieglitz in a letter dated 8 November 1915, sent a month prior to returning to New York: 'I shall be glad to see you all—and I know I shall be glad to get back to Berlin again. It is singular that I have my artistic and personal peace here—but it is so and I shall live here some time I fancy. I must make business plans somehow for the same freedom I have had as it has proven the only way for me. You will see a great advance personally and aesthetically'.[36]

It is clear from the above that Hartley was hopeful to return to Berlin after the war was over. It expresses his convictions having matured as an artist in Berlin, and makes transparent he would seek the same freedoms in New York as he had found and experienced and enjoyed in Berlin.[37] It is perhaps symptomatic of the psychology of the 'home' in modernity. Nikos Papastergiadis and

30 Tomkins, *Duchamp*, 39. For his part, Stieglitz, according to Calvin Tomkins, held an 'ivory tower attitude toward art, his belief in esthetic "purity", and his dictatorial self-righteousness made it very difficult for him to respond to the new, iconoclastic breezes from Europe. He thought Duchamp was a charlatan when they first met, later on he revised his opinion and said he greatly regretted not having shown his work' (167). Possibly the reason why he agreed to the commission to photograph *Fountain*. Duchamp and Hartley, themselves, are known to have met in the spring of 1914 in Paris.

31 McDonnell, '"Essentially Masculine"', 62.

32 *Ibid.*, 65.

33 McDonnell writes, 'The French Surrealist and gay author, Jean Cocteau, affirmed that this kind of layered coding was very much at work in the period of early modernism. He said, "Homosexuals recognise each other…. The mask dissolves, and I would venture to discover my kind between the lines of the most innocent book"'. George Chauncey calls these discreet flags of identification 'dropped hairpins' in his 1994 book, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay World, 1890–1940*. McDonnell, '"Essentially Masculine"', 65.

34 McDonnell, '"Essentially Masculine"', 65.

35 Voorhies, *My Dear Stieglitz*, 4.

36 *Ibid.*, 201. During his time in Berlin, Hartley secured two shows, one in that city and another in Frankfurt. He was confident that on his return home to New York he would be accepted as having broken into the European scene and be regarded as part of the expat American set.

37 Nikos Papastergiadis and Peter Lyssiotis, 'The Home in Modernity' [online], *Transition* No. 56, 1997, 65. This source is included in Christina Barton's brilliant analysis of two of New Zealand's most famous expatriates forced to navigate home(s) in modernity, from the colony and periphery to the centre: Francis Hodgkins's story 1901 to 1913, and Barrie Bates leaving New Zealand in 1959 and becoming Billy Apple on 22 November 1962. *The Expatriates* (Wellington: Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, 2005).

Peter Lyssiotis explain: 'The answer to the dilemmas of the migrant experience is not just to pack up and go home. Few who have left their native village and headed to a foreign city retain the illusion of a triumphal return. It is not just the chilling thought that their place of origin will have changed, leaving them still out of place, but there is also the wish to claim something for themselves within the new city'.[38] Before leaving Hartley's 'new city' on the *SS Rotterdam* in December 1915 bound back to America, he had arranged for the shipping of paintings to New York, but these would be held up at the border for nearly a year. Hartley was able to retrieve his *War Motif* series in March 1916, and these were exhibited by Stieglitz the following month at 291 together with work he completed soon after arriving in New York.[39]

The reception to his work in New York was mixed. The German Empire was not only the perpetrator of the Great War but was the enemy of the American people. Many German nationalists living in America anglicised their surnames such were the pressures felt. Any paintings with German iconography simply could not be easily tolerated, let alone German iconography painted by a homosexual artist. Of their impending reception, Michael Cirigliano II writes in his essay 'Marsden Hartley and Wilfred Owen: Queer Voices of Memorial in Wartime': 'Just as "Portrait of a German Officer" is coded with layers of meaning that Hartley could not otherwise communicate at a time of intolerance toward homosexuals, so too did he need to mask the intention of his German paintings upon his return to the United States in 1915. Unfortunately for Hartley, paintings depicting Iron Crosses and other German military insignia were met with a chilling reception by New York audiences'.[40] According to various sources, a number of critics focused on the formal and aesthetic merit in the paintings. Indeed, rather than declare what is so evident in his letters to Stieglitz of his experiences being at home in Berlin, Hartley, perhaps under Stieglitz's influence, placated audiences by writing in his exhibition catalogue encountered by visitors to the show: 'There is no hidden symbolism whatsoever in them…. Things under observation, just pictures any day, any hour. I have expressed only what I have seen. They are merely consultations of the eye … my notion of the purely pictorial'.[41] The 'notion of the purely pictorial' does, in fact, conceal other significance. Between 1913 and 1917 there were many varied and complex 'forces' at play, all influences upon the selection, production, and indeed constructions of *Fountain*.

The Stieglitz photograph is a record of the fate of two artists who left their countries of birth at a time when the nation state is, in T.J. Demos's words, being consolidated by the First World War: 'nationalism was resurgent, reasserting geographical borders, regional communities, purified languages, and a corresponding cultural chauvinism'.[42] By leaving their respective homes Duchamp and Hartley found certain new freedom for creative expression and outputs. Here, the ideal of a security of 'home', the promissory to protect a country for its nation's subjects (on which many wars are entered and engaged), in effect grants to these artists experiences as trans-nationalist subjects. Stieglitz's photographic commission of *Fountain* encodes the effects of these dynamics. If leaving their country of birth provided to Duchamp and Hartley different freedom of expression, it is not at all straightforward. As with other implications of the Great War raging in Europe, the reconstruction of their experiences and of the events in this article should not be understood as a neat category in the narratives of art history. And here, too, is a lesson from the readymade of 1917.

Fountain oscillates, always in a state of new 'becoming' between its prior understanding of physical function and a new conceptual meaning—from familiar knowledge of an object's worth and value based on its known function into a new object that emerges as a work of art—it is an object that is never at rest. Even today. *Fountain's* indexical referents in the world are unstable. Not only is it turned through 90 degrees rendering its utility pointless, its title diverts the viewer away from material form to cerebral suggestion. Neither can we forget the male urinal, both androgynous and a homoerotic thing, was suppressed by a committee who represented the collective wisdom of a dominant cultural orthodox where power resided. It is important to recall that *Fountain* in 1917 did not survive as a material object. While they enact and do other things for the neo-avant-garde, the replicas of *Fountain* made in the mid-1960s carry none of the political moment of 1917. It is the Stieglitz photograph which carries the legacy of 1917 forward and with it the indexical and transgressive power of alterity.

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38 Nikos Papastergiadis and Peter Lyssiotis, 'The Home in Modernity', 65.

39 *Exhibition of Paintings by Marsden Hartley* (April 04 –May 22, 1916).

40 Michael Cirigliano II, 'Marsden Hartley and Wilfred Owen: Queer Voices of Memorial in Wartime', MetMuseum, accessed May 13, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2017/marsden-hartley-wilfred-owen-world-war-i#!#3.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Demos, *Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, 75.

‘The Past We Harvest That Was Yours’: The Rhetoric of National Identity and the Legacy of the Unknown Warrior in New Zealand Memory

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Abstract

In 2004 the remains of a First World War soldier were disinterred from the Caterpillar Valley Cemetery in France and returned to New Zealand to be reburied in the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the National War Memorial in Wellington. The warrior’s original resting place in the Somme was in a Commonwealth (formerly Imperial) War Graves Commission cemetery. The commission was established in 1917 to care for the graves of the empire’s Great War dead. Prior to the new tomb in Wellington, the warrior buried in Westminster Abbey in London since 1920 had served as New Zealand’s unknown.

In the 1960s, with the development of a ‘new nationalism’ in New Zealand, came the emergence of new emblems of nationhood. By the time of the fifth Labour government (1999–2008) led by Prime Minister Helen Clark, an agenda to shape New Zealand’s national identity—including the promotion of military heritage—was well-established. At the Unknown Warrior’s funeral and interment ceremony in Wellington on 11 November 2004, both Clark and Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright proposed the warrior’s return represented a coming of age for New Zealand and a shared identity for its citizens. Against the backdrop of the Imperial War Graves Commission’s founding principles, this article explores the rhetoric of the official public ceremonies on the occasion of the Unknown Warrior’s return, and his apparent mobilisation and co-option in the construction of New Zealand’s distinctive, contemporary national identity.

Keywords

Helen Clark; Imperial War Graves Commission; national identity; new nationalism; New Zealand; Unknown Warrior

In 1917 the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) was established to care for the graves of the ‘fallen’ of the empire’s military and naval forces. Its ‘duty’ was not only to honour and perpetuate ‘the memory of their common sacrifice’, but also to ‘keep alive the ideals for … which they have laid down their lives’.[1] Eighty-seven years later, one of their number—buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Caterpillar Valley Cemetery in France beneath a headstone that bore the words, ‘A New Zealand Soldier of the Great War Known Unto God’—was again enlisted in the service of his nation. During her address at the Unknown Warrior’s funeral in Wellington on 11 November 2004, Prime Minister Helen Clark observed, [he] ‘has now been called back to serve his country once more… . It is, perhaps, a mark of the journey we have taken as a nation since then that we are finally welcoming home our own unknown warrior.’[2]

Clark’s words revealed the return of ‘our boy’—as he became known to those who escorted him home—was more than simply the homecoming of the mortal remains of one soldier representing all New Zealand servicemen and women who have died in overseas wars.[3] Later that day in her eulogy delivered at the warrior’s interment

1 Minutes of the proceedings of the Imperial War Conference, 1917, Sessional Paper No. 42a, 147, accessed 14 June 2019, https://archive.org/details/1917extractsfrom00impeuoft/page/14.

2 Prime Minister Helen Clark, ‘Address at Memorial Service for Unknown Warrior’, 12 November 2004, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/address-memorial-service-unknown-warrior. The Unknown Warrior was interred the day before this speech was published.

3 Fiona Terry, ‘For the Fallen: Remembering Those Lost to War’, 24 April 2017, Noted, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.noted.co.nz/currently/history/for-the-fallen-remembering-those-lost-to-war/.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 19–26
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/baird
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/4

ceremony, Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright asserted, 'Today … we honour all those others whose names, like his, we shall never know. Yet what we do know is that he, like each of them, was one of us'.[4] She also attached the nation's indebtedness to the service and sacrifice of the warrior and his comrades: 'Because of him, home is a better place'.[5] While both the prime minister and governor-general suggested the warrior's return represented progress, allusion was also made to the nation's coming of age and the common identity of its people.

Against the backdrop of the Imperial War Graves Commissions' founding principles, this article explores the rhetoric of the official public ceremonies on the occasion of the unknown warrior's return, and his apparent mobilisation and co-option in the construction of New Zealand's distinctive, contemporary national identity.

THE IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE AND THE 'CARE OF SOLDIERS' GRAVES'

Michael Volkerling maintains that '[s]ince the late nineteenth century, New Zealanders' engagement with the outside world has been punctuated by their involvement in a series of wars fought on behalf of the Mother Country or some more recent military ally'.[6]

The nation's participation as part of the British empire in the First World War was one such example and the reason for New Zealand's representation at the first Imperial War Conference held in London from 21 March–27 April 1917. The purpose of the conference —attended by representatives of the United Kingdom, the self-governing Dominions, and India—and of a second held in June/July 1918, was to coordinate the governance of the British empire during the First World War and prepare for the post-war period (Fig. 1). The prime ministers of the United Kingdom, and the dominions of Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland, represented their nations. Australia was not able to send representatives because of their impending general election.

A wide range of topics was discussed concerned not only with the conduct of the war but also the future role of the empire. Two agenda items were concerned with memory and remembrance. Both reflected an urgency to safeguard and remember the experience of the war before it disappeared. One related to the establishment of an Imperial war museum in London to commemorate the war. The planned contents of the collection reflected a desire to capture all aspects of war experience. A second agenda item concerned the 'Care of Soldiers' Graves'. The title suggests an orderly process but the reality was something quite different as Jay Winter describes: 'Those who tried to reunite the living and the dead, to retrieve their bodies and to give them a secure and identifiable resting place, faced staggering problems. There was the scale and chaos of the battlefields at the end of the war; there was as well terrible uncertainty as to the survival of thousands of men who simply had vanished in combat.'[7]

Prior to the First World War, for the soldiers of the British empire there was no official mechanism for marking and recording the graves of those killed. Individual commemoration of war dead—if it happened at all—was generally restricted to commissioned officers.[8] With the inception of the Imperial War Graves Commission established at the conference, no distinction would be made between officers and men: they would lie side by side in 'ordered ranks' and each grave would be marked with an identical headstone.[9] Furthermore, '[i]n death, from General to Private, of whatever race or creed, [all] should receive equal honour under a memorial which should be the common symbol of their comrade-ship and of the cause for which they died'.[10]

In addition to acknowledging the practical and financial impossibility of bringing all the dead home, the need to symbolise the presence of the absent dead and missing—along with the expression of equality—could be argued to have laid the foundation for the concept of the unknown soldier. His anonymity meant that he could have come from any rank, race, or religion represented in a nation's armed forces.

On 10 May 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission received its charter from King George V. The king charged the permanent imperial body 'with the duty of caring for the graves of officers and men of Our military and naval forces raised in all parts of Our Empire who have fallen, or may fall, in the present War'.[11]

The commission's guiding principles focused on common sacrifice, remembrance, and equality of treatment for the empire's dead. The wording in the

4 The Hon Dame Silvia Cartwright, 'Eulogy for the Unknown Warrior', 11 November 2004, 1, accessed 13 June 2019, https://gg.govt.nz/publications/eulogy-unknown-warrior.

5 *Ibid.*

6 Michael Volkerling, 'The Helen Clark Years: Cultural Policy in New Zealand 1999−2008', *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 40, no. 2 (2010): 100.

7 Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 28.

8 Chris Maclean and Jock Phillips, *The Sorrow & the Pride: New Zealand War Memorials* (Wellington: GP Books, 1990), 12–13.

9 Laura Clouting, 'Their Name Liveth For Evermore', Imperial War Museums, 14 November 2018, 8, accessed 14 June 2019, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/their-name-liveth-for-evermore.

10 Ken Warpole, *Last Landscapes: The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West* (London: Reaktion Books), 164.

11 The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Charter of Incorporation dated 21st May 1917 and Supplemental Charter dated 8th June 1964, 3. royal_charter_of_incorporation.pdf.

Figure 1. The Imperial War Cabinet. Group photograph of the IWC members in the garden of No. 10 Downing Street, 1 May 1917. Imperial War Museum (HU 81394).

following quotation, attributed to the king, conflates remembrance and empire and invites comparison with the sentiments expressed by New Zealand's prime minister and governor-general on the occasion of the unknown warrior's internment. The graves would, 'by honouring and perpetuating the memory of their common sacrifice, tend to keep alive the ideals for the maintenance and defence of which they have laid down their lives, to strengthen the bonds of union between all classes and races in Our dominions, and to promote a feeling of common citizenship and of loyalty and devotion to Us and to the Empire of which they are subjects'.[12]

The king's son, Edward, Prince of Wales who was appointed president of the commission by royal charter on 21 May 1917, was also concerned with the impact of the body's actions in time to come: 'Future generations will judge us by the effort we made to fulfil that duty … [to] all those who came forward to help the Empire in the hour of need'.[13]

That many New Zealanders during the First World War—along with the subjects of the other dominions—saw themselves unquestionably as loyal British 'citizens' is apparent in the transcript of the 1917 Imperial War Conference, at which the country was represented by Prime Minister William Massey and Minister of Finance Sir Joseph Ward.[14] However, while both were members of 'the great Imperial race', they were insistent on promoting and defending New Zealand's interests, including ensuring the protection of the graves of their compatriots at Gallipoli.[15] At the conference, Massey argued strongly for land under the control of a British organisation to be set aside in Gallipoli for the burial of 'our soldiers' in a post-war peace settlement with Turkey.[16] While Gallipoli was

12 *Ibid.*, 3.

13 Minutes of the proceedings of the Imperial War Conference, 1917, Sessional Paper No. 42a, 97, accessed 14 June 2019, https://archive.org/details/1917extractsfrom00impeuoft/page/14.

14 Minutes, Massey, Sessional paper No.42a, 31.

15 *Ibid.*, 31.

16 *Ibid.*, 31.

seen as part of the wider empire story, it was clear that New Zealand (and Australia) had made a distinct contribution to the Dardanelles campaign; though one of sacrifice rather than ultimate victory. Massey insisted that on the Gallipoli graves' issue he was expressing the views of his compatriots whom he represented, as well as speaking on behalf of (absent) Australia's interests.[17]

According to Ian McGibbon: 'In the South Pacific the campaign helped bolster a sense of national identity, albeit within a British framework, in both countries. At the time of landing, New Zealanders at home had thrilled to learn that their men were taking part in the top league… . There was pride that 1NZEF had performed well in difficult conditions'.[18]

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

At the end of the war, the decision as to where the dead's final resting place would be, varied according to the former warring nations. 'Having lost the war', Winter proposes, 'the Germans were in no position to return to the areas they had occupied and exhume the remains of their fallen soldiers'.[19] American families were allowed to choose between repatriation to the United States or burial in a military cemetery in Europe. The British ruled out repatriation on the grounds of expense and equality.[20] According to Winter: 'So many men had no known grave that granting the privilege of bringing back only identified bodies would discriminate against about half the population. Instead, symbolic gestures of the return of the fallen were made in many countries'.[21] Ken Warpole maintains the tomb of the unknown soldier, 'in the form of a new kind of national, collective memory, emerged to fill the eschatological vacuum'.[22]

On Armistice Day, 11 November 1920, the remains of unknown soldiers were re-interred in Westminster Abbey in London and under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The following year, Massey and his Cabinet considered a proposal from William Jennings, the member of Parliament for Waitomo (who lost a son at Gallipoli), to consider 'the advisability of bringing [home] the remains, preferably from Gallipoli, of one of our unknown boys'.[23] The Cabinet decided against this course of action and so the remains in the Westminster tomb continued as a surrogate unknown New Zealander until 2004.

Australia had also considered an Australian tomb of an unknown in the 1920s but it wasn't until 1993—to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the First World War—that the remains of an unknown Australian soldier were interred at the Australian War Memorial. At the foot of his tomb are inscribed the words, 'He is all of them and he is one of us'.[24] 'One of us' meaning he is an Australian: the soldier in Westminster Abbey could no longer act as a symbol for Australians who had died in overseas wars. Similar inclusive and nationalistic sentiments would be expressed upon the return of the Canadian unknown soldier in 2000 in Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson's eulogy: 'he has become part of us forever. As we are part of him'.[25] In her eulogy to the New Zealand Unknown Warrior, Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright echoed the sentiments expressed at the funerals of the Australian and Canadian unknowns.

On 6 November 2004, near the French village of Longueval, the remains of an unknown New Zealand soldier, killed in the First World War, were disinterred, like his Australian and Canadian comrades from a Commonwealth—formerly Imperial—War Graves Commission graveyard. He was handed over to a New Zealand delegation who would escort his coffin back to his homeland (Fig. 2).

On 11 November, New Zealand's Unknown Warrior was buried at the National War Memorial in Wellington. His return marked the beginning of perhaps the nation's largest ceremonial event. According to Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage: 'The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior is New Zealand's foremost symbol of remembrance for all New Zealanders who did not make the journey home after serving their country overseas. It also serves as a focus of remembrance for the sacrifice made by all New Zealand servicemen and women in times of war'.[26]

17 *Ibid.*, 32.

18 Ian McGibbon, 'Gallipoli', in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History*, ed. Ian McGibbon (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000), 198.

19 Winter, *Sites of Memory*, 27.

20 Warpole, *Last Landscapes*, 164.

21 Winter, *Sites of Memory*, 28.

22 Warpole, *Last Landscapes*, 163.

23 'Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Tomb of the Unknown Warrior', The Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatū Taonga, accessed 13 June 2019, https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/park/national-war-memorial/tomb.

24 'Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier', Australian War Memorial, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/hall-of-memory/tomb/.

25 'The Unknown Soldier Is Home', 28 May 2000, Veterans Affairs Canada, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canada/tomb-unknown-soldier/ottawadirect4.

26 'Pukeahu National War Memorial Park'.

Figure 2. Unknown Warrior. Wellington primary school pupils on the route travelled by the unknown warrior's coffin from Wellington Airport to Parliament, 10 November 2004. Photo: David Straight.

THE 'NEW' NATIONALISM

In a span of 11 years, why did the three former British dominions each bring home one of their unknown soldiers from the First World War? Canadian historian, Douglas Cole, writing in the early 1970s, argued that Canadians and Australians (and by extension New Zealanders) had traditionally located themselves within what he termed a 'Britannic nationalism' that possessed all of 'the most potent elements for nationhood—language, origin, cultural heritage, common loyalty, the inspiration of past achievement, a foreign menace' and so forth.[27]

In his comparative study, Stuart Ward contends that in the 1960s, 'it became abundantly clear that neither Empire nor Britishness could provide credible myths of identity and belonging'.[28] In 1963 New Zealand historian Keith Sinclair observed: 'for us to want to be British is a poor objective, like wanting to be an understudy or a caretaker—or an undertaker'.[29] As the old certainties of 'Britannic nationalism' receded, Ward argues 'a palpable sense of something lacking in Australian, Canadian and New Zealand civic culture emerged … [leading] to government intervention … to place the formal trappings of nationhood on a new post-imperial footing'.[30]

Around this time, a 'new' nationalism was identified in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Ward describes 'New nationalism' as: 'a process of redefining settler-colonial communities for a post-imperial era. It was a nationalism stripped of its British underpinnings —a self-conscious striving for a more self-sufficient, self-sustaining idea of the people, in place of the "old" nationalism with its entanglements in wider networks of British belonging'.[31]

This new nationalism, according to Ward, found expression in the three nations chiefly in the civic sphere; for example, 'official rites and rituals, public holidays, flags, anthems and so on'.[32] These fundamental emblems of nationhood 'were all suddenly up for

27 Stuart Ward, 'The "New Nationalism" in Australia, Canada and New Zealand: Civic Culture in the Wake of the British World', in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, eds Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, and Stuart Macintyre (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2007), 233.

28 *Ibid.*, 237.

29 *Ibid.*, 241.

30 *Ibid.*, 236.

31 *Ibid.*, 232.

32 *Ibid.*, 232.

grabs.'[33] Ward contends this assertion of independence would also become evident in relation to 'citizenship, foreign policy, and the role of the state in the promotion of "national" culture'.[34]

During this period, the United Kingdom was also looking to redefine its relationships. In 1973, the 'Mother Country' cut the apron strings and set New Zealand adrift by joining the European Economic Community, to which Prime Minister Norman Kirk responded: 'Now as a nation we are independent and on our own. As Britain joins her destiny with Europe's, we must draw more upon the spiritual and cultural strength of the people who make our nation'.[35]

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, New Zealand underwent a significant economic and social transformation. Paradoxically, in a time of radical economic reforms including deregulation and privatisation, cultural expenditure increased significantly because—according to Volkerling—'the fourth Labour government [July 1984 to November 1990], in particular, was consumed by cultural nationalism'.[36] Members of the government believed that they were 'presiding over an era of emerging national self-consciousness. Obviously', they argued, 'our sense of identity as New Zealanders in the Pacific/Asian region is served by greater understanding and development of our own national culture'.[37]

HELEN CLARK, MILITARY HERITAGE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

The final part of this article explores how the Unknown Warrior has served—and continues to do so—a government agenda to shape New Zealand's national identity. Through her leadership in the heritage sphere, Prime Minister Helen Clark played an 'instrumental' role in 'redefining New Zealander's [*sic*] shared past'.[38] During Clark's leadership of the 1999-2008 Labour Government, Volkerling argues '[a]mong the particular achievements to be considered are … [Clark's] promotion and preservation of New Zealand's military heritage'.[39]

In 2000 the Ministry for Culture and Heritage was established, with the prime minister taking on the arts, culture, and heritage portfolio. The new ministry's responsibility included war heritage projects such as writing publications on New Zealand history, the management of national monuments, and the administration of commemorative days. As prime minister, Volkerling points out, 'Clark could and did set her own agenda … [and] therefore may be considered New Zealand's most influential Cultural Minister'.[40] According to Graham Hucker, 'As Minister of Arts, Culture, and Heritage, Clark was instrumental in providing government support to military heritage projects both at home and abroad …' [and] 'recognized the importance of her country's part in military events on the world stage in the twentieth century'.[41]

Clark's efforts to preserve and promote New Zealand's military heritage as prime minister and minister of arts, culture, and heritage included:

- the Anzac commemorative site (2000) and the walking track extension at Gallipoli (2005);
- the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (2004) and the overseas New Zealand memorials on Anzac Parade in Canberra (2001), in Busan, South Korea (2005), and Hyde Park, London (2006);
- attendance at the commemoration of war anniversaries in which New Zealand servicemen fought (including Gallipoli—which she visited three times—and Passchendaele, and the Second World War battlefield sites of Crete, El Alamein, and D-Day);
- endorsing the literature on New Zealanders at war and the collection of the oral testimonies of Second World War veterans; and,
- secondary school essay competitions in which winners would travel to commemoration sites with the official government delegations.

In addition, the establishment of a National War Memorial Park dedicated in 2015 was the policy of Helen Clark's Labour Government.[42]

Clark's familial connections to war—her maternal grandfather and ten great uncles served in the First World War—meant her motivations concerning military heritage were very personal. She understood the role it could play in 'building the spirit of New Zealand and [in]

33 *Ibid.*, 242.

34 *Ibid.*, 232.

35 Kate McMillan, 'National Voting Rights for Permanent Residents: New Zealand's Experience', in *Global Migration: Old Assumptions, New Dynamics*, ed. Diego Acosta Arcarazo and Anja Wiesbrock (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2015), 105.

36 Volkerling, 'The Helen Clark Years', 97.

37 Project Development Team, 'Nga Taonga o Te Motu Treasures of the Nation, National Museum of New Zealand Te Marae Taonga o Aotearoa: A Plan for Development' (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1985), 7.

38 Volkerling, 101.

39 *Ibid.*, 95

40 *Ibid.*, 96.

41 Graham Hucker, 'A Determination to Remember: Helen Clark and New Zealand's Military Heritage', *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 40, no. 2 (2010): 105.

42 For a more extensive discussion on military heritage projects during Clark's government see Hucker, 'A Determination to Remember', 109–117.

Figure 3. Tomb of the Unknown Warrior Te Toma o Te Toa Matangaro, 12 November 2004. Photo: Guy Robinson.

understanding the forces that shape New Zealanders'.[43] 'War' according to Clark, 'has been an unforgettable and powerful experience for many New Zealanders, and a defining stage in the evolution of New Zealand as a nation'.[44] Clark was instrumental in supporting the return of the unknown warrior and such memorial projects showed a 'strengthening national identity' through recognition of New Zealand's participation in wars overseas and their impact and effects at home.[45]

Of the unknown warrior, Clark said, 'All we know of him is that he died on the Western Front, and that he was one of us. We are the future generations for whom he lost his life. In a very real sense he is one of the foundations of today's society'.[46]

The words of Vincent O'Sullivan's poem, *Homecoming – Te Hokinga Mai*, read at the interment ceremony, succinctly capture the unknown warrior's contribution to the nation's contemporary national identity:

> The past we harvest that was yours,
> The present that you gave for ours.[47]

43 Hucker, 114.

44 Helen Clark, 'PM launches campaign of Ministry for Culture and Heritage to preserve wartime memories', Beehive, 18 February 2002, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/pm-launches-campaign-ministry-culture-and-heritage-preserve-wartime-memories.

45 Hucker, 114. It is important to acknowledge the influence of eminent New Zealand historian, Dr Ian McGibbon (formerly Chief Editor [War History] at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage) in Clark's decision to support the unknown warrior project. McGibbon believed the return of an unknown soldier and his entombment at the National War Memorial would contribute to New Zealand's growing sense of national identity. Hank Schouten, 'The Homecoming', Dominion Post, 13 November 2004, 15, accessed 14 June 2019, https://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/databases/newztext/search-newztext/view/?sid=1958293&d4=fairfax%2Ftext%2F2004%2F11%2F16%2Fdoc00089.html.

46 Helen Clark, 'Address at Memorial Service for Unknown Warrior', 12 November 2004, Beehive, accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/address-memorial-service-unknown-warrior.

47 Vincent O'Sullivan, 'Homecoming – Te Hokinga Mai', Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Homecoming ceremony, accessed 14 June 2019, https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/park/national-war-memorial/tomb/homecoming.

But Clark was also concerned to 'reposition national identity to a more international setting' according to Hucker.[48] 'Clark, as the prime minister of New Zealand, was such a strong advocate of attending war anniversaries and commemoration services in global settings; she understood that in an increasingly globalized world, Zealand's military heritage and its contribution and participation in major overseas events in the twentieth century was an important piece "in the mosaic that makes up the picture the world sees when it thinks of New Zealand"'.[49]

The return of the unknown warrior was a widely promoted national event that captured the public's attention. According to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, it is believed that 'around 100,000 people lined the streets of Wellington to witness the funeral procession'.[50] The televised live broadcast was the largest undertaken since the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland.[51] Hucker argues that 'the interment of the Unknown Warrior … marked the apogee of military heritage in New Zealand, and perhaps, even the end of "empire" here' (Fig 3).[52]

* * *

The night before the Unknown Warrior's interment at the National War Memorial, he lay in state in the Legislative Council Chamber of Parliament Buildings. I was one of an estimated 10,000 people who went to pay my respects.[53] The lighting in the room and the mood of fellow visitors was subdued. Perhaps it was this atmosphere, the intensive publicity and promotion that surrounded the warrior's return, the relief of completing the tomb in a very tight timeframe and the associated stress, but as I left the chamber, it was with tears in my eyes. Whether this was succumbing to the government's national identity project or sharing a sacred moment of collective memory, I do not know.

Kingsley Baird is a visual artist whose work represents a longstanding and continuous engagement with memory and remembrance, and loss and reconciliation through making artefacts and writing. Major examples of his work in this field are the New Zealand Memorial in Canberra (2001, with Studio of Pacific Architecture), the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (2004, Wellington, New Zealand); the international Nagasaki Peace Park sculpture, *Te Korowai Rangimarie The Cloak of Peace* (2006); *Tomb* (2013) at France's Historial de la Grande Guerre; and *Stela* (2014) at the Militärhistorisches Museum der Bundeswehr in Germany. Memorial investigation continues in current practice with *Odyssey*, a sculpture collection concerned with composing historical and contemporary visual narratives – principally related to conflict – within the three-dimensional 'settings' of cast-bronze First and Second World War helmets. Kingsley Baird is the board chair of WHAM (War History Heritage Art and Memory) Research Network; and is the General Editor of Memory Connection journal. He is a Professor of Fine Arts in the College of Creative Arts at Massey University. www.kingsleybaird.com | k.w.baird@massey.ac.nz

48 Hucker, 114.

49 *Ibid.*

50 'Tomb of the Unknown Warrior', Ministry for Culture and Heritage Manatū Taonga, accessed 13 June 2019, https://mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-monuments-and-war-graves/tomb-unknown-warrior.

51 Hucker, 113.

52 *Ibid.*, 112.

53 'Tomb of the Unknown Warrior', Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatū Taonga, accessed 13 June 2019, https://mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-monuments-and-war-graves/tomb-unknown-warrior.

Singing From the Same Song Sheet: Patriotism in the 1917 Classroom

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Abstract

This article reviews how singing came to be used as part of the school experience in 1917 to foster a sense of patriotism, and to support New Zealand's commitment to the First World War. To start, key curriculum initiatives that embedded singing in schools as part of the compulsory curriculum prior to the First World War are outlined. The main barrier to effective singing in schools was always the level of competence that teachers had in facilitating this activity. As the First World War progressed patriotic songs were made available for school use. Examples of this repertoire illustrate how the songs became more sophisticated and overtly patriotic. Political forces shaping the school experience such as the influence of the National Efficiency Board in encouraging displays of patriotism, particularly flag saluting ceremonies, are also highlighted. As part of the increasing custom of patriotic displays, singing became an integral element, particularly the two national anthems of New Zealand: 'God Save the King'; and 'God Defend New Zealand'. The First World War provoked a wave of new compositions, both songs and instrumental works. There was a well-organised Society for the Encouragement of New Zealand Music and one of the aims of this organisation was to support the official introduction into public schools of songs composed by New Zealanders. There was increased patriotic zeal following the end of the First World War, but the incorporation of songs inspired by the war no longer had the same currency and they began to fall away from the repertoire.

Keywords

First World War; New Zealand; patriotism; schools; singing

> 'No more noble aspiration could inspire poet and composer than to hand down to posterity some memorials of the great and heroic deeds of our soldiers.'[1]

The Education Act of 1904 made singing compulsory in New Zealand primary schools. Following this, a syllabus of school music was published to support teachers in implementing this aspect of the school curriculum. At secondary level the inclusion of singing was left to the discretion of school principals. George Hogben, Inspector-General from 1899–1914 and Director of Education from 1914–1915, was responsible for the design of the new syllabus of 1914 which maintained the status of singing as part of the curriculum up to Standard Six (approximately 12 years of age).[2] He believed that education was one of the strongest unifying influences in society and therefore that it was the role of schools and teachers to shape children into productive, moral, and healthy citizens prepared to serve their country in both peace and war.[3] His opinion was that the war had been forced upon the British empire and as such New Zealand was honour bound to defend other nations in order to keep loyal to established treaties.[4] His determination that students should be taught about the war was conveyed in many ways, one of which was through singing.[5] Although clearly supportive of singing in schools from a policy perspective, Hogben also advocated strongly for teacher autonomy and liberty in the classroom and was often

1 Josiah Hanan, 'New Zealand Music', *Star*, 25 August 1917, 10.

2 'For Good Service: Mr G. Hogben Honoured', *Dominion*, 16 November 1915.

3 *Ibid*.

4 *Ibid*.

5 *Ibid*.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 27–32
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/turner
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/5

quoted, saying 'get the best teacher you can, and when you have got him, leave him alone'.[6] The Chief Inspector of Schools noted in February 1914 that this gave the teacher ample opportunity to develop a programme that would materially improve the quality of singing in schools.[7]

The Regulations for Inspection and Syllabus of Instruction for schools included four expectations for singing lessons, and for singing exercises to be practised in schools.[8] These were:

- By wisely chosen songs to awaken the imagination, and widen the capacity for emotion, while subjecting expression to artistic restraint.
- To cultivate the musical ear and the love of sweet sounds, and to train the pupils in the use of the melodious tones in their voices.
- To give some practical elementary knowledge of musical notation, and thus lay a foundation for further musical progress.
- To develop musical taste, by the singing of appropriate melodies, aided by suggestions from the teacher.

These regulations show that singing in the curriculum was used for a range of purposes, including: as a moral force; for voice and aural training; and for recreation and pleasure.

Meeting these expectations was the responsibility of the teacher and as such required not only choosing repertoire but also having the skills to develop singing ability. However, by June 1914, the perceived state of singing in state schools was so poor it prompted the Auckland Society of Musicians to initiate a petition, co-signed by all of the musicians' societies in New Zealand, asking the Minister of Education, J. Allen, to appoint a committee of prominent musicians to consider the matter and make recommendations.[9] There was no action taken by the minister to establish the proposed committee upon receipt of this submission.

The issue of teacher competence in guiding students with singing in schools had been identified in the Cohen Commission report on the education system in 1912.[10] This report suggested singing was such an important subject that special attention should be paid to it in teacher training colleges. It also recommended Saturday classes for those currently in service to raise the standard of the teaching of singing throughout the country. During the war years professional development programmes were offered around the regions by travelling instructors. These required a significant commitment from teachers with some programmes running for 12 consecutive, compulsory Saturdays.[11]

Within schools there was a tension between the emphasis placed on singing from an educative as opposed to recreative perspective. Otago school inspectors, in their annual report of 1917, make no mention of the educational value of singing simply commenting that some teachers did not value the recreative effect of incidental singing. By contrast Mr A.H. Robinson, speaking to the New Zealand Educational Institute, maintained the educative value was far greater than the recreative value.[12] He was dismissive of those who thought otherwise saying 'that there were many who regarded it merely as a little sing-song—a kind of "smoke-oh" with as much relation to education as a smoke bears to the actual work in hand'.[13]

The *School Journal*, established in 1907, was one of Hogben's progressive educational initiatives. This quarterly free publication was the first school book to be produced by the Education Department for use in New Zealand schools. During the war years patriotic songs were included in the editions of the *School Journal*. Although the sentiments were clear, the lyrical quality was often unsophisticated, as can be noted with the 'Flag Song' from the June 1914 edition of the journal:[14]

> Some flags are red or white or green,
> And some are yellow too.
> But the dear, dear flag that we love best,
> Is the red and white and blue.
> Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
> Of red and white and blue.
>
> We love our native country's flag,
> To it our hearts are true.
> Above we wave in splendid folds,
> The red and white and blue.
> Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
> Of red and white and blue.

Fortunately for the students, teachers and any audience, these home-grown songs started to gain more lyrical maturity as the war progressed. 'New Zealand, the Land 'neath the Southern Cross', which featured in the November 1915 *School Journal*, offered more lyrical substance using rhyming couplets as the main

6 Herbert Roth, *George Hogben: A Biography* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 1952), 152.

7 'Chief Inspector of Schools', *Press,* 10 February 1914, 4.

8 Department of Education, *Regulations For Inspection and Syllabus of Instruction* (1914), 29.

9 'Present–Day Music', *New Zealand Herald*, 16 June 1914, 9.

10 Mark Cohen, *Report to the Commission on Education in New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1912), 18.

11 Susan Braatvedt, *A History of Music Education in State Primary and Intermediate Schools 1878–1989* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 2002), 145.

12 A.H. Robinson, 'Educational Institute', *Otago Daily Times*, 7 June 1919, 13.

13 *Ibid*.

14 *School Journal* Part 2: June 1914.

poetic device.[15] A range of patriotic war song themes are covered, in particular fighting for Britain as the Motherland, honour from service and for supreme sacrifice. This song geographically locates with the reference to the Southern Cross and gives equal status to New Zealand and Aotearoa as the name for this land.

> In southern climes, in the rough rolling seas
> A fair land is planted well fanned by the breeze
> "Aotearoa" the long white cloud
> Her people are happy contented and proud
> Of their land and their home with its sea girt shore
> New Zealand the fairest "Aotearoa".
>
> *Chorus*:
> New Zealand! Fairland 'neath the Southern Cross
> New Zealand! The home of the free
> Her mountains so high, her valleys so green
> Her rivers, her lakes, like silver their sheen
> Oh give me New Zealand, the land of my birth
> New Zealand, my own land the fairest on earth.
>
> In her sons and daughters, the old blood still flows
> They still love the mother through weal and through woes
> Her cause it is their cause, they spring at her word
> To render assistance, If need draw the sword
> New Zealand! No craven! Her beacon fires light
> The mother is calling boys into the fight!
>
> God grant that her sons may with honor return!
> Help those that are sick, comfort all those who mourn
> May all raise their voices in praise, not in grief
> As one who rejoices in sweet found relief
> New Zealand acclaims them, her sons who replied
> To save her, and who for her honor have died. [16]

Along with the repertoire provided by the *School Journal*, other war-related songs were also used for school performances. An example can be seen in the patriotic selection for a concert in aid of the school picnic fund at Pakowhai School in October 1916.[17] The following songs were performed: 'I will make a Man of you'; 'I want to be a Soldier'; and 'Sergeant Daddie, V.C.'

Further moves to strengthen the place of singing as part of the school experience were introduced in 1917. The *New Zealand Fern School Book,* published in 1917, was produced to support singing in schools.[18] In his introduction to the collection J. Rennie notes the perceived want of teachers for distinctive New Zealand school songs. All of the lyrics were by M.A.J. Crawford with music by G.B. Laidlaw. Of the ten songs, nine were based on New Zealand nature themes: 'The Fern'; 'Toi Toi Grass'; 'The Crimson Rata'; 'Raupo (Bulrushes)'; 'Fantails'; 'Cowbells'; 'Kowhai Bells'; 'Manuka'; 'Pawa Shells' with 'Our Flag' inspired by New Zealand's commitment to the First World War. The flag was a popular theme for patriotic songs and 'Our Flag' draws heavily on the imagery of pride in nationhood, supreme sacrifice, and of fighting for the flag.[19]

> Silver stars on an azure sky,
> our own dear flag is passing by,
> Silver stars on an azure ground,
> The Empire's cross above them found;
> Proudly we welcome that flag of Blue,
> It aye will find us staunch and true,
> Staunch and true to our native land,
> By sea borne breezes gently fanned.
>
> Hearts beat fast and the tear drops fall,
> As each brave deed we soft recall,
> At sight of stars on an azure ground;
> For foreign lands have many a mound,
> Sacred dust of our boys that fell,
> For silver stars they loved so well;
> Brave and true for the flag they died,
> The flag that is our joy and pride.
> Ne'er let Greed or Dishonour stain,
> Our flag of blue for fleeting gain,
> May it stand for Truth and Right,
> And stainless float in honored might;
> Bright as stars let our record be
> In lands 'neath the Southern Cross so free;
> Greet we proudly that flag of blue,
> To Home and King we'll e'er be true.

A critic of these works, writing under the non-deplume A. Musician, stated unambiguously that:

> There can be discovered in the music hardly a single redeeming feature worth mentioning. Under ordinary conditions this plain valuation of a futile attempt would have been gladly spared publicity. But, unfortunately for the composer, the collection bears the imprint: "Authorised by the Education Department of the New Zealand Government for use in State Schools," a statement which makes it an imperative, if unpleasant duty to enter a protest and denounce an act of folly on the part of that Department. If ignorance of the law is deemed no valid excuse for the offender, why should ignorance of music exempt the Education Department from responsibility in that, as in any other educational subject entrusted to their care and supervision?[20]

15 *School Journal* Part 3: November 1915.

16 *Ibid*.

17 'Pakowhai', *Hastings Standard*, 9 October 1916, 3.

18 M. Crawford and G. Laidlaw, *New Zealand Fern School Song Book Containing Ten Beautiful Songs with Music in Old and New Notations* (Dunedin: Mills, Dick and co., 1917), 22.

19 *Ibid*.

20 A. Musician, 'A School Song Book: Music under the Education Department', *Press*, 11 August, 1917.

In 1917, the National Efficiency Board recommended that schools introduce flag-saluting ceremonies. The practice of saluting the flag was not new in schools and the *New Zealand Journal of Education* had previously provided rules for flag drills in 1903. The intention of this practice was to instil in the minds of school children a strong patriotic sentiment through overt displays of conformity. The Board was following the lead of American schools in recommending the adoption of this practice and they had the full support of the Minister of Education, J.A. Hanan. Singing, particularly of both of New Zealand's national anthems: 'God Save the King' and 'God Defend New Zealand', was included as part of the flag-saluting ceremony and for other occasions such as Anzac Day, Empire Day, Declaration Day, and Dominion Day. Some schools also celebrated Trafalgar Day and Waterloo Day.

Following the tabling of a letter from W.B. Scandrett, former Mayor of Invercargill, to the Southland Education Board, along with his generous offer to provide sixteen thousand copies, they voted to introduce daily singing of the national anthem with a new patriotic verse for 'God Save the King':[21]

> God bless our splendid men,
> Send them safe home again,
> God bless our men.
> Keep them victorious,
> Happy and chivalrous,
> They are so dear to us,
> God bless our men.[22]

Journalist P. Lawlor recalled that prior to the First World War 'God Save the King' was only played at events when the Vice-Regal party was in attendance, but as the war progressed so too did the playing of anthems, with the French and Russian national anthems also regularly played at public functions and the audience standing at every occasion.[23]

In a circular to schools sent in September 1917, and endorsed by the Minister of Education, a programme for Dominion Day outlined by the Senior Inspector to schools included guidance for instruction in History, Geography, Composition, Arithmetic, and Recitation and singing:[24] 'Recitation and singing. – Selections from Bracken and other New Zealand poets might be read, and a striking verse committed to memory. Failing these, let any poems of a patriotic character be read or recited. For singing, the National Anthem, the New Zealand anthem, and other New Zealand songs should be sung'.[25] Although Bracken's 'God Defend New Zealand' was not officially recognised as a national anthem until 1977, this shows it had become firmly entrenched by 1917. This also suggests that Bracken, who had died in 1898, had been elevated in status as a patriotic poet of national pre-eminence. However, he was not a musician and the accompanying music that would lead to his poem becoming the New Zealand national anthem, and subsequently sung in schools nationwide, was acquired through a competition. In 1876 three German musicians based in Melbourne had been given the task of selecting the music and they chose the score composed by J.J. Woods, a teacher from Lawrence in Otago.[26]

Dominion Day was never a public holiday but it was no doubt eagerly embraced by students as it typically meant an early dismissal for students after the formalities were concluded. Dominion Day events at Pukahu School in September 1917 were reported as follows: 'The children assembled, saluted the flag and sang a patriotic song. The headmaster, Mr R.H. Florence, then addressed the children on the growth of New Zealand and patriotism. After singing the National Anthem, the children were then dismissed for the day'.[27] Likewise, at Lyttelton District High School the principal, Mr E.U. Just: '… called for three cheers for our soldiers at the front. The children gave a hearty response, and followed up by singing *Sons of New Zealand*. After giving further cheers for Dominion Day and singing the National Anthem, the proceedings terminated by the children marching past and saluting the flag'.[28]

There was a political and societal expectation that teachers would participate fully in school based patriotic ceremonies. The Alien Enemy Teacher's Act of 1915 had enabled Education Boards to easily dismiss from teaching any non-British citizen who had citizenship of an enemy state.[29] Furthermore, there were well-documented examples of teacher dismissals for expressing negative sentiments towards New Zealand's war effort. This was consistent with a general rejection of German popular culture during the war. For example, the Auckland Liedertafel was renamed the Auckland Male Choir and the Dresden Piano company became the Bristol Piano company.[30]

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21 William B. Scandrett, 'A Patriotic Suggestion', *Manawatu Herald*, 5 February 1916, 5.

22 *Ibid*.

23 Pat Lawlor, *More Wellington Days* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 1962), 89.

24 'Dominion Day', *Manawatu Herald*, 18 September 1917.

25 *Ibid*.

26 Max Cryer, *Hear Our Voices We Entreat: The Extraordinary Story of New Zealand's National Anthems* (Christchurch: Exisle 2004), 42.

27 'Pukahu', *Hastings Standard*, 28 September 1917.

28 'Dominion Day', *Press*, 25 September 1917.

29 Roger Openshaw, Greg Lee, and Howard Lee, *Challenging the Myths* (Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press, 1993), 121.

30 Chris Bourke, *Good-Bye Maoriland* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017), 131.

Coupled with the in-school experience there were also much larger inter-school events. For example, the Wellington Queen's carnival of July 1915 featured a choir of 800 students from schools around the region.[31] They performed two concerts of national hymns and patriotic songs in the Town Hall. The support for school displays of patriotism was widespread although some questioned the appropriateness of on-going celebration events particularly in 1917 with the huge toll being exacted on the western front. Mr S.R. Dickinson, Headmaster of St. Andrew's College in Christchurch, asked: 'Are we such fools as to think there is going to be a regular perpetual jubilee of prosperity after the war is over, and that there will be no more wars to be prepared for? If we are, by all means let us put off getting what will make our children fit, and go on simpering vapid platitudes about parental love and "our dearest pledges", and all the rest of it'.[32] Festivals for the encouragement of New Zealand music were established in 1916. In Christchurch, Mr A. Lilly, composer of the music for 'We're coming back, Zealandia!' said that: 'If the New Zealand born composers were only treated with a little patience and consideration they would show that they could produce work on a far higher plane than the modern trashy, decadent German work which was in the main pot-boiling pure and simple'.[33] His strong advocacy for New Zealand compositions was widely supported and in August 1917 he received political support in a widely circulated letter from the Minister of Education, part of which said 'during war, such as is at present convulsing the whole world, the influence of music cannot be overestimated in inspiring deeds of heroism and gallantry...'.[34] Hanan followed this up with a letter suggesting a meeting between the two to discuss the prospect of introducing into public schools more songs composed by New Zealanders. However, this initiative did not progress to any formal implementation.

Hanan continued to support singing in schools. His 1918 Education report is evidence of that and notable for his strong support of the arts underpinning his educational vision. He said: 'All true education is the play of life upon life; of the activities of the child on the activities of life—hence the great importance of such subjects as English, civics and history, geography, singing, and a study of nature, not only in the primary, but in the secondary schools and in the universities'.[35]

There were hundreds of songs and tunes composed between 1914–1918. Not all of these were directly related to the First World War but the majority were patriotic and as such would be considered appropriate for use in the school setting. The Patent Office records the following order of musical submissions for the beginning of 1917:

– 'O' God defend NZ'
– 'Band march "Featherston"'
– 'The Boys of Killarney'
– 'When we meet you Kaiser Billy in Berlin'
– 'We'll never forget our boys'

Within the wave of patriotic song writing it is possible that some progressive teachers also encouraged their students to compose, although this was not part of the teaching syllabus guidelines. Finding evidence of patriotic song writing from school students would be a worthwhile starting point for further research. A few years later, there was strong support for students to write original music when E. Douglas Tayler was appointed Supervisor of Musical Education in 1926.[36]

After the First World War many schools kept flag-saluting ceremonies and commemorative days but singing of patriotic songs was not maintained to the level it had been previously. Openshaw has noted there was a 'rapid expansion of patriotic activity'.[37] However, the reasons for this new wave of patriotism, although stemming from the First World War were not focussed on the war, therefore songs about the First World War and the great and heroic deeds of our soldiers were no longer as relevant.

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In 2002 he founded the musical collective Ceol Manawatū and has produced three studio albums. The primary focus for Ceol Manawatū is the arrangement, recording, and performance of original music connected to Manawatū. In 2007 he travelled to Belgium with the band Wild Geese to perform at the 90th commemoration events at Messines. The following year

31 'Children in Song', *Dominion*, 2 July 1915.

32 S. Dickinson, 'Enlightening the community mind', *Education Crusade*, 23 April 1918, 4.

33 A. Lilly, 'New Zealand Music', *Press* 15 September 1916.

34 Hanan, 'New Zealand Music'.

35 Josiah Hanan, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year Ending 31 December 1917: Session 1-11, E, 01* (1918).

36 John Thomson, *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* (Oxford University Press, 1991), 269.

37 Roger Openshaw, 'The Highest Expression of Devotion: New Zealand Primary Schools and Patrotic Zeal During the Early 1920s', *History of Education* 9, no. 4 (1980): 333–34.

he was invited to play the lament at the Service of Remembrance for New Zealanders at Polygon Wood and at the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. He is an invited member of the New Zealand Pilgrimage Trust.

He has a particular interest in the music associated with the First World War, both historical and contemporary, and has recorded several war-related songs: 'Passchendaele': https://youtu.be/osR16hyH9eM; 'Anzac Cove': https://youtu.be/BCvBxeLMJDk; and 'Maunganui Duff': https://youtu.be/Pqwo3_tDe1E. P.D.Turner@massey.ac.nz

‘He died for us’: The Challenge of Applying Critical Thinking at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, 2015–17

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Abstract

On Anzac Day 2015, the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park in Wellington, officially opened to the public. With the National War Memorial, dedicated in 1932, at its heart, the development of the park was the government’s key project to acknowledge the centenary of the First World War. The park shared its opening with another First World War commemorative initiative, *The Great War Exhibition* at the nearby former National Art Gallery and Dominion Museum building.

In my role as Senior Historian–Educator I sought to establish an education programme at Pukeahu that would use an inquiry-based approach to encourage students to think critically about the National War Memorial and the wider themes of commemoration and remembrance.

Students as young as eight years old would gather round the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior and when asked ‘who is buried inside?’ would reply that the soldier interred within was someone who had ‘died for us’, ‘a hero’. These answers highlighted the need for our teaching to strike a balance that allowed space for empathy and emotion—valid responses in the context of a war memorial—while encouraging a more critical acknowledgement as to why the tomb exists in the first place (see Baird, this volume).

Remembering ‘the fallen’ is steeped in traditions that can be difficult to challenge or question. They reflect practices in which those participating have rarely had a say in creating yet are required to dutifully observe. Young New Zealanders visiting Pukeahu need to be supported in thinking critically about such practices to enable informed reflection.

This is an autoethnographic article in which I share my observations of teaching at Pukeahu between its opening in April 2015 and the Passchendaele centenary in October 2017. It examines the impact of the wider First World War centenary commemorations on the education programme and the pedagogy adopted to help students gain a deeper understanding of the impact of war on the nation.

Keywords

autoethnographic; commemoration and remembrance; empathy; education; memorialisation; national identity; Pukeahu National War Memorial Park; sacrifice and honour; war and conflict

This is an autoethnographic account of what I observed to be some of the challenges encountered when employing critical thinking skills with school groups visiting Pukeahu National War Memorial Park (Pukeahu) in Wellington between its opening on Anzac Day 2015 and the Passchendaele commemorations of October 2017. How could we encourage school visitors to Pukeahu to critically analyse what they experienced there objectively and to make reasoned judgments and conclusions as to its significance and meaning? Hew Strachan, noted British war historian and member of the United Kingdom government’s First World War Centenary Advisory Board, had warned that if the commemoration simply reworked these ‘familiar themes of remembrance, it will be repetitive, sterile and possibly even boring.’[1] He continued, ‘[i]f we do not emerge at the end of the process in 2018 with fresh perspectives, we shall have failed’.[2]

1 Hew Strachan, ‘First World War Anniversary: We Must Do More Than Remember’, The Telegraph, 11 January 2013, accessed 20 December 2019, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/9795881/First-World-War-anniversary-we-must-do-more-than-remember.html.

2 *Ibid.*

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 33–38
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/watters
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/6

New Zealand's official First World War commemoration programme (WW100) marked the centenary of the war through a range of events, activities, and projects in all parts of the country.[3] Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage was a key contributor to WW100. Manatū Taonga historians produced a range of new content for our NZHistory website and contributed to the official Centenary History Programme of print publications. In the education space, our 'Walking with an Anzac' project was a place-based initiative that encouraged schools to explore the war's impact on their own community and then locate this experience within the broader, national narrative. In 2018 the culmination of 'Walking with an Anzac' saw more than 60,000 New Zealand schoolchildren aged 9–15 years old use a discovery box containing a range of reproduced primary sources to gain a more intimate view of the war and its impact on real people in relatable settings and contexts.[4]

Manatū Taonga's other key education project was the development of a programme to support schools visiting the redeveloped Pukeahu National War Memorial Park in Wellington. Pukeahu was the government's key legacy project to commemorate the centenary and was built to create a space where New Zealanders could gather to remember and reflect on their country's experience of war and peacekeeping.

The themes of death, sacrifice, patriotism, and remembrance that dominated life at school a century before seemed just as familiar and powerful in the present. In 1914, many New Zealanders responded with great excitement and enthusiasm to the declaration of war. In the years prior to the outbreak of war the education system had helped prepare children for what would be expected of them. Children learned not only to read, write, and do their sums, but also received instruction in moral virtues and imperial ideals. Physical education and training in schools reflected the commonly held belief that a healthy body ensured a healthy mind. In the school cadets boys were taught to march, shoot straight and follow orders. Compulsory military training prepared a body of young men ready and willing to fight for 'King, Country, and Empire' when the call went out in August 1914. Young men, fearful the 'great adventure' would be over before they could take part, rushed to enlist. Britain accepted New Zealand's offer of an 8,000-strong expeditionary force on 6 August. Recruitment for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force's 'Main Body' began on 8 August and within four days 14,000 men had volunteered. Spoilt for choice the army could afford to be selective and for the remainder of 1914 the medical rejection rate averaged 25 per cent.

Everyone else was expected to show their support for the war through displays of patriotism, fundraising, or by making sacrifices in their daily lives. Schools and children raised funds for the war effort, knitted socks and scarves, and wrote letters to the 'boys' at the front. Children were encouraged to be 'cheerful' and 'helpful', to ease the worry and sorrow suffered by soldiers' mothers and wives.

But as the war dragged on into 1917 what could be described as a sense of 'war-weariness' had set in. Conscription had to be introduced in August 1916 to provide the necessary reinforcements, with the first monthly ballot held in November. In 1917 the call went out for renewed effort in support of the war and greater public displays of patriotism. In July of that year 14 conscientious objectors were sent from Trentham Camp to the western front.[5] Their victimisation by the military authorities was designed to break their resolve and force them into uniform. Soldiers who had returned home ill or injured, and parents of those who had lost a son, wrote to local newspapers demanding that children be taught to sing patriotic songs and demonstrate their loyalty through flag ceremonies.[6] Many schools made their students gather around the flagpole to remember the fallen, mark significant battles and salute or cheer the flag. This sense of loyalty was reinforced by singing the 'Flag Song', which first appeared in the *School Journal* in June 1914. It urged those gathered to 'hail the flag, the bonny flag, of red, white and blue'.[7] ,

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3 WW100 – New Zealand's First World War Centenary Programme, accessed 20 December 2019 (now archived), https://ww100.govt.nz/.

4 *Walking with an Anzac*, School Kit, Manatū Taonga, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, accessed 20 December 2019, https://www.walkingwithananzac.co.nz/.

5 'Untitled', *Manawatu Standard*, 20 July 1917, 4.

6 'Saluting the flag', Ministry for Culture and Heritage, updated 28-Aug-2014, accessed 20 December 2019, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/saluting-flag.

7 *Ibid.*:

Flag Song

Some flags are red or white or green,
And some are yellow too.
But the dear, dear flag that we love best,
Is the red and white and blue.
Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.

We love our native country's flag,
To it our hearts are true.
Above we wave in splendid folds,
The red and white and blue.
Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.

School Journal, June 1914, 80.

The New Zealand *School Journal* was initiated by Education Department head George Hogben in 1907 to provide schoolchildren with a free magazine containing information on history, geography, and civics.

The *School Journal* increasingly found subject material in the war, mixing moral fables, stories of heroism and battles, and poems and songs to promote patriotism in the schoolyard. Teachers pinned maps onto the walls of their classrooms and tracked progress at the 'Front'. Children were constantly reminded in class or at special assemblies of the sacrifices that 'old boys' and brothers and fathers were making in their name. They were also reminded that when they were old enough, they could be expected to be called upon to make the same sacrifices.

In 1917 the newly created National Efficiency Board recommended that schools require *all* children to salute the New Zealand flag at the start of each school day. District education boards ordered all schools to follow this recommendation.[8] Some teachers had preferred the less militaristic 'cheering of the flag' as a display of support.[9] This was not always understood or appreciated, and some teachers found themselves accused of 'seditious' or 'traitorous behaviour'. The *Hawera & Normanby Star* of 18 October 1918 reported on a 'curious matter' involving Hugh Goldsbury, a Quaker who was teaching at Umumuri School. Goldsbury was willing to cheer the flag but if forced to salute it, he would resign his position. The Wanganui Education Board initially accepted his resignation but rescinded this decision at a later meeting.[10] Earlier in 1918 the *Otago Witness* reported on the case of Henry Mayo, a teacher at Auckland Technical School who had been convicted and fined £25 for describing the British flag as 'a dirty rag not worth fighting for'. He was later deemed to be a 'fit and proper person to be teaching young Britons' having previously 'acted in a patriotic way' and the Board accepted his defence that on the day in question he was 'not feeling well'.[11]

A century later schools and their students were once more being called upon to do their 'bit', not by supporting an actual war but by actively participating in the commemoration of the war's centenary. Through a range of local and national initiatives, schools were encouraged to explore the impact of the war on our history and people. In addition to the range of curriculum-based experiences presented, including in the *School Journal*, all schools were provided with opportunities to participate in acts of remembrance.

At the end of 2014 I visited the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra to observe its long-established education programme in action. This is on a scale we in Wellington could only dream of. The Australian federal government's significant financial investment in the memorial includes the development and implementation of an education programme. A full-time staff of around a dozen is responsible for the development of online teaching resources. During my visit the teaching of the school groups I observed was the responsibility of community volunteers. Through the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) scheme, schools are given financial assistance to visit Canberra to support on-site learning about national democratic, historical, and cultural institutions. This funding in 2014 helped 160,000 Australian schoolchildren visit the AWM.[12]

The AWM includes permanent gallery spaces covering Australia's involvement in each major external conflict, as well as temporary exhibitions exploring other aspects of Australia's military history. These exhibitions are extensive and a significant attraction in themselves. The Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier and the Roll of Honour is another key feature of a visit to the memorial. Large, bronze panels in the Memorial's Commemorative Area, list the names of over 100,000 Australians who have died serving in overseas wars. The plaques are typically a sea of red as visitors attach poppies alongside the names of loved ones.

Many schools visiting the AWM participate in a Last Post Ceremony which is held shortly before the memorial closes each night. Visitors are invited to lay wreaths and floral tributes as a story of an individual serviceperson is told.[13] Members of participating schools with whom I spoke, described the ceremony as a moving and appropriate way of remembering those who are memorialised here.

I had witnessed similar displays in a private capacity when visiting the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ieper (Ypres), Belgium, and the Arlington National Cemetery near Washington DC, where schools were also significant participants in ceremonies. There was a strong sense that these visits were part of a pilgrimage. Ypres, Canberra, and Arlington all stressed the importance of the act of remembrance. There was consistency in terms of the form this remembrance would take. Canberra and Arlington highlighted the significance of recognising and valuing service to the nation. The relief commander who supervised the school groups laying wreaths at Arlington shook each child by the hand and thanked them for 'honouring' America's

8 'Displaying patriotism', Ministry for Culture and Heritage, updated 28-Aug-2014, accessed 20 December 2019, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/children-and-first-world-war/patriotism-in-schools.

9 *Ibid.*

10 'The Goldsbury Case', *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 18 October 1918, 3.

11 'A Teachers Loyalty', Otago Witness, 1 May 1918, 42. Note the average annual salary for a male teacher in a public school was recorded as £272 in the Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR) for 1918. 'Education: Primary Education', *AJHR*, 1919 Session I, E-02,17, accessed 20 December 2019, https://atojs.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/atojs?a=d&d=AJHR1919-I.2.1.6.3&e=-------10--1------0--.

12 Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER), accessed 20 December 2019, https://www.pacer.org.au/.

13 'Last Post Ceremony', Australian National War Memorial, accessed 20 December 2019, https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/last-post-ceremony.

fallen. The students participating were told that they had performed a 'great service to their nation'.

What was less obvious was the extent to which students had been encouraged to discuss what they had just witnessed. It was hard to know what work was going on behind the scenes to help students process the experience and embed any learnings from it. These observations were useful for us to reflect on as we developed the content and pedagogy for the education programme at Pukeahu. We wanted to ensure that our programme was not built on the notion of remembrance for remembrance's sake but presented opportunities for reflection where the purpose of such remembrance could be considered.

In 1917 we could speak of New Zealand as experiencing a sense of 'war-weariness'. In 2017 those of us working with the wider WW100 programme were experiencing something not dissimilar in the form of 'commemoration fatigue'. After two years of ceremonies and acknowledgement of certain milestones from the war how could we prevent things becoming 'boring and repetitive'. How could we maintain public interest *and* participation in a national commemoration that still had two years to run? We were acutely aware of the 'long shadow' cast by Gallipoli and its ability to dominate the entire centenary period.

In 2015, the Ministry of Education partnered with the Fields of Remembrance Trust on a project that saw approximately 2,500 commemoration packages delivered to all schools in time for Anzac Day.[14] The aim of the project was to provide an opportunity for those participating to establish their own field of white crosses at their school, resembling the cemeteries overseas where our fallen lay, as a way of honouring those who had served their country in the First World War. Each school was given 30 white crosses to commemorate the men and women who died while serving New Zealand. The list of names placed on these crosses included local soldiers and nurses; four New Zealand Victoria Cross recipients; the youngest New Zealander killed (aged 17); and an All Black captain. One of the crosses was labelled with the words 'known unto God' to commemorate the 'unknown soldier'. This initiative was deemed 'a huge success', with only a few schools choosing to opt out. Many schools commented on how poignant they found the exercise. It had a high visual impact and was able to produce an emotional response that was often interpreted as evidence of empathy and relevance. A smaller number were not so sure, questioning the connection of some of the names supplied with their community, or the choice of VC recipients as reinforcing the notion of heroes. The secular nature of contemporary New Zealand society made the appropriateness of using the Christian symbol of the cross questionable. It is worth noting that non-religious headstones are employed in Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries. Some schools baulked at the idea of turning part of their school grounds into a 'pop-up cemetery'.

Pukeahu and its new neighbour, *The Great War Exhibition* (GWE) located in the former National Art Gallery and Dominion Museum building, opened to much fanfare on Anzac Day 2015. An estimated 50,000 people attended the Dawn Service at Pukeahu. During the day large queues formed to view the GWE.

This enthusiasm for these new experiences continued throughout 2015. Before the opening of Pukeahu, formal school visits to the National War Memorial (NWM) were infrequent. There was no formal education programme in place. Within the first year of operation over 12,000 students had participated in a formal education visit to the combined sites.[15] But as we moved into 2016 it became apparent that for many, Gallipoli was *the* centenary. After the centenary in 2016 of the first Anzac Day there was a noticeable drop-off in the number of schools visiting. School visitor numbers in 2017 were around 3,500.

Many of the school groups that visited Pukeahu between 2015 and 2017 came with some experience of the commemoration of the war. Schools in existence at the time of the First World War often had an honour board acknowledging the teachers and ex-pupils who served or had been killed, as well as other memorials ranging from memorial gates, arches, plaques, trees, and stained-glass windows to school awards and prizes. These all served as an important connection for successive generations of students with their school's past.

At Pukeahu, we quickly discovered how established traditions of honouring war dead, whether by erecting white crosses as demonstrated by the Fields of Remembrance programme, or constructing monuments and memorials, affected our ability to encourage critical thinking by our visitors. Ours was a space steeped in much emotion around practices we had not created. There is an accepted form for official acts of remembrance that is rarely deviated from. These acts are underpinned by a belief that we, the living, owe so much to those who lost their lives in war. Honouring the fallen is the least we can do.

Despite having never visited Pukeahu before, many students quickly understood that they were visiting a 'special place'. This is often reinforced by the way teachers remind their students of what they believe is the necessary appropriate, respectful behaviour inside the cathedral-like Hall of Memories. This emphasis on 'good behaviour' can inhibit discussion. Once gathered inside the Hall of Memories we educators frequently

14 'Fields of Remembrance: packs to be delivered to schools and kura in March', Education Gazette Tukutuku Kōrero, accessed 20 December 2019, https://gazette.education.govt.nz/articles/1H9cqW-fields-of-remembrance-packs-to-be-delivered-to-schools-and-kura-in-march/.

15 'Queen Elizabeth II Pukeahu Education Centre', WW100, accessed 20 December 2019, https://ww100.govt.nz/queen-elizabeth-ii-pukeahu-education-centre.

start with the question, 'If this fell down tomorrow, would we bother to replace it?' Students can seem unsure as to how to answer, perhaps fearful that their answer may cause offence. Their answers tend to reflect what they think we want to hear. To help reassure students that all answers are acceptable as well as open avenues for broader discussion we ask supplementary questions about whether we would faithfully restore or rebuild and if not, what the alternatives might look like. Inviting students to think critically, creatively, and reflectively, rather than unquestioningly accept what they see before them is the goal.

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior frequently presents the most challenging space at Pukeahu from the perspective of critical thinking. Not all students are convinced there is actually a body in the tomb, but once this has been confirmed some will announce that 'he was a hero who died for us'. This casual use of the word 'hero' is perhaps not surprising. Despite his anonymity, his presence singles him out as in some way 'special'. Labelling him as such may well be seen as being suitably respectful. It might also be the result of what they had been taught, heard, or witnessed through experiences like the Fields of Remembrance. We always try to encourage them to explain what makes someone a hero. If we don't know who he was or anything about him, how can we describe him as a hero? We talk about why it is we feel the need to ascribe such labels and qualities to our war dead. Such conversations allow us to investigate other terms, such as 'our Glorious Dead', which we find on the dedication stones at the National War Memorial immediately behind the tomb. We may ask older students whether those who returned, the wounded and the damaged, can also lay claim to being 'glorious'.

The twin principles of sacrifice and gratitude exemplified by the tomb are complex concepts for a typical 11-year-old visitor to Pukeahu to consider. The notion that we/they are in debt to someone who died on the Somme all those years ago is challenging. It would be wrong to minimise the scale and impact of the loss of life and how it has shaped our practices of remembrance, but we need to ask whether we have emphasised it in such a way as to make other lines of inquiry harder to pursue.

To enhance Pukeahu's role as a transformative space in which teachers and educators could explore with their students a range of perspectives on how they think about their society, we developed a framework for our education programme.[16] This framework, consisting of nine principles,[17] provides teachers with 'design tools' when contemplating the purpose of a visit to the park to assist in developing powerful learning experiences. The principles are not intended as a checklist and, although written with Pukeahu in mind, could be used to design educational experiences at any site.

The end of the First World War centenary, and the closure of the GWE at the end of 2018, has provided an ideal opportunity to review and evaluate the success of the education programme at Pukeahu. The fact that some schools believed the closure of the GWE meant the end of formal educational visits to Pukeahu has presented a fresh opportunity to reassess the content of this programme. The concept of commemoration remains key, but other layers of Pukeahu's history such as the mana whenua history of the site are being developed for school audiences in order to broaden Pukeahu's appeal as an important site for learning outside the classroom. Central to this review and reassessment of the programme will be working with schools which visited during the peak centenary period to determine how helpful they found the framework in terms of both planning their visit and (more importantly) the embedding of key conceptual learning with their students as a result.

Questioning many of our inherited traditions associated with the commemoration of war is difficult. It can be challenging for students today to examine critically the events of the past that saw so many New Zealanders die. The impact of war on this scale is something most students visiting Pukeahu have never experienced. How we commemorate the impact of these events is also something our visitors to Pukeahu have had no say in creating. It is all too easy to accept such traditions and practices without question for fear of being seen as

16 Michael Harcourt, Andrea Milligan, Mark Sheehan, 'Pedagogical Framework for the Education Programme at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park', Manatū Taonga − Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2016. This report is found on the education page, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park website. https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/education.

17 The Nine Principles

Foreground the purpose of the visit
Prioritise conceptual approaches to learning
Embed visits within a pre, during and post framework
Collaborate with site educators
Discuss controversial issues
Balance emotional and critical responses
Separate memory and history
Use sites as opportunities to explore Māori history
Use collective pronouns carefully

Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 'Framework for the Education Programme at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park', 2016. A detailed discussion of these principles is available from the education page, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park website. For a detailed discussion of these principles, see Harcourt *et al.*, 'Pedagogical Framework', accessed 20 January 2020, https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/education.

disrespectful to the memory of those who served. More than a century after the First World War, if we believe it is important to make remembrance of such events mean something to young New Zealanders today, we must encourage and develop a different approach. We need to consider how we better foster and incorporate the student voice of today. Supporting students to think critically, creatively, and reflectively about commemoration, can achieve more than the simple replication of past practices and traditions and gain a richer understanding of conflict and its impact on our history.

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Mud, Blood and Not So Much Poppycock: ‘Myth’ Formation and the British Army in Late 1917

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Abstract
This article explores the origins of the ‘myths’ that have come to dominate popular memory of the First World War in Britain. Perceptions of the conflict as a bloody exercise in futility, orchestrated by inept generals, and fought in fields of mud are undoubtedly unrepresentative. Yet, far from pure fiction, such impressions can be historicised. Drawing on wider research into soldiers’ perception of crisis during 1914–1918, this piece argues that the kernel of many of these ‘myths’ can be found in the lived experience of the western front in 1917.

Keywords
Battle of Passchendaele; First World War; historical memory; historical myths; morale; 20th century Britain

The ‘myths’ of the Great War have been questioned and deconstructed by historians, yet, despite their efforts, they have had a limited impact on the popular memory of 1914–18 in Britain.[1] The Battle of the Somme’s centennial remembrance ceremony, which took place on 1 July 2016, provides an illustrative case study of how historical memory can be distorted and repurposed, used, and misinterpreted. Moving though it was, the event failed to capture the nuances of recent historical scholarship. Arriving at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site at Thiepval, France, attendees shuffled into the seating area that lay in the shadow of Sir Edwin Lutyens’ towering memorial to the ‘Missing of the Somme’.[2] Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was among the speakers paying homage to the lost servicemen. ‘On this day,’ he declared, ‘we remember all those caught up by the Battle of the Somme; those who faced the terrible waste and devastation, those who fought against all the odds, who endured the clinging mud and squalor of the trenches’.[3] The failure of more balanced scholarship to moderate such impressions has caused a fair amount of soul searching, not to mention frustration, among historians. Indeed, it has generated new research evaluating ‘the extent to which the range of commemorative activities undertaken since 2014 has engaged with, challenged, or changed this “myth”’.[4] Gordon Corrigan certainly would not be pleased.

1 See, especially, H. Jones, ‘As the Centenary Approaches: The Regeneration of First World War Historiography’, *The Historical Journal* 56 Issue 3 (Sept. 2013): 857–878, and H. McCartney, ‘The First World War Soldier and his Contemporary Image in Britain’, *International Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2014): 299–315.

2 For the Thiepval Memorial see, for example, G. Stamp, *The Memorial to the Missing of the Somme* (London: Profile Books, 2006, 2007) or J. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 2003), 105–108. For discussions of centenary activities see, for example, P. Cornish, ‘Imperial War Museums and the Centenary of the First World War’, *Twentieth Century British History* 27 Issue 4 (Dec. 2016): 513–517 or J. Kidd and J. Sayer, ‘Unthinking Remembrance? Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red and the Significance of Centenaries’, *Cultural Trends* 27, Issue 2: First World War Commemorations (2018): 68–82.

3 ‘Battle of the Somme: Royals at the Somme Commemoration’, BBC News Online, accessed 28 October 2019, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-36674451.

4 ‘Reflections on the Centenary of the First World War: Learning and Legacies for the Future’ Research Network, accessed 16 October 2019, http://reflections1418.exeter.ac.uk/.
For related research see C. Pennell, ‘Taught to Remember? British Youth and First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours’, *Cultural Trend*s 27, Issue 2: First World War Commemorations (2018): 83–98.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 39–44
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/mayhew
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/7

His monograph *Mud, Blood and Poppycock* was a wholesale attack on these inaccurate 'myths' about the conflict. 'The popular view of the Great War', he wrote, 'is of a useless slaughter of hundreds of thousands of patriotic volunteers, flung against barbed wire and machine guns by stupid generals who never went anywhere near the front line'.[5]

Historians should not simply dismiss these impressions of the First World War. It is more useful to ask *where* these common tropes emerged from, and *why* it is that they have become so central to public interpretations of 1914–18. Other scholars have made attempts to tackle these questions. Adrian Gregory, for instance, has examined the ways in which the commemoration ceremonies came to privilege the grieving, rather than the veterans, and became, at least to old soldiers, a symbol of the disconnect between the future they hoped for while at war and the reality of peace.[6] Dan Todman's compelling analysis of the historical memory of the war demonstrates how 'myths' surrounding 'mud', 'death', 'donkeys', 'futility', and 'poets' have been filtered by generational and historical context over the course of the 20th century.[7] Todman, however, shows that 'the modern myth of the war has its origins in events and emotions at the time'.[8] Perhaps, then, Jay Winter's conceptualisation of 'palimpsests' helps to explain the formation of these stereotypes. Winter defines the 'word "palimpsest" as something that is reused or altered but still bears visible traces of its earlier form'.[9] With this concept in mind, this article argues that many of these 'myths' are drawn from a set of experiences that befell British soldiers on the western front in 1917.[10] To do so, it will explore some of the key characteristics of this year, drawing on the findings of a wider research project on morale, which used the personal memoirs of men and particular units, as well as soldiers' newspapers and ego-documents (such as letters and diaries) written at the time.

First, though, it is important to consider exactly what a 'myth' is.[11] Historians, with some notable exceptions, often deploy the term as the antonym of 'truth' and consequently something to be avoided or combated. Dan Todman, however, uses 'myth' as a shorthand for 'history you can remember'. In his work a myth describes 'a belief about the past held by an individual but common to a social group', be it a nation, town, or family. These myths 'simplify, reducing complex events of the past to an easily understood set of symbols' that 'ease communication'.[12] Other disciplines see myths as a category of analysis, a key feature of human society, and something to be studied not dismissed. They might well be misrepresentations, in part imaginary or exaggerated; but they are also commonplace. They vary by religion and nation, and their origins are often clouded by the passage of time. Nonetheless, Todman makes it clear that each of Britain's historical myths has a purpose or function: 'mud', for example, is 'used to evoke a broader myth of the horror of the First World War'.[13] Those who espouse a functionalist explanation of myths would agree and argue that they provide a frame for social action or a worldview. Paul Radin suggested that myths direct popular perception: 'a myth is always explanatory. The explanatory theme often is so completely dominant that everything else becomes subordinated to it'.[14] In contrast, structuralists suggest that a myth provides meaning and purpose to fragmented and often conflicting cultural attitudes and perceptions.[15] The truth, as William G. Doty has argued, is that myths are 'complex'. They can 'be attempts to explain, others may satisfy human needs, symbolize something, consist of binary

5 G. Corrigan, *Mud, Blood and Poppycock* (London: Orion Publishing, 2003, 2004) 1–2. For the most balanced and successful attempt to 'pick' at these myths see G. Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory*. *The First World War: Myths and Realities* (London: Headline Book Publishing, 2001). For the development of myths during the war itself see, especially, E. Leed, *No Man's Land: Combat and Identity in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, 2009), 115–123.

6 A. Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919-1948* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994). Also J. Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

7 D. Todman, *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005, 2011). See also, B. Ziino (ed.), *Remembering the First World War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015); P. Grant, *National Myth and the First World War* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); G. Plain, ed., *Scotland and the First World War: Myth, Memory and the Legacy of Bannockburn* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2016).

8 Todman, *The Great War*, 221.

9 J. Winter, 'Palimpsests', in I. Sengupta, ed., *Memory, History and Colonialism* (London: German Historical Institute, 2009), 167.

10 For a broader history of 1917 as a year of failure see D. Stevenson, *1917: War, Peace & Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

11 Leed, *No Man's Land*, 118–121.

12 Todman, *The Great War*, xiii.

13 *Ibid.* 2.

14 P. Radin, 'The Basic Myth of the North American Indians' in *Eranos-Jahrbuch: Der Mensch und die Mythische Welt* (Winterthur: Rhein-Verlag Zurich, 1950), 370.

15 C. Lévi-Strauss, 'The Structural Study of Myth' in T. Sebeok, ed., *Myth: A Symposium*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974).

structures, or communicate hidden messages'.[16] First World War myths are not falsehoods. They stem from the worst of soldiers' shared experiences, particularly in 1917. The memories of this terrible year were something that unified those who survived it. So vivid and raw were these recollections that, subsequently, they were overused, overemphasised, or misapplied and came to characterise the war as a whole.

1917 was, for a variety of reasons, the most disappointing year from the perspective of the men serving in the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). The orchestration of the third battle of Ypres (Third Ypres) has rightly been criticised by historians, yet a number of scholars have drawn more nuanced conclusions. British assault tactics had improved and, arguably, German morale took a 'battering'.[17] Nevertheless, individual actors lack such holistic perspectives; it is lived experience, what one sees and what one is told, that informs perceptions. Many British soldiers felt that there was little to merit any optimism.[18] The first evidence of ebbing morale seems to have emerged in August 1917. Captain M. Hardie, the censor at Third (III) Army, reported that 'for the first time there is a frequent suggestion that the war cannot be won by military effort, but must end by political compromise'.[19] Illustratively, Lieutenant J.H. Johnson described Passchendaele as a 'mechanical, impersonal slaughter' and began to yearn for a life 'after the war'.[20] The extent to which the situation had improved by the end of the year is debatable.[21] David Stevenson and David Englander suggest that British morale remained at low ebb even in March 1918, an argument that has been supported by recent scholarship.[22] Dejection became pervasive during the summer and (while spirits lifted a little) was still evident towards the end of the year. Importantly, it contained all of the traces of the myths that have since come to dominate British public perception. This was, in part, the product of disappointment. Despite the undoubted horrors of the Somme campaign the preceding year, soldiers ended 1916 confident that they were treading a path towards victory.[23] In fact, the year began, despite troubling news from Russia, with a series of events that seemed to confirm this. There were still small tactical successes along the old Somme front, while the Battle of Arras, particularly at Vimy Ridge, offered the impression that new tactics *could* reap huge rewards. More significantly still, the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg line in March, a sound move on their part, indicated to the average British soldier an unmistakable change in the tone of the war: men sensed that the western front was becoming mobile, and infantrymen advanced alongside cavalry for the first time in the experience of many of them.[24] While careful not to reflect over-optimism, unit histories written shortly after the war point to a real sense of change.[25] What followed—Passchendaele, Cambrai, Russia's armistice with Germany, the crisis in Italy, not to mention the BEF's shift to a *defensive* strategy for 1918—meant that these hopes were quickly quashed and many men ended the year with little sense of forward momentum.

They were, one might say, stuck in the mud. The morass at Passchendaele was, alongside the rain, a defining feature of 1917. The weather had provided a source of great frustration and (particularly in winter) discomfort throughout the war; but in the conflict's penultimate year, it became a serious impediment to victory and peace. Santanu Das has described the

16 W.G. Doty, 'What is a Myth? Nomological, Topological, and Taxonomic Explorations', *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 86, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 2003): 391.

17 Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory*, especially 180, 183–184. Also N. Lloyd, *Passchendaele: A New History* (London: Penguin, 2017).

18 See, especially, A. Mayhew, 'Hoping for Victorious Peace: Morale and the Future on the Western Front' in L. Halewood, A. Luptak and H. Smyth, *War Time: First World War Perspectives on Temporality* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

19 IWM 84/46/1: Capt. M. Hardie, 'Report on III Army Morale': p 1.

20 IWM 77/33/1: Lt. J.H. Johnson, Diary 30 December 1917 and 6 January 1918.

21 A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War: Combat, Morale and Collapse in the German and British Armies* (Cambridge, 2008), 154–155, 184.

22 D. Stevenson, *With Our Backs to the Wall: Victory and Defeat in 1918* (London: Penguin, 2014), 267–268; D. Englander, 'Discipline and Morale in the British Army, 1917-1918', in J. Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 141; A. Mayhew, 'Making Sense of the Western Front: English Infantrymen's Morale and Perception of Crisis during the First World War', Unpublished PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science (2018).

23 Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory*, 186. Also W. Philpott, *Bloody Victory: The Sacrifice on the Somme* (London: Abacus, 2010), 403, 410–411.

24 Anon., *History of 1/6th The Royal Warwickshire Regiment* (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 1922), 37–38.

25 H.T. Chidgey, *Black Square Memories: An Account of the 2/8th Battalion the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 1914–1918* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1924), 167, 175; F.W. Ward, *The 23rd (Service) Battalion Royal Fusiliers (First Sportsman's): A Record of its Services in the Great War, 1914–1919* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1920), 57–58.

suffering, physical and psychological, engendered by these 'slimescapes' on the western front.[26] The 'popular myth' of mud as an inescapable, implacable, and unwavering enemy can be found in the lived experience of mid to late 1917.[27] As one senior veteran recalled, it was mud, not battle, that imposed the most 'misery and hardship on the soldier'.[28] Major General V.G. Toft recalled that Passchendaele had been 'a muddy and bloody shambles' (in that order).[29] The natural world became debilitating during these months. The summer months were unseasonably wet. During the height of the third battle of Ypres the rain was incessant; in July there was 158.2 mm and a further 162.3 mm fell in August.[30] In late August, Major G.H. Greenwell was forced to conclude that his had been the 'worst experience of modern warfare that I have yet struck'.[31] Such heavy rainfall on a battlefield that had already been churned and scarred by shellfire and trench digging left men dejected and pessimistic. P.R. Hall, for example, saw the 'torrents of rain' as an important part of Third Ypres' failure. He and many others were convinced that they 'were beaten by the weather of that terrible winter'.[32]

The mud and rainfall became a partner to death. It was not uncommon for men to become stuck in the quagmire around Ypres. In fact, many men were terrified of drowning (and some, probably erroneously, believed that this caused more danger than the German shells and bullets). H.E. Baker recalled his first conversations with the 'few men' that remained in 9th Battalion Devonshire Regiment. 'After the terrible Ypres 3 battle' they were little interested in discussing the Germans. However, they 'had a lot to say about the appalling conditions under which they had to fight'. They described how 'many more deaths' had been caused by men drowning in the mud than by enemy action.[33] Heavy losses among many units left some men struggling to adjust to the deaths of comrades and friends. Second Lieutenant Sydney Frankenburg, for instance, felt that the whole of his service was now a 'rotten' experience.[34] In one letter home the death of two flies became a tragic metaphor for those of his friends that had been 'smashed up'.[35]

Of course, other campaigns, in many theatres, witnessed heavy casualties. However, uniquely (in the British case) the physical environment around Ypres came to symbolise death. Some men could look on the old Somme battlefields, scarred and battered as they were, as evidence of hard-one successes. Yet, the 1917 battlefields held no such connotations: G.A. Stevens preferred St. Quentin to 'beastly old Flanders which one hates now'.[36] So visceral were some men's reaction that for some the smell of 'shit' *was* 'the smell of Passchendaele, [and] of the [Ypres] Salient'.[37]

All of this infused military manoeuvres with an aura of futility. While this had undoubtedly been felt before, it had been limited to particular occasions and contexts. By August 1917, it had spread throughout the army. Visions of victorious peace underpinned men's morale, but the III Army censor reported that 'for the first time there is a frequent suggestion that the war cannot be won by military effort, but must end by political compromise'.[38] Captain G.K. Rose recalled that: 'from the strategical aspect the operations showed by their conclusion that the error had been made of nibbling with weak forces at objectives which could only have been captured and secured by strong. Moreover, the result suggested that the objectives had been made on this occasion for the attack rather than the attack for the objectives'.[39] Although published in 1920, an undertone of bitterness is still apparent in Rose's comments. As the summer drew to an end, the expectation of another winter in the trenches was intensified by the failure of a military turning point to materialise. The end of Third Ypres was compounded by pacifist sentiments broadcast from the home front.[40] The soldiers, the III Army censor reported,

26 S. Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 35–72. For men's relationship with the landscape more generally, see R.J. Wilson, *Landscapes of the Western Front: Materiality during the Great War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012) and S. Daly, M. Salvante, and V. Wilcox (eds.), *Landscapes of the First World War* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

27 'More Mud Than Glory', *The B.E.F. Times*, 2, no. 1 (15 August 1917): 12.

28 Lt. Gen. E.L.M. Burns in C.E. Wood, *Mud: A Military History* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2006, 2007), 77.

29 IWM 67/7/1: Maj. Gen. V.G. Tofts, Memoir: p 11.

30 Mayhew, 'Making Sense of the Western Front', 223–226.

31 LIDDLE/WW1/GS/0664: Maj. G.H. Greenwell, Letter 29 August 1917.

32 IWM 87/55/1: P.R. Hall, Memoir: p 19.

33 IWM 12/31/1: H.E. Baker, Memoir, Part 6: 4.

34 LIDDLE/WW1/GS/0583: 2nd Lt. Sydney Frankenburg, Letter 25 December 1917.

35 *Ibid.* Letter 11 January 1918.

36 IWM 06/5/2: Brig. Gen. G.A. Stevens, Letter to Mother 4 March 1918.

37 P. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975, 2000), 331.

38 IWM 84/46/1: Capt. M. Hardie, 'Report on III Army Morale, August 1917': 1.

39 Capt. G. K. Rose, *The Story of the 2/4th Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1920), 125.

40 IWM 84/46/1: Capt. M. Hardie, 'Report on III Army Morale/Peace Sentiment, August-October 1917': 1.

felt that 'they were drifting into an endless destruction and sacrifice' and 'want[ed] to be shown a way out'.[41] Hardie's final comments in October 1917 pointed to 'the immense value of successful advances'.[42] The early accomplishments at the Battle of Cambrai briefly rekindled such hope, but the enemy counteroffensive made it clear this avenue for rehabilitation did not exist. This coalesced with bad news from other places and fronts throughout this year: Germany's successes, the French mutinies, the Italian collapse at Caporetto, and Russia's eventual withdrawal from the war, together painted a bleak strategic picture. It is unsurprising, then, that Sydney Frankenburg reported, in December 1917, that censoring letters had 'saddened' him.[43] G.A. Stevens, previously a very conscientious soldier, was 'getting awfully fed up with this jolly old war', while others simply felt they had 'come to the end of . . . [their] tether'.[44] Revealingly, the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's magazine described a metaphorical football game for its soldier-readers: they and the opposition (the 'enemy') were 'unable to pass the halfway line'. The Warwickshires, it concluded, had 'nobly upheld their record of this war, [but] a draw was the verdict'.[45] While defeat was unimaginable, it was at this stage that men began to believe the war was unwinnable.

Pessimistic about victory, men began to question the High Command's orchestration of the war. Not only this, but it is during this period that combatants began to complain more bitterly about the Home Front: particularly politicians, shirkers, and strikers. Christmas and New Year 1917–18 saw a dwindling belief that 'thay [sic]' were capable of ending the war.[46] Tellingly, Captain A.J. Lord expressed his hopes that the General Staff 'were not feeling too hostile' and would not 'devise' another offensive while the weather was so poor.[47] Dwelling on the year's fighting, Lieutenant J.H. Johnson pondered, with a deep sense of irony, whether 'the crisis and danger become greater if we are "winning the war"?'[48] The year's campaigns had drawn the men through multiple horrors and they sensed that the sacrifice had been for very little. Commanders became not only the focus of bitter resentment because of their comparative comfort but became regarded as the source of injustices and hardships. While its importance should not be overly emphasised, it is no surprise that the Étaples 'incidents', or mutiny, took place in September of this year.[49] Scepticism and a desire to escape had become more prominent by 1917, emotions that easily morphed into bitterness and regret. Though unrepresentative, it is telling that one military chaplain, Reverend M.A. Bere, concluded that 'I don't think we deserve to' win the war.[50] Of course, most men stoically continued to endure and, importantly, 1918 finally brought them victory and a campaign that witnessed a faltering return to semi-open warfare.

It was, however, the atmosphere of late 1917, not the stoic determination that characterised much of 1916, nor the unadulterated relief or renewed sense of purpose many men felt in 1918, that came to dominate Britain's collective memory of the Great War. The reasons for this can generally be found in the inter-war world, something beyond the scope of this short essay. The events of 1917 on the western front do, though, play an important role. They coalesced to form a common narrative bound together by negative emotions. Memory, and historical memory in particular, is selective. So, as a brighter post-war world failed to emerge from the conflict's embers, it is understandable that veterans (and civilians) fell back on a set of memories of 1914–1918 that seemed most appropriate: those that focused on bitterness and futility. Even the men who had served in earlier and more successful (or at least less painful) years could not help but have their appreciation of the war transformed by 1917. What is more, the BEF of late

41 *Ibid.*, 2.

42 *Ibid.*

43 LIDDLE/WW1/GS/0583: 2nd Lt. Sydney Frankenburg, Letter 10 December 1917.

44 IWM 06/5/2: Brigadier G.A. Stevens, Letter to Mother 10 December 1917; LIDDLE/WW1/GS/0273: Capt. C. Carrington, Diary 9 October 1917.

45 'The Dear Old Regiment at Play: From Horton to Hartley – A tale of travel', *The Dear Old Regiment*, (1 December 1917), 3.

46 IWM 07/02/1: S.B. Smith, Letter 29 October 1917.

47 IWM 09/34/1: Capt. A.J. Lord, Letter 29 December 1917.

48 IWM 77/33/1: Lt. J.H. Johnson, Diary 30 December 1917 and 6 January 1918.

49 D. Gill, and G. Dallas, 'Mutiny and Etaples Base in 1917', *Past & Present* 69 (Nov., 1975): 88–112. Étaples was one of the BEF's major bases and training centres during the Great War. The arrest of a New Zealand serviceman, followed subsequently by the shooting of a corporal of the Gordon Highlanders (as well a French woman) by the military police, sparked several days' unrest in the training camp, colloquially known as the 'Bull Ring'. While this was undeniably an event of great significance, it was also a relatively limited affair, ignited by perceived injustices in the camp rather than the war *per se*, and ultimately shunned by a large number of the British troops present. Despite a spree of court martials, only one man, Corporal Jesse Robert Short (a Welshman in the Northumberland Fusiliers), was put to death for 'Attempted Mutiny'.

50 IWM 66/96/1: Reverend M.A. Bere, Diary 7 December 1917: 134.

1917 was remarkably young; populated by conscripts, many battalions' modal age was as low as 19.[51] While memory is corrupted by time, it might be that these traumatic months were *the* formative experience of their young lives. This was also the year that the BEF was at its largest, with more than two million men serving in Belgium and France in August. Illustratively, Harry Patch—the last surviving war veteran of the western front in the United Kingdom—was only 19 when he crossed The Channel. Passchendaele *was* his First World War experience: having arrived in June, he was severely injured in September, and was still convalescing at the time of the Armistice.[52] It was men such as Patch that survived longest and were able to continue to tell their tales deep into the 20th century.

In summary, the seeds of Britain's First World War myths can be found in the common experience of 1917. The reasons that these took root are undoubtedly found in the years and decades after 1918. Yet the visceral memories of this year were the source and substance of these 'myths'. There are certainly glimpses of these myths in other campaigns, but the horrors and stresses, disappointments and dejection, that were so pervasive during this time provided an easy focal point as disenchantment came to dominate popular perceptions of the Great War in the years after it ended.[53]

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51 Mayhew, 'Making Sense of the Western Front', 223.

52 H. Patch and R. van Emden, *The Last Fighting Tommy: The Life of Harry Patch, Last Veteran of the Trenches 1898–2009* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009).

53 A number of the arguments found in this essay will be expanded upon in a monograph the author is currently preparing. This is provisionally titled *Making Sense of the Great War: Englishness, Morale, and Perceptions of Crisis on the Western Front, 1914–1918*.

1917 and the Long Reach of War: Three Stories from the Salient

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Abstract

Battles, by their very nature, are fixed in time and space. Paradoxically (as several historians have observed) they defy the constraints of linear time and their effects can be felt well into the future. This article explores the way the third battle of Ypres changed the lives of three men caught up in the carnage. It charts the way their stories have changed over time and considers the fraught politics of remembrance. All three stories are part of the 100 Stories project, a counter narrative that challenged the dominant mode of commemoration in Australia throughout the centenary of the war. Its aim was to broaden the ambit of remembrance, emphasise the human cost of conflict and examine the way war reaches into and damages the social fabric. Thus far, the 100 Stories have produced a book, inspired musical compositions and performance, formed the basis of several public exhibitions, and led to a host of public and academic presentations in Australia and overseas. They were the centrepiece of a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) fielded by Future Learn and provide the framework of a new website hosted by the Australian National University, https://onehundredstories.anu.edu.au. The stories in this article suggest the scope of the 100 Stories project, spanning the lives of an Indigenous soldier as well as those of British descent. Two of the men examined here were killed in the precinct of Glencorse Wood on the Ypres salient. The third took his own life well after the fighting had ended.

Keywords

1917; commemoration; domestic violence; memory; mourning; remembrance; shellshock; trauma; war; Ypres

From the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War through to November 2018, Museum Victoria hosted the *WWI: Love and Sorrow* exhibition in Melbourne. In some respects, *WWI: Love and Sorrow* was not so dissimilar to the *Scars on the Heart* exhibition bridging the World War One Sanctuary and the World War Two Hall of Memories in the Auckland War Memorial Museum. In common with the Auckland exhibition, *WWI: Love and Sorrow* employed artefact and testimony to convey both the memory and the lived experience of war, was grounded in expert historical commentary, and elicited a deeply emotional response from the visitor. Both exhibitions are examples, as Vanessa Agnew aptly put it, of history's 'affective turn'.[1]

The opening gallery of *WWI: Love and Sorrow* merits our particular attention here. It provides a kind of platform to explore the key themes of this article. The 'journey' (as the museum catalogue was apt to style it) began at the entry to the exhibition itself, a concave gallery featuring a panoramic depiction of Glencorse Wood.[2] For much of the war, this stretch of Belgian woodland was in the frontline of fighting in Flanders. By September 1917 and the disastrous push on Passchendaele, the forest that had once stood there was all but obliterated by shellfire. Michael McKernan's review of *WWI: Love and Sorrow* describes the imagery of the shattered wood as 'supremely evocative'. At one level, it recalled the moonscape imagery of Great War battlefields, the ghostly remains of trees eerily emblematic of men butchered by the same artillery (Fig. 1).[3] At another, it mobilised sound to 'connect' visitors with an otherwise unimaginable experience: 'for

1 Vanessa Agnew, 'History's Affective Turn: Historical Reenactment and its Work in the Present', *Rethinking History* 11, no. 3 (2007): 299–312.

2 Museums Victoria, *WWI: Love and Sorrow* [Museum Catalogue] (Melbourne: Museums Victoria, 2014).

3 We owe this observation to Jennifer Wellington's recent study of museums and commemoration, *Exhibiting War: The Great War, Museums and Memory in Britain, Canada and Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 45–52
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/scales_wheatley
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/8

Figure 1. 'Ghostly remains': Glencorse Wood shattered by shell fire. E00916A, Australian War Memorial.

the first and only time in "Love & Sorrow", [McKernan notes] we hear the sound of battle gradually replaced by today's birdsong'.[4] That temporal shift—from the roar of the guns in 1917 to the tranquil woods of today—was reinforced by the way visitors interacted with the photographic panels. As individuals moved across the space of the gallery delayed sequence filming 'ghosted' one image on another, the green of the forest, symbolising life and renewal, restored in each figure's wake (Fig. 2). Visitors to this space thus found their own form 'embedded in that landscape', a poignant reminder that the Great War still somehow touches us all.[5]

The fighting that consumed Glencorse Wood transformed a generation and in many ways affects us to this day. Battles, by their very nature, might be bound in time and space but paradoxically (as many historians have observed) they defy any register of linear time and their effects spill well into the future. This article will consider three specific lives lost in that desperate fighting on the salient.[6] It will ask what these three case studies—all centred on 1917—tell us about the Great War and (equally importantly) how the memory of that war shapes current understanding of human conflict.[7]

SITUATING THE STORIES

These three portraits (and many others) were devised as part of the 100 Stories project. This was a First World War centenary initiative that began as part of Australia's official commemorative programme but (steeped in controversy) ended as an independent venture. The stories were chosen from both sides of the Tasman; they highlight the experience of women as well as men, and focus as much on civilians as combatants. Amongst

4 Michael McKernan, 'WW1: Love and Sorrow', *Recollections* 10, no. 1 (April 2015), https://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/volume_10_number_1/exhibition_reviews/wwi_love_and_sorrow.

5 'Course Introduction', *World War 1: A History in 100 Stories*, accessed 29 July 2019, https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/ww1-stories/1/steps/28133.

6 Research informing this piece was funded by two Australian Research Council Linkage grants, LP110100264 (*A History of Anzac Day at Home and Abroad*) and LP0883705 (*A History of Soldier Settlement in NSW*). We thank the Partner and Chief Investigators on both these projects.

7 For a rewarding discussion of the changing and dynamic character of remembrance see Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 1-13. See also, Bart Ziino, ed., *Remembering the First World War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015) and '"A Lasting Gift to His Descendants": Family Memory and the Great War in Australia', *History and Memory* 22, no. 2 (Fall/Winter): 125–146.

Figure 2. 'Tranquil Woods': Life returns to the salient. Courtesy of authors.

the cast of the 100 Stories are not just sailors, soldiers, airmen, and nurses, but parents who lost their sons, wives who struggled with shell-shocked husbands, and children who never knew their fathers. Grappling with contentious and disruptive narratives—shell shock, domestic violence, suicide, and venereal disease—the stories run counter to the shallow sentimentality of state-sanctioned commemoration. They were a bid to broaden the ambit of remembrance and suggest ways memories of the past still resonate in the present.[8]

The stories were presented in myriad different ways. At their centre was what might be called a digital narrative, a brief video presentation simulating handwriting across a page, the blunt typeface of newsprint or telegram, and words that were spoken from the pulpit, in courts, on the hustings. This use of Keynote software was an experiment in digital humanities.[9] Each story aimed to distil the essence of an archive, outlining a life, or rather a phase of a life, in a matter of minutes, evoking 'voices' from the past in a sharp and arresting fashion. Individual stories acted as a synecdoche and represented an experience intended to challenge or enlarge traditional narratives.

These freestanding digital presentations can be accessed online but they are also exhibited and screened continuously at both Victoria's Shrine of Remembrance and the National Anzac Centre in Albany. The website that hosts the stories is scaffolded by historical commentary—reading lists, supplementary sites, and a forum where experts discuss topics as varied as women's mobilisation, traumatic memory, and the lasting impact the Great War had on Australia's Indigenous communities.[10] An educational resource (informing the most highly subscribed First World War MOOC fielded by Future Learn),[11] the stories also found artistic expression. The Australian Art Orchestra devised a musical interpretation of the 100 Stories. Performed at the London Jazz Festival

8 '100 Stories Project', *Report of the Second Meeting of the Military and Cultural History Group*, 30 April 2012, tabled at the Anzac Centenary Advisory Board Meeting 15 May 2012, Canberra.

9 The keynote presentations were written by Bruce Scates and rendered in digital form with the assistance of Rebecca Wheatley, Tom Chandler, Rick Laird, and Margaret Harris.

10 This site is now hosted by the Australian National University, accessed 29 July 2019, https://onehundredstories.anu.edu.au/. An earlier version of the website was the most frequently visited website fielded by the Faculty of Arts at Monash University, accessed 7 June 2017 https://future.arts.monash.edu/onehundredstories/. For an extended inquiry into this innovation in the digital humanities see Bruce Scates and Margaret Harris, 'Reaching out Beyond the Museum: "Love and Sorrow" and the Engagement of On-Line Learning', forthcoming.

11 Future Learn, 'World War 1: A History in 100 Stories', accessed 29 July 2019, https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/ww1-stories.

in late 2018, it marked the centenary of Armistice,[12] as did the 'durational sonic meditation sound installation', *Aftermaths*, staged on Remembrance Day at Melbourne's Domain.[13] At the same time the stories fed into more conventional academic outputs: a co-authored monograph and a host of articles and publications.[14] Indeed the three cases profiled in this article were first presented to *The Myriad Faces of War* conference held in Wellington.

RETURNING TO GLENCORSE WOOD

Bill Knox's story is the first of three stories from the salient we will consider.[15] An officer in the Field Artillery, Knox served in Gallipoli and France before he was killed in August 1917 in Belgium. The archive on which his story is based is vast and complex. Thousands of pages of correspondence have been preserved and so too has their provenance. The collection includes maps, operational orders, newspaper clippings, pressed flowers, and artefacts. It remains in the hands of the family and stands, one might argue, as Knox's most impressive but also most intimate memorial.

So rich a collection offers a historian considerable latitude. William Knox's story might have been about duty. Trained in the militia prior to the outbreak of war, Knox felt a deep obligation to serve and boarded his troopship within weeks of his first—and only—child being born. Bill Knox left a young wife and his baby daughter behind him, a promising career in business, and political interests as well. Like hundreds of young men who put themselves forward, duty to Country and King outweighed any personal consideration. The Knox story might have been about the 'big words' we have heard so often during the First World War centenary—sacrifice, courage, service.

It might also have been about privilege. Knox was schooled at Scotch College, made his money on the Stock Exchange, and gave his address as the Melbourne Club. And beyond all that lies the complex afterlife of William Knox—an elaborate and ever-shifting architecture of remembrance. Captain Knox was commemorated in church, school, and community; his name was carved in the polished blackwood of Melbourne Stock Exchange's Honour Roll. A hundred years after his death, Knox's grave became a place of pilgrimage for the Chair of Victoria's Anzac Centenary Committee.

William Knox's story is all these things and more. But this is a very private as well as a public narrative. All said and done, Knox's story is about love. Bill Knox loved the men who served beside him. It was not just the enduring friendship forged with fellow officers, decent chaps he shared a tent with. Far from home, the young Knox acted as a surrogate father for the men who served beneath him, he cared for their welfare, wrote to their families, and brought them extra rations. Their deaths touched him deeply:

> I lost two of my best … yesterday [Knox wrote to his wife at the beginning of 1917]…. They got blown up by a shell…. Feltham was one of the best fellows in the world – cheery and popular with everyone. Young Robinson I told you about before … I am very sad about it and a bit upset & nervy tonight…. I couldn't get a Padre so I had to read the burial service myself. The most trying thing I have ever done and more so as we were under heavy shellfire at the time – I was very fond of those two lads and wanted to do what I could for them properly – Fritz just commenced to hot us up with heavy stuff though I had tried to pick a quiet time … I had just commenced to read the service when we got it right and left…. This is the way two fine brave lads went out and I am very sad and had to write their people tonight…. It is desperately cold snowing for four days & … an icy wind blowing that almost cuts one in half….[16]

Knox also loved his baby daughter, Diana, a child he would never really come to know. In the close world of the trenches, he would stare at her photograph for hours, willing it somehow to life: 'I love that lovely little snap of her … with her mouth all pursed up in readiness for a smile…'.[17]

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12 The performance featured the work of George Darvidis (voice), Lizzy Welsh (violin), Aviva Endean (clarinets), James Macaulay (trombone), Jacques Emery (double bass), Simon Barker (drum kit) with system design/production by Jem Savage. Production was supported by the Anzac Centenary Arts and Culture Fund, the Australia Council for the Arts, the Australian High Commission in the United Kingdom, and Creative Victoria. Art Orchestra, *Sometimes Home Can Grow Stranger than Space: A Suite of Works by Peter Knight, Tilman Robinson and Andrea Keller* (Melbourne: AAO, 2018). The influence of the 100 Stories project is generously acknowledged in such publications as if the original conception of AAO founder Paul Grabowsky.

13 The creative team behind the installation included Aviva Endean (clarinets/turntables), Peter Knight (trumpet/tape loops/turntables) together with Tilman Robinson (electronics/turntables), George Darvidis (voice/turntables), and Jem Savage (system design/production). Australian Art Orchestra, *Aftermath Program* (Australian Art Orchestra: Newport, 2018). For reflections on these creative outputs see Bruce Scates, 'Aftermaths: Commemorating the Centenary of Armistice and Reflections on the Performance of Remembrance,' in *Beyond the Stage: Re-imagining Conflict through Performance*, ed., Mark Carroll (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2019).

14 Bruce Scates, Rebecca Wheatley and Laura James, *World War One: A History in One Hundred Stories* (Melbourne: Penguin/Viking, 2015).

15 The first iteration of this story appears in Scates, Wheatley, and James, *World War One: A History*, 346–349. We thank Kate Baillieu for permission to consult and cite these privately held papers.

16 Bill Knox to Mildred Knox, 20 January 1917, Baillieu family papers.

17 Bill Knox to Mildred Knox, 28 July 1917, Baillieu family papers.

And Knox loved his wife. Throughout the war, he wrote to Mildred on an almost daily basis, snatching a moment of tenderness from the chaos and brutality erupting around him. He described the horrors of the battlefield, the terror of the fighting, but also the love that sustained him in his ordeal. Every letter to 'Mim' brims with intimacy and affection. She was his 'dearest girl', his 'dear old sweetheart', 'the most splendid perfect wife'.[18] Mim would read every letter time and again, treasure their presence—that reminder of him—in her household. And in 1916, at great risk and no little expense, Mim and Diana travelled all the way to England. They spent a few precious weeks with Bill on 'Blighty leave' from France. The three of them walked the pebbled beach at Bognor Regis, a memory rendered in sepia by a photograph (Fig. 3). The only recollection Diana had of her father was being lifted high up on his shoulders in the crisp sea air.

Within a matter of months of that photograph being taken, Bill Knox was dead. A lifetime of grieving lay before Mim; like thousands bereaved by war she would not marry again. Diana would grow up without a father—as would thousands of other children, in countries all over the world.

When Diana died at the age of 97, her ashes were placed—as she had asked—in her father's grave. Kate, Diana's daughter, remembered Ypres as a strangely peaceful place, a once battered landscape glowing golden with wheat. 'On a perfect summer's day,' she described how she walked across Flanders fields and found the place where her grandfather was almost certainly killed. The ground around her was peppered with shrapnel. 'It seemed as though the war was still growling beneath my feet,' she said, 'rumbling on just below the surface'.[19]

Space does not allow us to reach much *beyond the surface* of that account. It brims with references familiar to cultural historians—Mike Roper's and Joanna Bourke's work on soldier masculinity,[20] Jay Winter on the emotional labour of real and fictive kin.[21] In the Knox correspondence we certainly see a shift from 'warrior' to 'nurturer'. And—through time-honoured rituals of burial and pilgrimages—we see the way remembrance is reinvested with meaning for new generations.[22]

Figure 3. Captain W. J. (Bill) Knox M.C. (13th Field Artillery, A.I.F.) on his last leave with his daughter, Diana, on Bognor Regis beach, England, June 1917. Courtesy Kate Baillieu.

* * *

Our second narrative centres on the story of two brothers, also killed near Glencorse Wood in 1917 but different, besides that, in almost every other way. Bill Knox was born into power and privilege. Rufus and Cyril Rigney were raised on the fringes of white colonialism, on the Aboriginal mission station at Port Macleay.[23]

Port Macleay is the name Europeans used. Raukkan has been the Aboriginal name for this place since time immemorial; it means a place of meeting. Once the

18 Bill Knox to Mildred Knox, 2 January 1917, Baillieu family papers.

19 Kate Baillieu email correspondence and interview with authors, 10 March 2015.

20 Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Press, 1996).

21 Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jay Winter, 'Communities in mourning', in *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War*, eds. Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995).

22 For inquiry into the changing character of pilgrimage over time see Bruce Scates, *Return to Gallipoli: Walking the Battlefields of the Great War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) and '"Letters from a pilgrimage": reflection on the 1965 return to Gallipoli', *History Australia* 4, no. 2 (2017): 540–544.

23 The authors respectfully acknowledge the elders past and present of the Ngarrindjeri nation. This account is based on sources in the public domain, most importantly the Rigney brothers' service dossiers, the Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry initiated for Rufus Rigney, and websites for the State Library of South Australia, the Raukkan community, and the Connecting Spirits Commemorative Tour; see also Mike Sexton, 'One service charged with extra emotion', *The 7:30 Report*, ABC, 25 April 2005, transcript available: http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2005/s1353096.htm. The first iteration of this story appears in Scates, Wheatley, and James, *World War One: A History*, 305–308.

traditional lands of the Ngarrindjeri extended many miles up the Murray, and encompassed coastlands as far as Encounter Bay. By the turn of the century the best of that vast estate had been taken by white farmers. Clearing destroyed a landscape Aboriginal people had tended for generations.

At the time Rufus and Cyril enlisted, Ngarrindjeri people were not permitted to speak their language, the community was isolated and institutionalised, and traditional practices vigorously discouraged. Both boys recorded their occupation as 'Labourer' on their attestation papers. Few other vocations were open to them. Perhaps it was the hope of something better than toiling on a farm that persuaded Rufus and Cyril to enlist; perhaps—as for many white recruits—the lure of travel and adventure. In Rufus's case at least, it may have been the strong sense of family obligation at the core of Aboriginal culture. Cyril signed up in April 1916; Rufus would follow his elder brother to war four months later.

Both these lads were under 21 years. Had they been white, they would have required their father's consent, but the Protector of Aborigines—not the boy's parents—was deemed to be the legal guardian of all Indigenous people. William Garnet South, a man Rufus had probably never met, duly signed his papers.

Cyril was killed at Messines in 1917. Rufus died near Passchendaele three months later. Unlike Bill Knox, we know little of the circumstances of Cyril's death—the body of this Ngarrindjeri man was swallowed up by the Ypres salient. Rufus was initially reported 'missing' rather than killed and the uncertainty regarding his fate prompted a series of Red Cross inquiries. A few sparse lines, saying so much because they said so little, are the only remaining record of his war.[24]

Ninety years after their deaths, the Rigney brothers' family travelled to Belgium. They carried part of their country with them—sand from the dunes of Ninety Miles Beach. Dry earth from Australia was scattered on the moist turf of Harlebeke New British Cemetery where one of the two brothers was buried. The distinctive notes of a didgeridoo cried out across Flanders Fields to the other.

And where might that story take us? One might reflect again on the ever-inventive rituals of remembrance or the way (as Bart Ziino has put it) home and the front were imagined and connected.[25] Or one might consider the politics of pilgrimage. In 1917, the Rigney family had neither the means nor the opportunity to make that journey to the battlefields. In Australia, Aboriginal people were not even permitted passports. Arguably however, the most challenging aspect of the Rigney brothers' story is the role that remembering war plays in Indigenous communities today.

Not long after the war ended, a memorial window was placed in the church of the Mission (Fig. 4). It reads 'For Justice and Freedom' and that powerful phrase can be read in a number of different ways. It may originally have been invoked in spirit of patriotism,

Figure 4. 'For justice and freedom': memorial windows raised to the memory of Indigenous soldiers from Raukkan. Courtesy of authors.

24 Private Rufus Rigney 2872, Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau files, 1914–1918 War, 1DRL/0428, Australian War Memorial.

25 Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley: UWA Press, 2007).

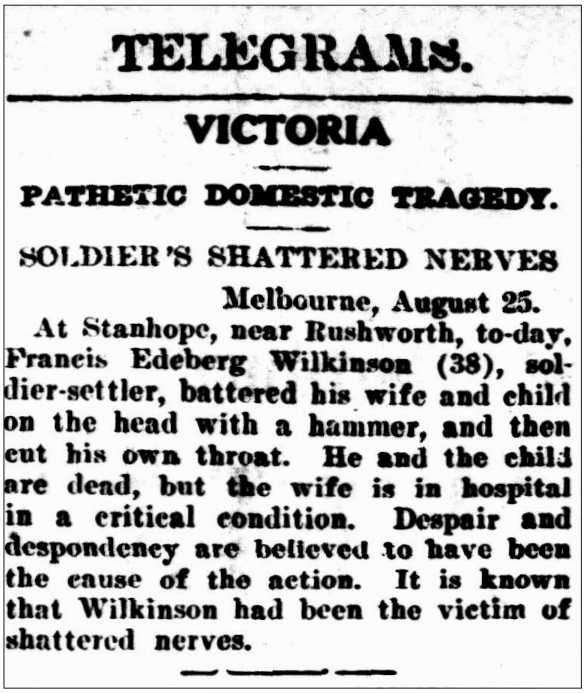
even imperialism. These were the lofty sentiments that rationalised the butchering of a generation. And yet, for many Aboriginal people today, including the community at Raukkan, fighting in the Great War was literally a struggle for justice and freedom, and the loss of the Rigney brothers part of the price for full and equal citizenship.[26] It is interesting the phrase Aboriginal people often use when they are conceded a symbolic space in war memorials across the country. 'To those who fought for their country', some plaques read, a reference perhaps to a frontier war many white Australians are still intent on forgetting.[27]

The reference to the politics of remembering and forgetting acts as a segue into our final story. It too hails from Belgium and from 1917.

* * *

By any criteria Frank Wilkinson was a war hero.[28] In the push towards Messines, he charged into an ammunition dump set ablaze by shelling. He extinguished the fire and was awarded the Military Medal.[29] Frank survived the war but not the peace. He returns to Australia in 1919, takes up marginal land as a soldier settler in Victoria, fails as a farmer, struggles against debt, illness, and depression and, ten years after Passchendaele, takes his own life.[30] But before slitting his throat, Frank Wilkinson MM turned on those who loved him. He killed both his wife, Elizabeth, and his four-year-old daughter, Isabella (Fig. 5). Elizabeth Wilkinson lingered on for days after the attack. Her skull had been crushed by a hammer. Elizabeth's last words were read out to the Inquest. 'He couldn't help it, he couldn't help it.'[31]

No one hurried to condemn Frank Wilkinson in the 1920s. Perhaps because Australia was full of similar stories equally tragic; once good men undone by the horrors of war, brutalised by what they had seen and what they had done. The question really is whether we are prepared to hear such stories today.



TELEGRAMS.

VICTORIA

PATHETIC DOMESTIC TRAGEDY.

SOLDIER'S SHATTERED NERVES

Melbourne, August 25.

At Stanhope, near Rushworth, to-day, Francis Edeberg Wilkinson (38), soldier-settler, battered his wife and child on the head with a hammer, and then cut his own throat. He and the child are dead, but the wife is in hospital in a critical condition. Despair and despondency are believed to have been the cause of the action. It is known that Wilkinson had been the victim of shattered nerves.

Figure 5. "The horrors of war': Press account of murder and suicide in Stanhope. *Geraldton Guardian*, 27 August 1927.

The Wilkinson story was one of several submitted to the Anzac Centenary Advisory Board in the lead up to formal commemorations. Prior to Wilkinson, the Board had approved several of the 100 Stories; it could tolerate tales of loss and hardship, like Knox's, extend the narrative of Anzac to those it once so readily excluded, like the Rigneys, even contemplate the enormous psychological trauma war inflicted. The difference with Wilkinson was that the violence was no longer directed inward; he ceased to be simply a

26 We gratefully acknowledge our debt to Clyde Rigney, who facilitated a visit to Raukkan, and Verna Koolmatrie, who welcomed researchers to her community and generously shared her memories. Thanks are also due to the Indigenous playwright Wesley Enoch who first alerted us to the existence of the Rigneys' memorial window and who wove their story into his remarkable play, *Black Diggers*. For further insight into Wesley Enoch's work see the interview conducted by Rebecca Wheatley and Laura James, 'Wesley Enoch on Indigenous soldiers', One Hundred Stories – Australian National University, accessed 29 July 2019, https://onehundredstories.anu.edu.au/stories/wesley-enoch-indigenous-soldiers.

27 Studies of Ngarrindjeri Anzacs were pioneered by Doreen Kartinyeri, see *Ngarrindjeri Anzacs* (Adelaide: Aboriginal Family History Project, South Australian Museum and Raukkan Council, 1996) and more generally, Doreen Kartinyeri and Sue Anderson, *My Ngarrindjeri Calling* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2008). For more recent scholarship see Joan Beaumont and Allison Cadzow, eds., *Serving our Country: Indigenous Australians, War, Defence and Citizenship* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018).

28 The first published account of Wilkinson's story appears in Scates, Wheatley and James, *World War One: A History*, 68–69.

29 Frank Wilkinson, recommendation for Military Medal, 10 August 1917, AWM28 1/206 - Recommendation file for honours and awards, AIF, 1914–18 War, 4th Australian Division, 30 June 1917 to 30 July 1917.

30 Frank Wilkinson's soldier settlement record, VPRS5714 Land Selection Files, unit 1473, Public Records Office of Victoria. For recent work on the plight of soldiers sent to work the land see Bruce Scates and Melanie Oppeheimer, *The Last Battle: A History of Soldier Settlement in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). For an inquiry into the insights historians might draw from repatriation records see Bruce Scates, 'How War Came Home: Reflections on the Digitisation of Australia's Repatriation Files', *History Australia* 16, no. 1 (2019): 190–209.

31 Coroner's Inquest of the deaths of Frank, Elizabeth and Isabella Wilkinson, Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS5714, 1927/1017.

victim and he suggested a possibility totally at odds with the commemorative carnival that distorts the remembrance of war in Australia. The Anzacs were not all heroic caricatures, mythical embodiments of service and sacrifice. Many were deeply flawed, troubled, and violent human beings.

After some debate, the Board resolved to reject the story altogether. The Chair instructed historians to delete all reference to Frank Wilkinson MM and replace his confronting testimony with 'a positive nation-building narrative'. Driving the Board's concern was a fear of 'embarrassing the Minister'—the public would surely take offence at so 'brutally honest' a history.[32] Canberra was wrong. Wilkinson's story was published (without the sanction of the Department of Veterans' Affairs) and, within a week of its appearance in Melbourne's *The Age* newspaper, researchers were approached by his niece. One family member likened telling the story to laying a ghost to rest, enriching what had once been a purely archival narrative with a vernacular memory of her own.[33] As Carolyn Holbrook has observed, Anzac descendants may well have a far more 'complex and nuanced' attitude towards the First World War than many commentators have assumed. Often they reject comforting mythologies, the 'warm fuzzy feeling' Board members were all too prepared to offer, and embrace a more mature and reflective history.[34]

CONCLUSION

There is more at stake here than the sensibilities of a few disputatious historians. What is at issue is the whole character of historical remembrance. Throughout the centenary archives, galleries, libraries, memorials, and museums on both sides of the Tasman have negotiated a difficult path—the journey through Glencorse Wood was never an easy one. But the response to the 100 Stories project, and for that matter the equally confronting *WWI: Love and Sorrow* exhibition, suggests many believe it is time to broaden the ambit of remembrance, embrace new, disruptive, and even transnational narratives. Those of us who engage with the commemorative project face what Jay Winter calls 'a stark choice'. Either we 'aim at an interrogation as to how war can be represented or [we] continue to deepen lies and illusions about it'.[35] A hundred years since the catastrophe that tore Europe and the world apart, Anzac deserves a better history.

Acknowledgements

We thank Rae Frances and the editors of this volume for comment, the participants of *The Myriad Faces of War* symposium hosted by the Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa in 2017, and Piet Chielens and Annick Vandenbilcke who guided us across the Ypres salient in Belgium. Whatever form this project took it was always a collaborative endeavour. We acknowledge the support of the co-creator of the 100 Stories, Laura James, and also the many cultural institutions, archives, libraries, universities, and communities that made our work possible.

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32 See account of the Anzac Centenary Board's deliberations, see Scates, Wheatley, and James, *World War One: A History*, vii–viii.

33 'What we owe them this Remembrance Day', originally published in *The Age*, 11 November 2012, https://onehundredstories.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/Scates-Forgotten-Stories-Age-2012.pdf. Authors' correspondence with Jill Fradd. Rebecca Wheatley, co-author of this piece, interviewed Wilkinson's niece as Wilkinson's narrative was redrafted.

34 Caroline Holbrook, *ANZAC: The Unauthorised Biography* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2014), 155; see also Scates. Wheatley and James, *World War One: A History*, vii–viii.

35 Jay Winter, 'Museums and the Representation of War', in *Does War Belong in Museums: The Representations of War in Exhibitions*, ed. Wolfgang Muchitsch (Wetzlar: Verlag, 2013), 17–36, also *War Beyond Words: Languages of Remembrance from the Great War to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

The Politics of Heroism: Propaganda and Military Celebrity in First World War Australia

Bryce Abraham Australian War Memorial

Abstract

Afghanistan veteran Ben Roberts-Smith is one of the most well-known faces of modern conflict in Australia. The decorated special forces soldier is frequently at the forefront of commemorative initiatives, has become a spokesman for health and sport, and is popularly portrayed as the embodiment of the modern 'Anzac'. But Roberts-Smith's social currency as a hero is not a recent phenomenon. It has its origins in 1917, when decorated soldiers were first used to advertise the war effort. This was a tumultuous year for Australians deeply embroiled in the First World War. A failed conscription plebiscite—and another looming—and increasing devastation on the battlefield had led to a growing sense of war weariness. Amidst this discontent, the State Parliamentary Recruiting Committee of Victoria launched the Sportsmen's Thousand, an army recruitment initiative designed to encourage the enlistment of athletic men. The posters released for the campaign featured a portrait of a fit, young uniformed man—Lieutenant Albert Jacka, an accomplished sportsman and decorated 'war hero'. The Sportsmen's Thousand used Jacka to invoke the connection between masculinity and heroism by suggesting that talent on the sports field would translate to prowess on the field of battle, just as it had for Jacka. This article explores how 'heroes' like Jacka were increasingly used in Australian war propaganda and recruitment initiatives from 1917 to inspire enlistment and promote a sense of loyalty to the war effort. I argue that the success of these propaganda initiatives set the scene for the similar use of 'heroic' men throughout later conflicts, creating a legacy of the promotion of martial heroism and military celebrity that is reflected in Roberts-Smith's status today.

Keywords

1917; Australian Imperial Force; heroes; propaganda; recruitment; Victoria Cross

On a clear summer morning in January 2011, all attention at Campbell Barracks in Perth, Western Australia, was directed to Corporal Benjamin (Ben) Roberts-Smith of the elite Special Air Service Regiment (SASR). Before politicians, military dignitaries, and Roberts-Smith's family, the Governor-General of Australia presented the special forces soldier with the Victoria Cross for Australia; the premier award for heroism under the Australian Honours System. The medal recognised Roberts-Smith's actions in June 2010 when, subject to fierce small arms, machine gun, and rocket fire, he neutralised two machine gun posts and facilitated the demise of a third during an assault on a Taliban compound in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.[1]

At the time of the investiture fellow SASR corporal and Victoria Cross for Australia recipient, Mark Donaldson, remarked that Roberts-Smith will 'get to shake a lot of hands and sign a lot of signatures'.[2] Donaldson was signalling a curious connection between martial heroism and celebrity. He was not wrong. In the years since his investiture, Roberts-Smith's social currency as a hero has only grown. He was, for instance, named the number-one ticket holder for the Fremantle Dockers Football Club in 2012, appears in the song 'Lest

1 'SAS Digger Awarded VC for Taking on Taliban', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 January 2011, https://www.smh.com.au/national/sas-digger-awarded-vc-for-taking-on-taliban-20110123-1a0zd.html; Craig Blanch and Aaron Pegram, *For Valour: Australians Awarded the Victoria Cross* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018), 462–463.

2 Mark Donaldson, quoted in 'Victoria Cross for Soldier Who "Tore Into" Taliban', *Herald Sun* (Melbourne), 23 January 2011, https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/victoria-cross-for-soldier-who-tore-into-taliban/story-e6frf7l6-1225993133252.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 53–60
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/abraham
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/9

We Forget' on country singer Lee Kernaghan's *Spirit of the Anzacs* album, and in 2015 was even featured on a postage stamp.[3] He is also the patron of a number of sporting and service charities, and is frequently at the forefront of the Australian War Memorial's commemorative initiatives.[4] Roberts-Smith has been transmogrified, as Chris Masters observes, from 'secret soldier to civic superman'—he represents the face of modern conflict and contemporary military celebrity in Australia.[5] During this process, however, reports on Roberts-Smith's combat prowess have become somewhat sanitised; the aggressive and violent nature of the battlefield is downplayed, while more comfortable virtues such as courage, mateship, and sacrifice are emphasised in its place.

The overexuberant focus on military celebrity arguably obscures the realities of war. As historian Peter Stanley recently argued: 'The emphasis on "Anzac VC heroes" ensures that Australia sees glory in its war history rather than the horrific reality. Focusing on VCs helps us rise above the ruck of suffering and victimhood that characterised military work…'.[6] While Stanley refers more to contemporary commemorations of the First World War, his words also hold true for modern martial heroes. But glorified representations of war and, indeed, military celebrity are not recent phenomena in Australia. Both, I argue, have origins in the First World War. The veneration of martial figures has a longer history, dating to the martial nationalism and imperial militarism of the nineteenth century, but it was from 1917 that recognised 'war heroes' became entangled in the politics of recruitment and propaganda in Australia. This article traces the roots of military celebrity in Australia to suggest that, amid the heavy casualties of the western front and the dampened popular enthusiasm for the war, men recognised for their heroism were increasingly featured or used in government propaganda, patriotic rallies, and recruitment drives as almost brand ambassadors for the war effort. In doing so, these men were fêted, became respected symbols of heroic attainment, and served as the genesis of modern military celebrity in Australia.

* * *

The martial nationalism and heroic reverence of the Victorian and Edwardian periods saw Australians react enthusiastically to the outbreak of the First World War. British culture at the turn of the century was profuse with what historian Graham Dawson has labelled the 'masculine pleasure-culture of war'.[7] The aggressive imperialism, race patriotism, and militarism of the time manufactured the ideology of martial nationalism; a belief that war provided the purest test of nationhood and manhood.[8] Such thinking was pervasive across the British Empire.[9] In Australia, for instance, militaristic influences pervaded literature, the school curriculum, sporting ventures, children's toys, and even fashion. Graeme Davison argues that Australian schoolteachers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries 'took a keen interest in the cultivation of hero-worship'; youth were encouraged, urged even, to model themselves after the empire's soldiers, explorers, and martial heroes.[10] Indeed, pupils were provided lessons on heroic or inspiring figures from the empire's history. The examples were not exclusively martial in form, but Sir Francis Drake, Viscount Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington filled out the list.[11] Instruction in courageous tales of empire suited middle-class objectives, because they nurtured youth who were versed in British triumphs and sacrifices, understood their heritage and, importantly, provided a source of inspiration. As the Reverend William Henry Fitchett wrote in the preface to his highly popular *Deeds That Won the Empire* (1897), such initiatives sought 'not to glorify war, but to nourish patriotism' and promote the 'finer qualities' of individual character.[12]

3 'Roberts-Smith the No 1 Ticket Holder at Freo', *WAtoday*, 20 March 2012, https://www.watoday.com.au/sport/afl/robertssmith-the-no-1-ticket-holder-at-freo-20120320-1vgri.html; Suzanne Siminot, 'Gold Coast's Lee Kernaghan's Anzac album "Incredibly Emotional" to Make', *Gold Coast Bulletin*, 30 March 2015, https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/entertainment/gold-coasts-lee-kernaghans-anzac-album-incredibly-emotional-to-make/news-story/6e144c5e4960e0d62d3545fd57effe71; 'Australian Legends The Victoria Cross (2015)', Australia Post website, accessed 1 June 2019, https://auspost.com.au/content/corp/collectables/stamp-issues/australian-legends-the-victoria-cross/.

4 Blanch and Pegram, *For Valour*, 464.

5 Chris Masters, *No Front Line: Australia's Special Forces at War in Afghanistan* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2017), 480.

6 Peter Stanley, 'Australian Heroes: Some Military Mates Are More Equal Than Others', in *The Honest History Book*, ed. David Stephens and Alison Broinowski (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2017), 205.

7 Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994), 236.

8 *Ibid.*, 1; Stefan Berger, 'Introduction: Towards a Global History of National Historiographies', in *Writing the Nation: A Global Perspective*, ed. Stefan Berger (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 5–6. See also Mark McKenna, 'The History Anxiety,' in *The Commonwealth of Australia*, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of Australia*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 561–580.

9 Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, 82–83.

10 Graeme Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History* (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 2000), 23.

11 Craig Campbell, 'Schooling in Australia', in *Schooling in Oceania*, ed. Craig Campbell and Geoffrey Sherington (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2007), 44.

12 W.T. Fitchett, *Deeds That Won the Empire: Historic Battle Scenes*, 3rd ed. (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1897), v–vi.

Much of Australia was thus gripped by a patriotic and expectant fervour on the declaration of war. Union Jacks were flown across cities, nationalistic songs reverberated through public spaces, and much of the press encouraged patriotic zeal and martial sentiment.[13] Opposition to the war did exist, but the few were drowned out by the vocal many. Australia's newspapers late in 1914 published official despatches from the western front alongside editorials and popular works of patriotism.[14] As if to inspire visions of glory, the press also reported on the heroics performed during the early fighting in Europe.[15] Australians were primed for the next generation of martial heroes; Homeric figures of the empire but, crucially, ones also from Australia. The Boer War of 1899–1902 had provided Australia's first wartime heroes, but the lack of romanticism and controversial tactics employed during the conflict failed to adequately galvanise or inspire Australians.[16] Australian men were thus expected to deliver the national 'baptism' of fire and achieve martial glory in this fledgling European war.

Australia's initial commitment to the imperial war effort was the offer of an expeditionary force of 20,000 men in the form of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF).[17] The Defence Act of 1903 restricted Australia's standing military to home defence, so the AIF's recruits were sourced from volunteers. Such was the early enthusiasm for the war that, by December 1914, 52,561 men had enlisted.[18] This sense of eagerness was not to last. As historian Joan Beaumont argues, Australia was geographically remote from the main battlefields and disconnected to the threat of direct attack. Persuasion therefore provided the key means through which to achieve mass social mobilisation.[19] The imagery of posters, text of pro-war articles in the press, and the cry of government slogans induced men to enlist and reassured the public that the war was righteous and in Australia's interest.

By 1917, however, the sense of righteousness, moral duty, and imperial loyalty was starting to falter. The Australian government was under increasing pressure from the British War Cabinet to maintain reinforcements available for service on the war fronts. The AIF divisions on the western front were already understrength following the severe casualties of Fromelles, the Somme, and later Passchendaele. As war weariness began to set in at home, however, enlistments also plummeted. This shortfall posed a problem for the political ambitions of Prime Minister Billy Hughes, who desired a greater say in regional, dominion, and empire affairs.[20] The situation prompted an attempt by Hughes's Cabinet to introduce conscription. The divisive proposal was narrowly defeated in a plebiscite in October 1916. A second attempt was made fourteen months later, but in the meantime the Australian government had to turn to alternate means to stimulate recruitment and reinspire a sense of loyalty to the war effort.[21]

Propaganda and recruitment drives provided one solution. It was amid this sense of war weariness and discontent that the State Parliamentary Recruiting Committee of Victoria launched the Sportsmen's Thousand initiative in March 1917. The Sportsmen's Thousand was a targeted recruitment drive intended to mobilise 1,000 young athletes and sportsmen in the state of Victoria—a battalion's worth—by suggesting that talent on the sports field would translate to prowess on the field of battle. According to the Melbourne Argus, the drive would see sportsmen 'join together, train together, go to the motherland together, and, if the exigencies of war permit, fight together'.[22] The drive thereby invoked pre-war notions of masculinity to construe the sporting ground as a training field for civility, gentlemanly behaviour, and war (Fig. 1).

The most notable aspect of the Sportsmen's drive, however, was the salient figure featured on many of the posters: Lieutenant Albert Jacka, an officer of the 14th Battalion AIF then serving on the western front.[23] Jacka was an accomplished cyclist and amateur boxer prior to the war, but he was (and remains) best known for being awarded Australia's first Victoria Cross (VC) of the

13 L.L. Robson, *The First A.I.F.: A Study of Its Recruitment*, 1914–1918 (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1970), 24.

14 Peter Stanley, 'Part III Society', in John Connor, Peter Stanley, and Peter Yule, *The War at Home*, vol. 4 of *The Centenary History of Australia in the Great War* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2015), 148.

15 See, for example: 'Victoria Cross', *Argus* (Melbourne), 24 December 1914; 'Renaming Germanton', *Argus* (Melbourne), 19 June 1915.

16 Carolyn Holbrook, 'Nationalism and War Memory in Australia', in *Australia and the Great War: Identity, Memory and Mythology* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2016), 220–221

17 Joan Beaumont, *Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2013), 12–16; Ernest Scott, *Australia During the War,* vol. 11 of *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918*, 7th ed. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941), 11.

18 Michael McKernan, *Australians at Home: World War I* (Scoresby: Five Mile Press, 2014), 3.

19 Beaumont, *Broken Nation*, 48–49, 103–109.

20 *Ibid.*, 446–50; Jean Bou and Peter Dennis, *The Australian Imperial Force*, vol. 5 of *The Centenary History of Australia in the Great War* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2016), 72.

21 Beaumont, *Broken Nation*, 219–248.

22 'Sportsmen's Thousand', *Argus* (Melbourne), 8 March 1917

23 See, for example, 'Enlist in the Sportsmen's Thousand', Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee, 1917, ARTV00026, Australian War Memorial, Canberra (hereafter AWM); 'Which? Man You Are Wanted!', Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee, 1917, ARTV05005, AWM.

Figure 1. In this Sportsmen's poster Albert Jacka provides a source of inspiration and a leader to the myriad sportsmen arranged in the background. Troedel & Cooper, 'Enlist in the Sportsmen's Thousand. Show the Enemy What Australian Sporting Men Can Do,' Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee of Victoria, 1917. H2001.34/1, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne.

war. The VC has since been superseded in Australia by the Victoria Cross for Australia, but at the time of the First World War it was the highest award for bravery in the British Empire; a status it maintains in the United Kingdom. Jacka received the medal for his heroism in singlehandedly retaking a trench amid rigorous Ottoman resistance during the Gallipoli campaign in 1915.[24] The publicity that Jacka's VC generated meant he was a well-known figure across Australia, particularly in his home state of Victoria. The Sportsmen's Thousand sought to make use of this local connection and affinity for Jacka. Backed by the Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee, the Victorian Cricket Association, and the Director-General of Recruiting, the Sportsmen's Thousand was launched at a rally in West Melbourne Stadium (now Festival Hall) on 16 March 1917. Between boxing exhibitions, vaudeville, and band music, the inaugural rally achieved the drive's first twenty recruits.[25] Over the following months, the chief organisers of the Sportsmen's Thousand hosted numerous recruiting rallies across Melbourne and regional Victoria. By all accounts the rallies were well attended, well publicised events that attracted the attention of the public and the press.[26]

The Sportsmen's Thousand closely mirrored earlier government-sanctioned recruitment drives in Australia. Carmichael's Thousand, instigated by and named for the senior New South Wales politician Ambrose Carmichael (who himself enlisted), had been raised in New South Wales through recruiting rallies in 1915. The Carmichael and Sportsmen initiatives also led to a Ryan's Thousand, christened after the Queensland premier, and a second Carmichael's Thousand in 1918 (after a decorated

24 Ian Grant, *Jacka V.C.: Australia's Finest Fighting Soldier* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1982), 25.

25 'Sportsmen's Thousand'; 'Need for Men', *Argus* (Melbourne), 17 March 1917.

26 See, for example, 'Sportsmen's Thousand', *Ballarat Star*, 1 June 1917; 'Sportsmen's Thousand Military Band', *Inglewood Advertiser*, 18 September 1917; 'Sportsman's Thousand', *Malvern Standard*, 1 December 1917.

Figure 2. Note the significance accorded to Jacka and his Victoria Cross in the imagery of the Sportsmen's Thousand campaign. Troedel & Cooper, 'Enlist in the Sportsmen's 1000. Play up and Play the Game,' Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee of Victoria, 1917. H2001.34/3a, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne.

Carmichael had returned home to convalesce).[27] Targeted recruitment drives that made use of local, notable personalities therefore had some precedent. But unlike the Carmichael and Ryan initiatives, Jacka was not a noted politician. The Sportsmen's Thousand was the first government-sanctioned propaganda in Australia to feature a VC recipient or, indeed, a decorated and recognisable soldier. By placing Jacka in the same league as socially prominent and influential people, the Sportsmen's Thousand highlighted Jacka's social currency as a recipient of the VC and cemented his status as a modern martial celebrity.

In this sense, the Sportsmen's Thousand differed from other Australian recruitment and propaganda initiatives. The Carmichael and Ryan drives, as with much of Australia's earlier recruitment propaganda, appealed to a sense of duty, loyalty and, in some cases, guilt to recruit men to the war effort and legitimise Australia's participation in the conflict.[28] Such tactics were most prominent in atrocity propaganda, which was used to highlight real or manufactured German atrocities against Belgian civilians and prisoners of war to demonise the Germans as an almost bestial and barbaric enemy.[29] Atrocity propaganda generated what Heather Jones has

27 Bede Nairn, 'Carmichael, Ambrose Campbell (1866–1953)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed 8 April 2019, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/carmichael-ambrose-campbell-5506; Beaumont, Broken Nation, 420–22.

28 Emily Robertson, 'Propaganda at Home (Australia)', in 1914-1918-online, *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, ed. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, 17 February 2015. doi: 10.15463/ie1418.

29 Emily Robertson, 'Propaganda and "Manufactured Hatred": A Reappraisal of the Ethics of First World War British and Australian Propaganda', *Public Relations Inquiry* 3, no. 2 (2014): 246.

labelled 'war culture' in Britain and the Dominions, which in turn fostered a hatred for the enemy.[30] However, in most of these propaganda campaigns—atrocity or otherwise—nameless figures adorned the posters. Not so with the Sportsmen's Thousand. As a VC recipient and recognised 'war hero', Jacka's presence at the centre of the Sportsmen's campaign lent a sense of legitimacy, of inspiration, and of aspirational encouragement to potential enlistees.

This stimulus can be seen in the posters created for the drive. Jacka's likeness is conspicuous in many of the artworks, and so too is the VC. In one poster an arrow points to the VC on Jacka's chest, proclaiming it to be 'The medal of all medals'[31] (Fig. 2). Evidently, it was a reward that all sporting men should desire and prize above any other. Indeed, there was an expectation that the Sportsmen would win a cache of medals on the battlefield. In December 1917, just one month after the first Sportsmen had embarked from Australia, the *Newcastle Morning Herald* reported: 'It is anticipated by those who compose the Sportsmen's Thousand that … numerous military decorations, perhaps including a Victoria Cross or two, will be amongst their honours of war'.[32] The confidence in these men was so great that Agar Wynne, a senior Victorian politician and an executive of the Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee, pledged £500 (approximately AU$48,815 in 2019 terms) to the first man to win the VC.[33] No Sportsman would claim this prize, but the experience mirrored that of Jacka. On the outbreak of war in 1914, prominent Melbourne businessman John Wren had promised £500 and a gold watch to the AIF's first recipient of the VC—a prize that was duly claimed by Jacka.[34]

Jacka's presence at the centre of the Sportsmen's Thousand lent a sense of legitimacy and inspiration to the drive, and saw it transcend social boundaries. Sporting connotations of the time were typically grounded in the middling classes, but the working-class Jacka ensured the campaign had a wider appeal and some measure of success. The campaign also used Jacka, a soldier who had killed and who had been wounded multiple times, as almost a brand ambassador to present a glorified and sanitised representation of war. In doing so, the Sportsmen's Thousand established a precedent for the use of 'war heroes' for political purposes.

Almost simultaneous to the Sportsmen's drive was the pro-conscription activism of Arthur Blackburn. As a second lieutenant in the 10th Battalion AIF, Blackburn had won the VC at Pozières in 1916 for leading fifty men to clear some 370 yards of trench in what he later described as 'the biggest bastard of a job I have ever struck'.[35] Illness forced Blackburn's return to Australia late in 1916, where he was discharged in April. He was not idle for long. In May 1917 he was elected Vice-President of the Returned Soldiers' Association (forerunner of the Returned and Services League) in South Australia. By September he was state president and, in April 1918, he was elected to the South Australian parliament.[36] From these platforms Blackburn became an advocate for the welfare of soldiers and, according to his biographer Andrew Faulkner, made use of 'his new celebrity to promote the war effort by speaking at recruiting rallies'.[37]

In a manner not too dissimilar to the Sportsmen's drive, Blackburn spent much of the remainder of the war touring Adelaide and regional South Australia to inspire recruitment and relay the merits of conscription. In one rally at Kapunda in March 1917, Blackburn gave an impassioned speech on the merits of enlistment, conscription, and imperial loyalty. Blackburn claimed that, by the time he left Britain in October 1916, 'the entire manhood of England was mobilized, and there was scarcely a single man in the place who was not in khaki'.[38] Although clearly a hyperbolic statement, Blackburn was looking to Britain and its policy of conscription as the standard to emulate. He was not the only one. Sergeant George Howell, who won the VC for his devastating work with bombs and bayonet at Bullecourt in 1917, appeared at rallies in regional New South Wales in 1918 to similarly stimulate recruitment.[39] To the general populace, Blackburn's and Howell's authority as voices from the trenches were lent even further credence and held in greater esteem because they possessed the social currency of the VC. This phenomenon was observed by one regional newspaper in 1918: 'apparently the one thing townspeople desired to show was their high

30 Heather Jones, *Violence Against Prisoners of War in the First World War: Britain, France and Germany, 1914–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38–39, 62–67.

31 'Enlist in the Sportsmen's 1000', Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee, 1917, ARTV05616, AWM.

32 'The Victoria Cross', *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 29 December 1917.

33 '£500 for V.C. Winner', *Bendigo Independent*, 8 August 1917; Reserve Bank of Australia, 'Pre-Decimal Inflation Calculator', Reserve Bank of Australia website, accessed 27 April 2020, https://www.rba.gov.au/calculator/annualPreDecimal.html.

34 Grant, *Jacka, V.C.*, 33–35.

35 Recommendation for Lieutenant Arthur Blackburn, 29 July 1916, AWM28, 1/5 PART 3; Arthur Blackburn to Guy Fisher, 4 September 1916, 3DRL/6392, AWM.

36 Andrew Faulkner, *Arthur Blackburn, VC: An Australian Hero, His Men, and Their Two World Wars* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2008), 120–129, 139.

37 *Ibid.*, 123.

38 Arthur Blackburn, paraphrased in 'Appeals for Recruits', *Kapunda Herald*, 16 March 1917.

39 'Sergt. Howell, V.C.', Western Champion (Parkes, New South Wales), 13 June 1918; 'Sergeant Howell, V.C. and M.M.', *Lachlander and Condobolin District Recorder*, 5 June 1918.

appreciation of the efforts of the Australian Army and men of the type of Sergeant Howell'.[40]

The Australian government was evidently aware of the inspirational pull commanded by the VC and its recipients. In June 1918 the Department of Defence, with backing from its minister George Pearce and Prime Minister Hughes, raised a proposal to grant three months furlough to Australia to the AIF's VC recipients still on active duty. The request was purely political, as it was intended that these men 'would give great fillip to recruiting'.[41] By this stage of the war, conscription had again been rejected, enlistments had further slumped, and several battalions on the western front were being forced to merge or disband due to lack of personnel.[42] The proposal garnered widespread support among the AIF's senior command, with Major General John Gellibrand venturing so far as to declare that the men 'would have a stimulating effect on the recruiting movement'.[43]

At the time of the request 37 Australian personnel had received the VC, of whom 18 were still on active duty overseas.[44] Divisional commanders were instructed to consult with the VC recipients under their command, with the strict stipulation that '[n]o officer or man is to be retained with his unit on the ground that he cannot be spared'.[45] Of the 18, four were indisposed and three—including Albert Jacka—refused outright. The eleven amenable to the offer embarked from London in August. A further six sailed for Australia over the following two months. As the men made the journey home, Secretary of the Department of Defence, Thomas Trumble, instructed the commandants of each of the state-based Military Districts to liaise with their State Recruiting Committee 'with a view to taking … such advantage from [the VC's] stay … as may be secured from a recruiting point of view'.[46] However, as the first group of men did not arrive home until October, they had but a limited effect on recruiting before the fighting came to an end on 11 November 1918. The intended recruiting drive, nevertheless, was not the final use of heroic figures or the VC for propaganda purposes in the present war, for Jacka was again to be featured on a poster: this time for peace bonds. The message was broadly similar to earlier initiatives, conveying that Jacka had given his all, 'kept his pledge', and now it was the public's turn.[47]

* * *

The VC-oriented propaganda and recruitment initiatives from 1917 created a distinct legacy for the promotion of martial heroism and military celebrity in Australia. The use of the VC and its recipients for propaganda purposes was purposeful, for it coincided with increasing awareness and veneration of the VC in Australia and came at a time when the war effort was in crisis. Schemes such as the Sportsmen's Thousand served to glorify decorated personnel and their achievements, while simultaneously shrouding the war in sanitised imagery to make the fighting fronts more palatable to the public. In doing so, the propaganda and recruiting campaigns reinforced the notability of the VC and propelled these modern 'war heroes' into the realm of military celebrity. Indeed, the men were widely recognised, venerated, and accepted as almost authoritative brand ambassadors. The use of men like Blackburn and Howell and initiatives such as the Sportsmen's Thousand also inspired the similar use of VC recipients and decorated personnel for propaganda purposes in the Second World War and later conflicts. The legacy of which can still be seen in Australia, in the privileged status, social currency, and celebrity that modern heroic figures like Ben Roberts-Smith experience (or perhaps endure) today.

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40 'Sergeant Howell, V.C. and M.M.'

41 Department of Defence to General Sir William Birdwood, cablegram, 26 June 1918, MP367/1, 556/33/51, National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), Canberra.

42 Bou and Dennis, *Australian Imperial Force*, 17.

43 Major General John Gellibrand to Headquarters Australian Corps, 11 July 1918, AWM26, 449/3, AWM.

44 Of the remaining 19, eleven had been killed in action or died of wounds and eight had already returned to Australia. Brigadier General Thomas Griffiths, Commandant AIF Headquarters London, to AIF Headquarters France, 28 June 1918, AWM26, 449/3, AWM.

45 Brigadier General Thomas Dodds, Deputy Adjutant General AIF, to headquarters Australian divisions, 25 July 1918, AWM26, 449/3, AWM.

46 Memoranda by Thomas Trumble to the commandants of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Military Districts, 25 September 1918, MP367/1, 556/33/51, NAA, Canberra.

47 'He Kept His Pledge', Commonwealth Government of Australia, c. 1918–19, ARTV00784, AWM.

Having a Good War During a Bad Year: Herbert Hart in 1917

John Crawford New Zealand Defence Force

Abstract

To have 'a good war' may be defined as 'making the most of the opportunities presented to one during wartime'. This article focuses on one man who had a good war between 1914 and 1918; with a particular focus on 1917.

In 1914 Herbert Hart was a small-town solicitor and officer in the part-time Territorial Force. By the end of the First World War he was a much decorated and highly regarded brigadier-general. The factors that led to Hart having a good war and how they can be seen at work during his career in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force are assessed in this article. How having a good war and becoming a senior officer changed Hart's experience of war on the western front and the trajectory of his life are also examined.

Keywords

Brigadier; First World War; Herbert Hart; good war; NZEF

INTRODUCTION

For the British empire and its allies 1917 was a bad year which saw the failure of major offensives on the western front and the collapse of the Russian empire's war effort. Even in a bad year, however, some men and women were having 'a good war'. The concept of having 'a good war' is rather alien to twenty-first century sensibilities, but during and after the First World War it was not an uncommon expression.[1] To have 'a good war' may be defined as making 'the most of the opportunities presented to one during wartime'.[2] This article looks at one man who had a good war in 1917: Brigadier-General Herbert Hart (Fig. 1).

In 1914, Hart was a 31-year-old solicitor and major in the part-time Territorial Force in the small Wairarapa town of Carterton.[3] By the end of 1917 he was a well-known and highly respected senior officer in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF). In this article the key factors that led to Hart and other men having a good war are outlined. The focus will be on Hart's career during 1917; how his experience of war on the western front changed during that year; and how having a good war changed the course of his life.

There are, in my view, five main factors that in combination could lead to a military officer having a good war. These are opportunity, luck, courage, resilience, and, above all, talent. The boundaries between these factors are often rather blurred and their relative importance varied between individuals.

In the New Zealand military forces, unlike in the British Army, social position and contacts with influential individuals and groups did not play a significant part in the promotion of particular officers.[4] In assessing Hart's First World War career it is, however, important to recognise that as a well-educated, European, Protestant man of above average height with a high-status occupation he was a prime example of the kind of individual who dominated the ranks of the NZEF's officer corps and those of other

1 See for example, *New Zealand Herald*, 11 August 1927, 8, 5 March 1928, 14.

2 *Collins English Dictionary*, accessed 22 May 2019.

3 John Crawford, ed., *The Devil's Own War: The First World War Diary of Brigadier-General Herbert Hart* (Auckland: Exisle, 2008), 17–21.

4 Keith Simpson, 'The officers', in *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War*, eds. Ian F. W. Beckett and Keith Simpson (Manchester: Manchester University Press,1985), 75–83; Peter Cooke and John Crawford, *The Territorials: The History of the Territorial and Volunteer Forces of New Zealand* (Auckland: Random House, 2011), 163–165, 193–194.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 61–70
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/crawford
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/10

Figure 1. Herbert Hart inspecting a unit of the 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade, France, 6 July 1917. Alexander Turnbull Library. RSA Collection, 1/2-012830-G.

similar Allied forces.[5] It is also worth noting that Hart's career may have been rather different had he been a British Territorial officer as he would have had to contend with a pervasive prejudice amongst British regular army officers against citizen soldiers being given senior rank.[6] Although such qualities were by no means a pre-requisite for advancement or success during the First World War, it is worth observing that Hart was a charming, likeable man who possessed considerable charisma.[7]

OPPORTUNITY

The massive expansion of the armies of the combatant nations following the outbreak of war in 1914 provided great opportunities for advancement. As in other armies, men who began their service in the NZEF as officers were best positioned to take advantage of these opportunities.[8] During the war heavy casualties amongst officers provided further opportunities for the survivors to rise up the military hierarchy.[9] Active service also provided capable individuals with more situations in which they could display their talents.

In 1914 Hart was a young and comparatively junior major in the New Zealand Territorial Force. After he volunteered for service in the NZEF he was made second-in-command of the Wellington Infantry Battalion. Second-in-command of an infantry battalion was the best post a man of Hart's rank and experience could hope for. The commander of the Wellington Infantry Battalion was Lieutenant-Colonel William Malone, the best battalion commander in the NZEF during the first year of the war. Malone thought highly of Hart, who was fortunate

5 Crawford, *Devil's War*, 17–21; Peter D. Hodge, 'The Army of Opportunity? Social and Military Backgrounds of NZEF Officers in the Great War, 1914–1918' (BA Honours Research Essay, Victoria University of Wellington, 1994), 24–38; William Westerman, 'Change and Continuity in Combat: A Statistical Analysis of the Officers of the 5th Australian Infantry Battalion, 1914 to 1918', *First World War Studies* (2019): 10–11, accessed 21 April 2019; Dale James Blair, 'An Australian "Officer-Type"? – A Demographic Study of the Composition of Officers in the 1st Battalion, First AIF', *Sabertache* XXXIX (March 1998): 21–27; Jean Bou and Peter Dennis with Paul Dalgleish, *The Australian Imperial Force*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2016), 59–60.

6 Ian Beckett, 'The Territorial Force', *A Nation in Arms*, 140–143.

7 *Devil's War*, 296–298.

8 Bou and Dennis, *AIF*, 55–57.

9 Simpson, 'The Officers', *A Nation in Arms*, 69, 86–87.

to serve under such a capable officer.[10] Malone's death during the heroic defence of Chunuk Bair in August 1915 left the way open for Hart to take command of the Wellington Battalion the following month.[11]

LUCK

There is no doubt that in order to have a good war an individual required more than their fair share of luck. On 27 April 1915 Hart was shot in the hip while playing a key role in the defence of Walker's Ridge, a vital position overlooking Anzac Cove. The resulting wound was large, but did not fracture his hip, something that would have been very dangerous and which easily could have terminated his military career, if not his life.[12] Hart survived his brush with death on Walker's Ridge as he did other close calls during the war.[13] Many other talented New Zealand officers, such as lieutenant-colonels William Malone and George King were not so lucky.[14] The wound Hart sustained during the initial fighting at Gallipoli took months to heal, which meant he missed the virtual destruction of the Wellington Infantry Battalion on Chunuk Bair in August 1915.[15]

COURAGE

Officers were expected to be brave both by the men they commanded and their superiors. An officer who lacked this highly valued quality was unlikely to be promoted.[16] At Gallipoli, and later on the western front, Hart repeatedly demonstrated his personal bravery. During the initial fighting at Gallipoli, for instance, he showed 'gallantry and devotion to duty … in rallying men and digging into an important forward position in the face of an extremely severe fire'.[17]

RESILIENCE

In order to have a good war both officers and other ranks needed to be resilient, physically and mentally. Hart was young, physically fit, and strong. The serious wound Hart suffered at Gallipoli does not appear to have had any long-term impact on his health.[18] In general, Hart's health was good, and unlike a significant number of officers he was rarely unfit for active service.[19]

Hart's physical resilience was complemented by a mental resilience which enabled him to withstand the stresses and strains of active service in the Great War. Like most soldiers who saw a considerable amount of action, Hart developed a number of coping or survival strategies; including a sometimes rather black sense of humour that helped many soldiers through the First World War.[20] After he was badly wounded at Gallipoli, for instance, Hart, who was a keen cyclist, told his wife in a telegram that he had been shot, remarking that he had a: 'Double puncture; being vulcanised; well soon'.[21] He was also an optimist who had a great ability to take advantage of any opportunities for pleasure or relaxation and, it seems, an ability to at least temporarily put the worries of command to one side.[22] Perhaps most importantly, as was very common, he became a fatalist. On the eve of the New Zealand Division's commitment to the bloody Somme offensive, for instance, he wrote that 'what is to be will be, and I think we are all fatalists long before this'.[23] Hart was not a 'war lover' or 'fire eater'. He was painfully aware of the ever-increasing number of his old comrades and friends who had died. After noting the death of an old friend in May 1918, for example, he was moved to write that: 'One by one they pass and are no more'.[24] In his detailed diary he regularly expressed his disgust at the destruction and misery caused by what

10 13 August 1914 and 27 April 1915 diary entries, John Crawford with Peter Cooke eds., *No Better Death: The Great War Diaries and Letters of William G. Malone*, 2nd ed. (Auckland: Exisle, 2014), 41, 166; Christopher Pugsley, *Gallipoli: The New Zealand Story* (Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 18, 237–239.

11 19 August 1915, 6 September 1915 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 71, 73–74.

12 27 April 1915 diary entry, *ibid.*, 60–61.

13 8 July and 16 September 1916 diary entries, *ibid.*, 122, 141–142.

14 *Patea Mail*, 7 May 1917, 2; Ian McGibbon, *New Zealand's Western Front Campaign* (Auckland: David Bateman, 2016), 139.

15 5 August 1915 diary entry, *Devil's War*, 70.

16 Terry Kinloch, *Godley: The Man Behind the Myth* (Dunedin: Exisle, 2018), 177; William Westerman, *Soldiers and Gentlemen: Australian Battalion Commanders in the Great War, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 157–58; Frank Davies and Graham Maddocks, *Bloody Red Tabs: General Officer Casualties of the Great War, 1914–1918* (London: Leo Cooper, 1995), 22–24, 48–50.

17 Herbert Hart DSO citation, J. Bryant Haigh and A.J. Polaschek, *New Zealand and the Distinguished Service Order* (the authors: Christchurch, 1993), 16–18 September 1916 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 64, 141–143.

18 27 April–23 June 1915 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 60–64; Casualty Form-Active Service and related papers, Herbert Ernest Hart, No. 10/133, military personal file, R24044567, Archives New Zealand Wellington (ANZ).

19 14–31 December, 18 February–11 March 1918 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 155–158, 223–227.

20 Alex Watson, 'Self-deception and Survival: Mental Coping Strategies on the Western Front, 1914–18', *Journal of Contemporary History,* 41, no. 2 (April 2006): 247–268; 20 July 1916, 22 September 1916, *Devil's War*, 125–126, 143–144.

21 *Daily News*, Carterton, 3 May 1915, clipping in MSZ-0661, Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL).

22 9 July 1916 and 2 February 1918 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 12223, 219; S.J.E. Closey ed., *Fourthoughts: Being the Journal of the War New Zealand Infantry Brigade Group* (London: Argus Printing, 1918), 113.

23 5 September 1916 diary entry, *Devil's War*, 137.

24 3 May 1918 diary entry, *ibid.*, 232.

he once called 'the devil's own war'.[25] Hart, like other soldiers, had to harden his heart in order that he might continue to effectively perform his duties.[26]

TALENT

The final good war factor is talent. The factors discussed above either singularly or collectively would not have led to Hart's rapid advancement if they had not been combined with considerable ability. Before the First World War he had been recognised as a 'good officer, keen and enthusiastic'.[27] During the war regular confidential reports were prepared by commanding officers on the performance of officers under their command. Unfortunately, comparatively few of these reports have survived and none of these relate to Hart.[28] At Gallipoli, Hart's exceptional performance during the defence of Walker's Ridge was recognised when he was made a member of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). Only one other NZEF officer was so honoured for their service during the opening days of the Gallipoli campaign.[29] Hart's conduct and performance in 1915 and 1916 impressed senior NZEF officers. During September 1916, on the Somme, as commander of the 1st Battalion of the Wellington Regiment Hart demonstrated outstanding leadership combined with an ability to make quick, sound decisions in action.[30]

HART BECOMES A BRIGADE COMMANDER

These good war factors or traits are all important to Hart's career during the crucial and grim year of 1917. By the end of 1916 Hart had established himself as one of the New Zealand Division's best battalion commanders. For a week in late October 1916, Hart was for the first time given the temporary command of his brigade.[31] For all of January 1917, Hart was the temporary commander of the 3rd New Zealand (Rifle) Brigade.[32] He made the most of these opportunities and showed himself to be capable of commanding a brigade. An infantry brigade, which at full strength consisted of over 4,000 men, was the smallest formation in the British and Dominion forces during the First World War. Its main units were four infantry battalions. Brigades had a crucial role in operations. Normally an infantry division had three brigades.[33]

Early in February 1917, however, he was informed by Major-General Sir Andrew Russell, the commander of the New Zealand Division that he would not become the new permanent commander of the 1st New Zealand Infantry Brigade. This post went to a regular officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Brown. Russell apparently would have preferred to appoint Hart, but was overruled by the commander of the NZEF, Lieutenant-General Sir Alexander Godley. Hart was, however, assured by Russell that he would receive the next vacant brigade command.[34]

Hart's opportunity came sooner than it would otherwise have done because of the New Zealand government's decision in February 1917 to form an additional infantry brigade. As promised, Hart, who Godley described as 'a capital New Zealand citizen soldier', was promoted to brigadier-general and was placed in command of this new, 4th Infantry Brigade. This was a major advance for Hart as there were 47 lieutenant-colonels on the strength of the NZEF in 1917, but only six brigadier-generals.[35] This promotion, therefore, elevated Hart into a much more select company.

THE ADVANTAGE AND IMPLICATIONS OF BECOMING A BRIGADIER-GENERAL

Promotion to the rank of brigadier-general substantially changed Hart's experience of warfare on the western front. Regular periods of leave were vital to maintaining

25 4-7 February 1917 and 14 December 1916 diary entries, *ibid.*, 164, 156.

26 7 March 1917, 5 September 1918 diary entries, *Devil's Own War*, 172, 251; *Wairarapa Age*, 17 September 1918, 5; Simon Robbins, *British Generalship during the Great War; The Military Career of Sir Henry Horne 1861–1929* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 267–268.

27 Confidential Reports on Territorial Force Units 1912 [1911]–1913, 345, AD37, 21/26, ANZ.

28 See for example, Confidential Reports on Officers of Infantry Second Reinforcements, Trentham Camp, 20 November 1914, AD10, 42/3, R3885592, ANZ.

29 *Devil's War*, 64.

30 27 April 1915 diary entry, Malone to Ida, 3 July 1915, *No Better Death*, 166, 260; 16–27 September 1916, *Devil's War*, 141–146; H. Stewart, *The New Zealand Division 1916-1919: A Popular History Based on Official Records* (Auckland: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1921), 106, 163.

31 22-29 October 1916 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 148–149.

32 *Devil's War*, 156, 158-163; Stewart, New Zealand Division, 106, 163

33 Peter Simkins, "'Building Blocks": Aspects of Command and Control at Brigade Level in the BEF's Offensive Operations, 1916–1918', in *Command and Control on the Western Front: The British Army's Experience 1914–1918*, eds. Gary Sheffield and Dan Todman (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2004), 141–171.

34 2 February 1917 diary entry, *Devil's War*, 163, Andrew Russell diary entry 1 February 1917 (copy), R.F. Gambrill, 'The Russell Family Saga, Vol. 3', QMS-0822, ATL.

35 Godley to Wigram, 10 March 1917, WA 252/14, R24048337, ANZ; *NZEF Gradation List January 1917* (Wellington?: NZEF, 1917); John Crawford, 'New Zealand is Being Bled to Death: The Formation, Operations and Disbandment of the Fourth Brigade' in *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies and the First World War*, eds. John Crawford and Ian McGibbon (Auckland: Exisle, 2007), 250–253.

the physical and mental well-being of soldiers. On average a New Zealand soldier serving on the western front could expect an eight-day period of leave in the United Kingdom plus travel days about every 18 months.[36] Senior officers like Herbert Hart benefited from a more liberal leave regime. In 1917 Hart had three periods of leave in the United Kingdom, totalling 21 days.[37] He also spent two and a half months in England forming and training his brigade.[38] As a brigadier-general with some resources Hart was able to arrange for his wife, Minnie, to travel to the United Kingdom during 1917 for a visit that lasted for more than a year. Consequently, Minnie was able in February 1918 to visit Hart in hospital in France after he had been gassed.[39] Her presence in England, which fortuitously overlapped with the time Hart was posted there raising his new brigade, was a boost to his morale. After her departure Hart wrote: 'the sunshine has gone out of my life and am greatly worried and depressed'.[40]

Brigade headquarters were located further behind the front line than battalion headquarters and generally the accommodation was somewhat more comfortable. This combination of more leave and better accommodation fostered resilience amongst more senior officers.[41] This was just as well because the stress of command and very long working hours undoubtedly took their toll on senior officers. Officers in general and senior personnel in particular were a valuable commodity and as such the military system took particular care of them. By the end of 1916, for example, Hart was rather rundown and unwell after a year of hard service. He was then sent for the Christmas-New Year period to a 'very cosy' Château that was being run as a convalescent home for officers.[42]

Becoming a brigade commander not only increased the physical distance between Hart and front line troops, but also the psychological distance between him and the men he commanded. This is perhaps best illustrated by Hart's account in his diary of the first trench raid he oversaw as a brigade commander:

> I found it much less trying being connected with a raid as Brigadier than as Battalion Commander. In the present case my position more closely resembled the picture of a General during an engagement as depicted by popular magazines. As zero time—5 o'clock—drew near, I entered the Brigade office where a direct telephone wire had been run to the Artillery Group covering the sector and also to the Battalion Commander directing the raid. On a table in the office was spread out a large map and aeroplane photos of the part being raided, also the operation orders, timetable and a watch. The Brigade Major [the principal staff officer in a brigade] sat on one side and the Commander of the Artillery Group on the other.[43]

This account is an interesting contrast with Hart's depiction of the raid in July 1916 which he directed as a battalion commander. In this operation, his closest friend in the NZEF, Captain Alexander McColl, was killed. Hart felt partially responsible for McColl's death and never became so closely attached to any of his subordinates during the rest of the war.[44]

Promotion to the rank of brigadier-general also markedly changed Hart's material and social circumstances. His pay almost doubled to more than £1,000 a year.[45] This was significantly more than the heads of major public service departments in New Zealand who received on average between £800 and £900 per annum.[46] As a brigadier-general he met and occasionally socialised with senior generals, politicians, and even members of the royal family[47] (Fig. 2).

HART AS A BRIGADE COMMANDER: 1917–1918

Hart's 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade had a support role during the Battle of Messines in June 1917. It carried out its first, and as it transpired, only major assault on 4 October 1917 as part of the Battle of Passchendaele. The planning and the preparations for this attack were

36 Glyn Harper, *Johnny Enzed: The New Zealand Soldier in the First World War 1914–1918* (Auckland: Exisle, 2015), 386.

37 Calculated from Hart's diary entries (31 May–8 June 1916, 8 days, 8 November–21 November 1916, 13 days, 13–18 March 1917, 5 days, 11 September–16 September, 5 days, 20 December 1917–6 January 1918, 11 days; and see 5 March 1917, *Devil's War*, 169.

38 11 March to 28 May 1917 diary entries, *ibid.*, 172–178.

39 23 March 1917, 26 February 1918, 18 May 1918, 30 May 1918 diary entries, *ibid.*, 173, 225, 235, 236.

40 1 June 1918 diary entry, *ibid.*, 236.

41 See for example 4 November 1917 diary entry, *ibid.*, 207; Simkins, 'Building Blocks', 141–171; Westerman, *Soldiers and Gentlemen*, 120–124.

42 14-29 December 1916 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 155–158.

43 7 January 1917 diary entry, *ibid.*, 159.

44 1 July 1916 diary entry, *ibid.*, 119–121.

45 New Zealand Defence Forces, 'Pay and Allowances New Zealand Expeditionary Force', Special General Order 230/1917, 23 May 1917, AD1, 31/419, R22433941, ANZ; Copus to War Office, 10 March 1916, AD1, 31/900, R22431509, ANZ.

46 *Supplement to New Zealand Gazette*, 28 April 1917. 'List of persons employed in the public service on 31 March 1917', 1637, 1653, 1677, 1723, 1731.

47 29 December 1916, 1 May 1917, 25 June 1917, 30 June–1 July 1917, *Devil's War*, 157, 176, 187.

Figure 2. The Prince of Wales and Hart's staff on 18 January 1919 outside of the Rifle Brigade's headquarters, Mielenforst Château, near Cologne. The Prince is in the centre with Hart to the right, on the lowest step.
Alexander Turnbull Library. RSA Collection, 1/1-002093-G.

meticulous. In a classic 'bite and hold' operation the 1st and 4th Brigades seized all their objectives. Eight days later the other two infantry brigades of the New Zealand Division suffered terrible losses in a disastrous attack that ended in abject failure. This failure was in no way due to a lack of commitment or ability by the assault troops or the commanders but, as Hart recognised, was due to a combination of factors which included poor high-level planning, terrible weather and ground conditions and inadequate artillery support. Hart was fortunate that his brigade was not selected to take part in this doomed assault.[48]

Hart was also lucky to escape being wounded or killed during 1917. Charles Brown, who was given command of the 1st Infantry Brigade ahead of Hart, was not so fortunate. After only four months in command he was killed in action at Messines.[49] More than 200 British and Dominion generals were killed or wounded during the Great War[50] (Fig. 3) Hart's resilience was evident during this crucial year in his career. He suffered no serious health problems during 1917 and was virtually always fit for active service.[51]

The highly successful way Hart went about raising and leading his new brigade confirmed that he was indeed a talented officer. In February 1918, the 4th Brigade was disbanded as part of the reorganisation of the New Zealand Division. Hart was transferred to command the 2nd New Zealand Infantry Brigade.[52] Two weeks after taking up the appointment his headquarters, which was located in a large dugout, was heavily bombarded with high explosive and gas shells. The gas-proof doors of the dugout failed, and Hart and most of his staff were overcome. Hart was temporarily blinded and spent nearly a month in hospital. He then went to a rather luxurious officers' rest home in the south of France. In April 1918, Hart took over command of the New Zealand training

48 3 October-13 October 1917, *ibid.*, 199–205; Ian McGibbon, *Western Front*, 124–145.

49 Stewart, *New Zealand Division*, 207.

50 Davies and Maddocks, *Red Tabs*, xi-xii, 50, 62–63, 78.

51 5 July 1917, 1 December 1917 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 188, 212; Crawford, 'Fourth Brigade', 263–265.

52 27 January and 4 February 1918 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 219, 221.

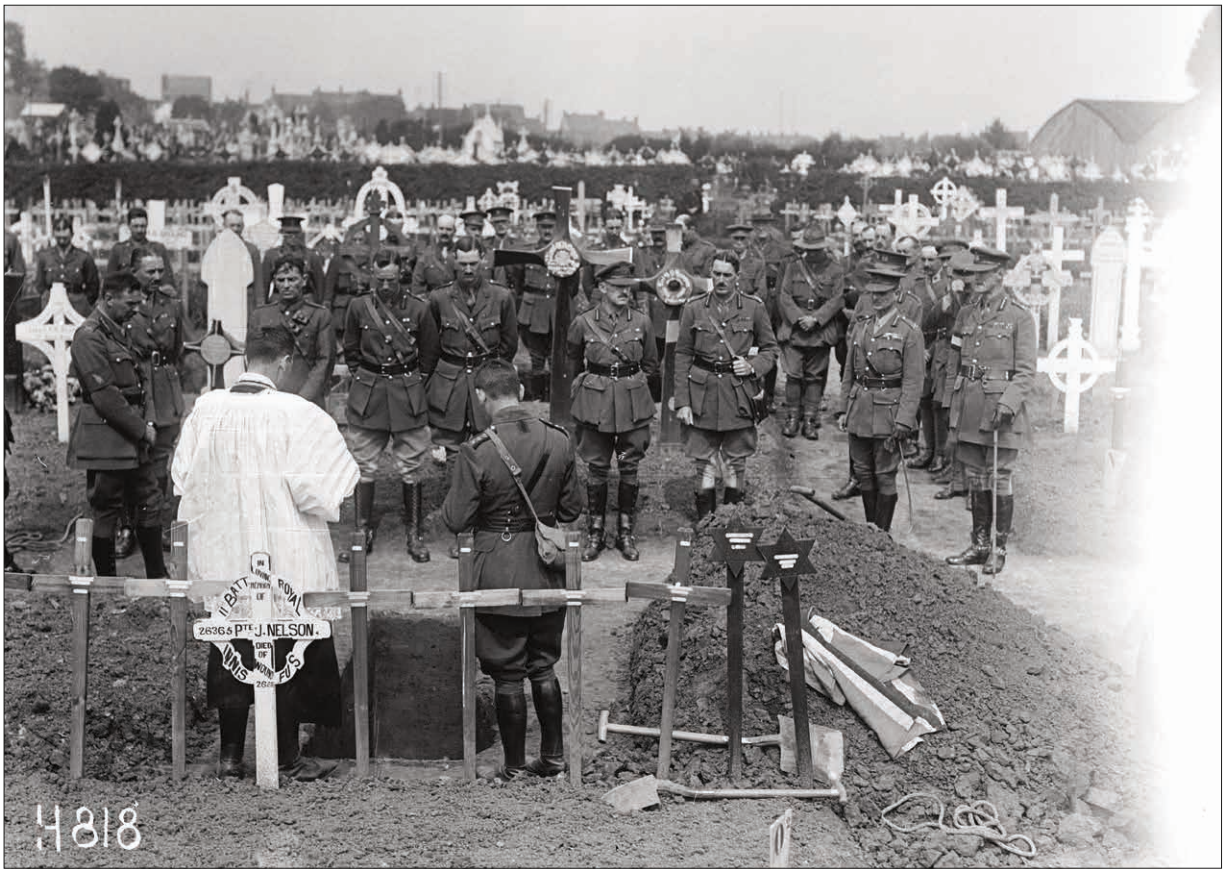

Figure 3. The funeral of Brigadier-General Charles Brown, 9 June 1917. From right to left: Lieutenant-General Sir Alexander Godley, Lieutenant-General Sir William Birdwood, Brigadier-General Herbert Hart, Major-General Sir Andrew Russell, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Cook. The soldier standing third from the left is almost certainly one of Brown's sons. His other son is probably one of the unidentified officers. Alexander Turnbull Library. RSA Collection, 1/2-013402-G.

and depot units in England.[53] In mid-July, he was urgently dispatched to France to take over command of the 3rd New Zealand (Rifle) Brigade after its commander was wounded. For the next four months he led the brigade during the great Allied offensives that ended the war. At the beginning of November 1918, in the New Zealand Division's last and perhaps most spectacular operation, his brigade captured the walled town of Le Quesnoy. This action helped ensure that Herbert Hart was one of the best known senior New Zealand officers by the end of the Great War.[54]

POST-WAR LIFE

Hart had to remain in Europe on duty for a considerable period after the end of the war and did not return home until Anzac Day 1919. Hart's increasingly illustrious career in the NZEF had attracted considerable interest in New Zealand, but above all in Wairarapa.[55] When he returned to his hometown of Carterton he received a tremendous welcome (Fig. 4). A large crowd carried him shoulder high from the railway station to his home.

A few days later, Hart was presented with an illuminated address signed by many of the Wairarapa's leading citizens. It extolled his qualities and achievements and wished him success and happiness in the future. This address along with the decorations he received for his war service, CB, CMG, DSO, Croix de Guerre, and being mentioned in dispatches on five occasions, are potent symbols of having had a good war.[56]

Less than a month after returning to New Zealand Herbert Hart resumed his legal practice in Carterton. A

53 18 February to 12 April 1918 diary entries, *Devil's War*, 223–231; Stewart, *The New Zealand Division*, 323.

54 16 July to 11 November 1918, *Devil's War*, 240–269; Stewart, *The New Zealand Division*, 395, 593; *Poverty Bay Herald*, 11 January 1919, 9; *New Zealand Herald*, 13 January 1919, 6; Christopher Pugsley, *Le Quesnoy: New Zealand's Last Battle 1918* (Auckland: Oratia, 2018).

55 *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 7 April 1917, 4; 4 May 1917, 3; *Thames Star*, 12 May 1917, 6.

56 Illuminated Address presented to Herbert Hart, MSY-3872, ATL; *Devil's War*, 285–288. Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB), Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (CMG), Distinguished Service Order (DSO).

Figure 4. The crowd gathered at the Carterton railway station to welcome home Brigadier-General Herbert Hart, Anzac Day 1919. Alexander Turnbull Library. MSY-3872_023.

few months later he and his family moved to Masterton, the major centre of Wairarapa, and established a new law firm with offices in both Masterton and Carterton.[57] He was in a sound financial position and became involved in local business and farming enterprises. Hart also had a prominent role in many community organisations; including being an important early leader in the Rotary movement. In short, he had a much higher public profile than before the war. Hart was also one of the most senior officers in the Territorial Force until his retirement in 1925.[58] During the 1920s he lived and practised law in Wairarapa.[59] Unlike some other former NZEF officers who had good wars, Hart never entered national politics, although it was rumoured that he had been asked to do so. There was, as one Wairarapa newspaper commented in 1919, a widely held view that: 'Men who have distinguished themselves on the field of battle, and have shown themselves leaders of men, should make capable representatives of the people in the highest court of the land'.[60]

In 1929, the Minister of Defence suggested to Hart that he apply to become head of the administration in Samoa, New Zealand's League of Nations mandated territory. The key requirements for this post were thought to be a strong personality and administrative experience. Weakness, indecision, and ill-health were seen as absolutely disqualifying candidates.[61] In his successful application for this significant and well-remunerated post, Hart emphasised his wide military and civilian experience. He also stressed his dealings with Māori in Wairarapa and indigenous people in South Africa and Egypt.[62]

His tenure as administrator in Samoa (Fig 5) between 1931 and 1935 was regarded as a success by the government and Hart was knighted for his services. The following year, on the recommendation of the New Zealand government, Hart was appointed to head the Imperial War Graves Commission's operations in the Middle East. In addition, between 1940 and 1942 Hart, as an unpaid acting brigadier, organised and ran the British Army's grave service in the Middle East. Hart made a success of both these demanding roles. He retired and returned to New Zealand in 1943. At the time of his death in 1968 Hart was the last surviving senior NZEF officer. He was buried with full military honours in Masterton.[63]

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that Herbert Hart was a capable, intelligent man with a winning personality. If it were not for the First World War he would probably have been a successful provincial lawyer and a senior citizen soldier in New Zealand's Territorial Force. The Great War provided Hart with opportunities to display his considerable talent and this combined with luck, courage, and mental and physical resilience ensured that he had a good war. Hart's wartime military career widened his horizons and changed the trajectory of his life. He became a well-known and respected figure

57 *Devil's War*, 286–287.

58 *Ibid.*, 287-92; *Wairarapa Age*, 3 May 1919, 3; 16 September 1919, 5; 20 September 1919, 5; 22 November 1919, 5; *Evening Post*, 5 November 1920, 4; 3 May 1924, 9; 5 June 1924, 6; 6 June 1924, 7.

59 *Devil's War*, 289–290.

60 *Wairarapa Age*, 22 July 1919, 4.

61 Berendsen to Minister of External Affairs, 12 February 1931, IT1, EX89/23, R17963143, ANZ.

62 Hart to Prime Minister, 5 May 1930, IT1, EX89/23, R17963143, ANZ.

63 *Devil's War*, 290–296.

Figure 5. The Governor-General of New Zealand Lord Bledisloe and Lady Bledisloe in Apia, Samoa, April 1933. Herbert Hart is second from the right next to Lady Bledisloe and his wife, Minnie Hart, is to the left of Lord Bledisloe. Alexander Turnbull Library. PACOLL-3062-1-04.

after the war in Wairarapa and nationally. This status, which flowed directly from wartime service, led to his appointment to important positions by the New Zealand government and the Imperial War Graves Commission. Brigadier-General Sir Herbert Hart is an excellent example of the class of men who had a good war, went on to have a good peace, and who played a significant part in shaping the post-war world.

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‘Fittingly Displayed’: The Acquisition and the Exhibition of Photographs of New Zealand’s Great War Medal Recipients at the Dominion Museum

Kirstie Ross Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Abstract

In 1917, the director of the Dominion Museum in Wellington, New Zealand sent his first form letter to the next-of-kin of New Zealanders awarded medals during the Great War. The director wrote to families, asking them for photographs of their decorated kin, and any other artefacts, ‘in readiness for the time when they can be fittingly displayed’. The outcome of this effort was 71 photographic display boards, now held at Archives New Zealand along with the correspondence associated with the acquisition, reproduction, and display of the photographs.

The heroic, commemorative narrative represented by the images featured on these boards was just one of many ways in which photographic technology operated during and immediately after the war. However, as Sandy Callister notes in her 2008 book, *The Face of War: New Zealand’s Great War Photography*: ‘…[t]oo often, the multiplicity of ways in which New Zealanders produced and consumed photographs during the war years is overlooked’. With this in mind, the article considers the nature of war photography, museums, and public remembrance, through the close examination of the correspondence related to the Great War medal recipients’ photographic display boards. By doing so, the article amplifies the work of Callister, in addition to Tanja Luckins and Anne-Marie Condé’s research, which has examined the motivations behind the donation and sale of Great War soldiers’ diaries and letters to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and Mitchell Library in Sydney. As this case study demonstrates, we see that photographic prints, because of their capacity to be copied, existed simultaneously both in private and in public, and conveyed different but also overlapping meanings in each of these two spheres.

Keywords

Dominion Museum; First World War soldiers’ portraits; history of collecting; museum collections; New Zealand; photography

INTRODUCTION

After the tactical failure of the armies of the British empire and France on the Somme in 1916, the war seemed to demand an alternative approach to its public presentation. A new type of military history was needed to make sense of this defeat and the protracted, unprecedented nature of the conflict. A group of British politicians and prominent citizens believed that the most fitting and effective way to do this was through a ‘National War Museum’, which was officially established in March 1917. (Later that year, the ‘national’ institution became the Imperial War Museum (IWM) after its founders were reminded of the Dominions’ contributions to the war).[1]

Advocates of the IWM promoted it as a setting where ‘the individual [would] find the work of himself and his family exhibited for all time as a living acknowledgement of their sacrifices offered by them to the Empire’.[2] They aspired to an institution that would provide ‘a more intimate personal interest for the individual than any museum that has ever been contemplated’.[3] The museum’s collecting committees soon began accumulating diverse materials in a range of subject areas that would enable the museum to exhibit

1 On the formation of the Imperial War Museum see Gaynor Kavanagh, ‘Museum as Memorial: The Origins of the Imperial War Museum’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23, (1988), 77–97.

2 ‘The Imperial War Museum’, circa 1917, 9, WA10 3 ZWR 6/8 part 2, Archives New Zealand, Wellington (ANZ).

3 *Ibid.*

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 71–80
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/ross
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/11

'total war'. Photography was perfect for connecting visitors personally to this subject, and within a year, the IWM's Photography Section held 10,000 items.[4]

Hillary Roberts, who is the Research Curator of this collection, observes that 'professional and amateur photographers of all nationalities combined to create a significant body of work which informed public understanding during the war itself'.[5] However, most historical considerations of First World War photography disregard the ways in which the public understood this pervasive medium. Research tends to focus on official photography and its contested status as propaganda and historical record, or on the amateur soldier photographer and the issue of censorship.[6] New Zealand photographic historian Sandy Callister asserts that: 'What historians have overlooked is how central photography was *at the time*…. [F]ew works of history in New Zealand deal specifically with the accumulation, use and dissemination of photographic records.'[7] Too often, she observes, the 'multiplicity of ways in which New Zealanders produced and consumed photographs during the war' goes unnoticed.[8]

This article builds on Callister's insights.[9] Instead of looking at the production and subject matter of New Zealand's official First World War photography, it is concerned with war-time photography on the home front, specifically the Dominion Museum's acquisition of around 2000 individual photographic portraits of decorated soldiers.[10] The article is a study of New Zealand's '*evolving* mnemonic culture of the Great War', as seen through the process of museum collecting from 1917–1921. In particular, it explores the degree to which *becoming* a collection multiplied the meanings of the photographs, at a time before local war memorials and Anzac Day were the dominant mode of community remembrance.[11] It introduces museum director Allan Thomson, who designed the collecting initiative on behalf of the Dominion Museum, and touches on his motivations and the strategies he used to secure portraits—as well as other related material—from next-of-kin and returned servicemen. It goes on to survey donors' responses to Thomson's appeal, based on a reading of a sample of the archive generated by his requests.[12] The conclusion considers what this scheme, and the responses to it, demonstrates about photography's role in determining historical meaning towards the end of, and immediately after, the Great War.[13]

4 'The Imperial War Museum', circa 1917, 21, WA10 3 ZWR 6/8 part 2, ANZ. The IWM now has almost eleven million items in its photography collection. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/photographs (accessed 25 June 2019).

5 Hilary Roberts, 'Photography', in *1914–1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, Ute Daniel, Peter Gattrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Aland Kramer, and Bill Nasson, eds, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, 8 October 2014, accessed 18 June 2019, https://encyclopedia.1914–1918-online.net/article/photography.

6 Scholars focussing on official war photography and photographers include Martyn Jolly, 'Australian First-World-War Photography: Frank Hurley and Charles Bean', *History of Photography*, 23, no. 2, (1999), 141–148; Robert Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake: C.E.W. Bean. Frank Hurley and the Making of the 1923 Photographic Record of War', *History of Photography*, 31, no. 2, (2007), 165–179; Peter Robertson, 'Canadian Photojournalism During the First World War', *History of Photography*, 21, no. 1 (1978), 37–52; Laura Brandon, 'Words and Pictures: Writing Atrocity into Canada's First World War Official Photographs', *Journal of Canadian Art History*, 31, no. 2 (2010), 110–126. For war-time photography as propaganda for military medicine on the U.S. home front see also Beth Linker, 'Shooting Disabled Soldiers: Medicine and Photography in World War I America, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 66, no. 3 (2011), 313–346.

7 Sandy Callister, *The Face of War, New Zealand's Great War Photography*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 6, 7.

8 *Ibid.*, 6.

9 For work that explores war-time photography as photography undertaken *during* war, rather than war photography as photography of war, see Michael Fitzgerald and Claire Regnault, *Berry Boys: Portraits of First World War Soldiers and Families*, (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2014); Kate Hunter and Kirstie Ross, *Holding on to Home: New Zealand Stories and Objects of the First World War* (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2014), 32–33, 37. For personal photographs as war memorials in a British context see Catherine Moriarty, '"Though in a Picture Only": Portrait Photography and the Commemoration of the First World War', in *Evidence, History and the Great War: Historians and the Impact of 1914–1918*, Gail Braybon, ed., (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 30–47.

10 On New Zealand's official war photographer see Chris Pugsley, '"Who is Sanders?" New Zealand's Official Cameraman on the Western Front 1917–1919', *Stout Centre Review* 5, no. 1 (1995), 19–22. See also Melanie Lovell-Smith, 'Photographing New Zealanders at War', accessed 21 June 2019, https://ww100.govt.nz/photographing-new-zealanders-at-war.

11 Stephen Heathorn, 'The Mnemonic Turn in the Cultural Historiography of Britain's Great War', *The Historical Journal*, 48, no. 4 (2005): 1123. On the history of New Zealand's war memorials see Jock Phillips, *To the Memory: New Zealand's War Memorials* (Nelson: Potton & Burton, 2016). First World War memorials are discussed in chapters two and three. On Anzac Day see Scott Worthy, 'New Zealand's First Anzac Days', *New Zealand Journal of History* (*NZJH*) 36, no. 2 (2002), 185–200.

12 The photographs are in two series: AALZ 902 and AALZ 25044, Archives New Zealand. Individual records in series 902 are described as 'Exhibition photographs – Great War medal recipients' on Archives New Zealand's database. The correspondence related to the photographs is in AALZ 907, ANZ. A random sample of approximately one quarter of the correspondence was consulted for this study.

13 Useful comparative studies of the collection of personal WWI-related documentary records are Tanja Luckins, *The Gates of Memory: Australian People's Experiences and Memories of Loss and the Great War*, (Freemantle: Curtin University Books, 2004), chapter 8 as well as Luckins, 'Collecting Women's Memories: The Australian War Memorial, the Next of Kin and Great War Soldiers' Diaries and Letters as Objects of Memory in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review* 19, no. 1 (2010), 21–37; Anne-Marie Condé, 'Capturing the Records of War: Collecting at the Mitchell Library and the Australian War Memorial', *Australian Historical Studies*, 125 (2005), 134–152.

PIONEERING HISTORY IN THE MUSEUM?

New Zealand's national museum, which opened in 1865 as the Colonial Museum, was initially dedicated almost entirely to collecting, researching, and displaying natural history and ethnology.[14] However, just prior to the outbreak of the war in Europe, the government began looking at the systematic acquisition and preservation of New Zealand's history of European settlement, through private records and documents. The museum—by now designated 'Dominion'—would house this national collection which would come into its own for the coming generations. This new direction coincided with the appointment of Allan Thomson, the museum's third director, in January 1914. Two years later, the New Zealand born, Oxford-educated geologist submitted a formal report on establishing such a collection. In this paper, Thomson predicted that 'the whole tendency of historical research serves to show that documents of a private nature will be … valued by the historian of the future'.[15]

Such aspirations reflected the intellectual climate of the period. In the decades around 1900, some Pākehā were developing an appreciation of their fast-fading pioneering past. Concerned amateur scholars, politicians, and civil servants began tracking down key documents from the colonial period which would later form the basis of historical research and writing.[16] As a corollary, so-called early or old settler organisations also sprung up in this period. Members of these groups came together to celebrate a district's progress, usually by marking significant anniversaries, but very occasionally through the formation of local museums and collections. Fiona Hamilton, in her study of Pākehā collective memory at this time observes that the 'pioneering histories' of these organisations were 'genealogies of communities striving for a sense of legitimacy in a recently settled land'.[17]

However, the outbreak of war compelled Thomson to expand his collection activities and to consider the acquisition of contemporary military artefacts, documents, and imagery for the Dominion Museum, alongside his commitment to amassing 19th century historical records. Through 1915 the director tried to obtain material from Gallipoli, although he was disadvantaged by distance and the absence of an active local agent to collect on his behalf for the museum.[18] And because Thomson was civilian, official war trophies were unavailable to him: they remained the property of military authorities. Only a few personal artefacts made their way back to Wellington; others—mostly unused and generic—were supplied to the museum by the Defence Department.[19]

But during this period, when collections from the Dardanelles campaign failed to materialise, Thomson successfully acquired items related to battles fought on New Zealand soil in the 1860s and 1870s. This was a large collection, including historical photographs of New Zealand Wars medal recipients, which the museum negotiated to buy from a private collector, W.F. Gordon, between June 1914 and early 1916.[20] Thomson was conscious of the purchase's strategic importance, noting in the museum's annual report for 1915–16 that the 'Gordon Collection' was one of two recent additions to the museum that formed 'a fitting nucleus for the national historical collection, the growth of which, it is hoped, will be the principal feature of the year's activity'.[21]

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14 C. McCarthy, 'Displaying Natural History: Colonial Museum in *The Amazing World of James Hector*, S. Nathan and M. Varnham, eds, (Wellington: Te Awa Press, 2008), 49–61. In its early years, photography was a minor adjunct to the museum's research activities. See Athol McCredie, 'Augustus Hamilton – Creating a Visual Database', *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 47, no. 1 (2017), 138–144.

15 Allan Thomson, 'Report on the Establishment of a National Collection of Historical Records', 20 January 1916, MU01/015/07, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Archives, Wellington (Te Papa Archives). Thomson conducted this investigatory work under the auspices of a statutory body, the Board and Science and Art. The government's ambition to establish a national historical collection is covered by David Colquhoun '"The Pioneers Are Steadily Passing to the Great Beyond": Early Collecting and the National Historical Collection', *Archifacts*, October (2005), 1–17.

16 Fiona Hamilton, 'Pioneering History: Negotiating Pakeha Collective Memory in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *NZJH*, 36, no. 1, (2002), 66–81. The Early Settlers and Historical Association of Wellington was set up in 1912; 'to promote and foster the study of Wellington and New Zealand and a spirit of patriotism and friendship in the people'. *Journal of the Early Settlers and Historical Association of Wellington* 1, no. 1 (1912), not paginated. See also Sean Brosnahan, To *Undying Fame: The Otago Settlers Association and its Museum, 1898-1998*, (Dunedin: Otago Settlers Association, [1998]).

17 Hamilton, 'Pioneering History', 77.

18 Thomson approached New Zealand's official war correspondent, Malcolm Ross, in August 1915, but nothing came of this, unlike Ross's Australian counterpart, Charles Bean, who is lauded for his contributions to the founding of the Australian War Memorial and the breadth of its First World War collections. For an assessment of Ross's work on Gallipoli, see Ron Palenski, 'A New Zealand Failure in the Great War', *Australian Historical Studies* 39, no. 1 (2008), 19–35.

19 On Thomson's numerous attempts to collect war-related material from overseas, see Kirstie Ross, '"More than books tell": Museums, Artefacts and the History of the Great War' in *Making History a Difference: New Approaches from Aotearoa*, Katie Pickles, Lyndon Fraser, Marguerite Hill, Sarah Murray and Greg Ryan, eds, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge University Scholars, 2017), 240.

20 See Rebecca Rice, 'From Aide-memoire to Public Memorial: The "Gordon Collection" of Photographic Portraits Relating to the New Zealand Wars', NZJH 52, 1 (2018), 41–68.

21 Thomson, 'Report of the Director of the Dominion Museum 1915-16', *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives*, H-33, (1916), 4.

A selection of photographs of the medal recipients was displayed soon after the collection came into the museum (Fig. 1). When the Minister of Internal Affairs opened the exhibition on 8 April 1916, he echoed Thomson's belief that these portraits formed the foundations of a national history collection. He also noted that the veterans depicted in the portraits were 'men who took [an] active part in the making of history in this country during the turbulent days of the Maori wars'.[22] The exhibition and these comments were apposite, as the first anniversary of the landings at Anzac Cove by the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) was rapidly approaching. In this context, exhibition visitors (and readers of the newspaper report) would have been inclined to link the heroes who had made history in the 1860s with the soldiers whose efforts on Gallipoli were being recognised and were continuing to make New Zealand's history for the future.

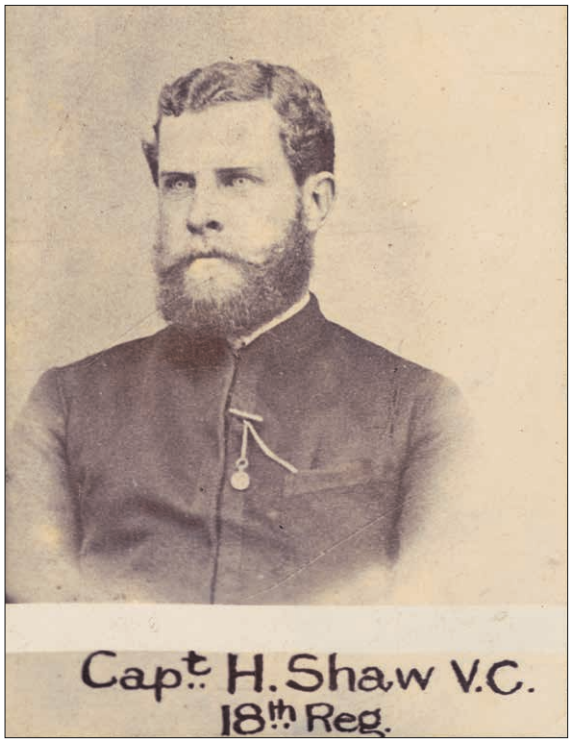

Figure 1. The portrait of New Zealand Wars recipient Captain Hugh Shaw came to the Dominion Museum as part of the Gordon Collection in 1915. Shaw also served in Afghanistan, Egypt, Ireland and India. Purchased 1916. Te Papa (0.045187).

'GIFTS SPECIALLY DESIRED'

The following year, when Thomson embarked on a targeted collecting programme for the museum, he exploited this assumed connection between the present and the past. In February 1917 he sent out a circular to descendants of early settlers asking for donations related to 'the history of the Dominion from its commencement'. With a ministerial signature adding authority to the document, recipients were ensured the 'permanent preservation' of any donations given to a national collection. The circular listed eleven 'Gifts Specially Desired', including 'letters written from the Front during the present great European War'.[23] A second circular, declaring that '[m]aterial in reference to Great War [was] specially desired', was sent at the same time.[24] Securing items related to current events appeared to be just as critical as salvaging those from the 19th century.

A newspaper article from April 1917 also stressed that collecting material related to the current overseas conflict was an urgent matter. Its anonymous author—Thomson perhaps—strategically invoked New Zealand's colonial wars of the 19th century to motivate donations of material related to the current fighting overseas. The article appealed to readers: if 'relations of a Maori War veteran [had] a son or a brother at the front[,] [l]etters from him would be of interest' to the Dominion Museum.[25] Pre-empting the loss of historical records underpinned this request: 'The heroes of today will be the veterans of to-morrow, and there is no reason why their writings and doings should not be collected while the fighting is going on, instead of leaving it to a future generation to send out a search party such as is now in progress to discover and fill the blanks of the past history of the Dominion.'[26]

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE 'HEROS OF TODAY'

Uniting the 'heroes of today' in one place was the key note in Thomson's next collecting scheme, which he launched around July 1917. This time his emphasis diverged from previous efforts. Thomson now sought recent photographic portraits of men awarded medals for gallantry, which he described in the first version of his requests as 'New Zealanders whose conduct has marked them out for distinction by their King and country'.[27] However, the salvage of settler history remained a priority. In the standard letters he sent, Thomson also mentioned, somewhat obliquely, that '[i]n putting on record the fine work of our Pioneer Settlers' by establishing a national

22 *Dominion*, [8 April 1916], clipping (incorrectly annotated 8 March 1916). MU14/001/0010, Te Papa Archives. See also Charlotte Macdonald, 'The First World War and the Making of Colonial Memory', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 33, no. 2 (2015), 15–37.

23 Russell, 15 February 1917, MU73/001/82, Te Papa Archive.

24 For a list of the types of material sought by Thomson see Ross, '"More than books tell"', 243. For methods used to solicit war-related historical material by staff at the Mitchell Library, Sydney and the Australian War Memorial, see Condé, 'Capturing the Records of War, 136–45.

25 *Evening Post*, 10 March 1917, 6.

26 *Ibid.*

27 Thomson to Mr W.J. Bassett, [19] December 1917, AALZ 907 box 2, ANZ.

historical collection—it was 'most desirable to trace the splendid part their descendants are playing in the present great war for freedom'.[28]

This correspondence drew on newspaper lists of medal recipients and early embarkation rolls for next-of-kin contact details.[29] In his requests, Thomson asked next-of-kin and medal recipients themselves for additional war-related material—letters, trophies, and souvenirs—while reassuring these potential donors that their possessions would be 'valued and safeguarded in a manner impossible to the average dwelling'.[30] Thomson promised, too, that the photographs donated to a 'New Zealand War Section' of the 'National Historical Collection' would eventually be 'fittingly displayed'. In the interim, before a suitable venue was formally established, the portraits were installed for public viewing 'above the stairs' at the Dominion Museum.[31] The first framed groups, which comprised of randomly arranged portraits, were hung in this location in January 1918. Captions identified medal recipients, mostly in uniform, and sometimes explained the circumstances of a soldier's award.

Thomson's call for photographs resembled regular appeals made by newspapers for personal portraits which illustrated rolls of honour of dead and wounded soldiers. Circulated publicly in this way, deceased soldiers 'made their way back into the public arena as evidence of both service to and sacrifice for one's country', as Callister puts it.[32] A national portrait gallery of medal recipients and war heroes, however, served another purpose beyond that of mourning and remembrance. This display of myriad faces in a national institution validated a heroic version of the war. The men exhibited in the groups illustrated universal qualities admired and aspired to by many. As we will see, the museum was the context within which their deeds were confirmed as public property and the portraits were the medium for making this collective sense of the war.[33]

RECEPTION: 'A VERY NICE IDEA'

Thomson's revised collecting scheme ran from mid-1917 to 1921.[34] In that time, the clerk who administered it handled the correspondence and receipt or reproduction of more than 2000 portraits. The archive associated with the collection reveals that almost everyone contacted responded positively to Thomson.[35] Letters from two mothers whose sons received the Military Cross (MC), expressed sentiments that were typical of those who endorsed the initiative: Frank Greenish's mother 'fe[lt] very proud that [the photograph] should be included in the national collection', while Clarence Seton's 'consider[ed] it a very nice idea….'[36]

The chance to display his son's portrait in a national gallery with those of other medal recipients also met with the approval of Oliver Senior, the father of deceased MC recipient Charles Senior. In correspondence with Thomson he explained that: 'I have hitherto declined the invitations from the public press but [Charles's] mother + I recognise that the purpose for which you require [the photo] is of an entirely different nature + we are sending you a 'home portrait' [?] one he himself liked best.'[37]

Senior did not explicitly outline reasons behind this preference. Perhaps it was having the portrait displayed in the company of other imperial heroes in an enduring national institution that prompted Mr and Mrs Senior to favour the scheme (Fig. 2).

Much of the sampled correspondence is of a practical nature. In some cases photographs were delivered to the museum by hand, which suggests personal investment in the portrait gallery, and perhaps reflects a sense of pride, the preciousness of the photo, or the chance for a more intimate exchange with Thomson. Only one correspondent in the sample, Mr W.G. Berryman, felt that the scheme's focus was too narrow. Berryman wrote several times to justify the inclusion of his undecorated

28 *Ibid.*

29 Thomson to H. Watkinson, 19 October 1920, AALZ 907 box 16, ANZ.

30 Thomson to Mr W.J. Bassett, [19] December 1917, AALZ 907 box 2, ANZ. Thomson's reference to the protection provided by the museum echoed a claim made by Charles Bean when collecting private records for the Australian War Memorial. See Ross, 235–236.

31 Thomson to John Llewellyn Saunders, 7 May 1918, AALZ 907 box 14, ANZ.

32 Callister, *The Face of War*, 75–79; quote on 11.

33 Thomson's scheme predated a similar one undertaken by the Canadian War Records Office in London, launched at the start of August 1917. See Robertson, 'Canadian Photojournalism', 45. The New Zealand and Canadian schemes differed in scope from an IWM initiative that started at around the same time. In July 1917, the IWM announced in national and local newspapers, that it wanted to acquire portrait photographs to create a national visual record of those who had participated in the war. The museum's photography curator was 'anxious to receive photographs of every man who served'. Fifteen thousand portraits, mostly of those who died, came in between 1917 and 1919. Moriarty, '"Though in a Picture Only"', 38–39, quote on 38.

34 No official documentation has been sighted, yet, that reveals either the official start of the scheme or its conclusion.

35 This was also the case in Australia: Tanja Luckins has observed that next-of-kin contacted by the Australian War Memorial for war-related material 'belie[ved] that they were contributing to Australia's history, so consequently took up the task of replying to the AWM seriously'. Luckins, 'Collecting Women's Memories', 28.

36 Mrs Greenish to Thomson, 30 August 1917, AALZ 907, box 7; Mrs G.E. Seton to Thomson, 5 January 1920, AALZ 907 box 14, ANZ.

37 Oliver Senior to Thomson, 5 May 1920. AALZ 907 box 14, ANZ.

Figure 2. Charles Senior's head and shoulders 'home portrait' is third from the right in the middle row of this framed group of medal recipients. R21921822, AALZ 902 item 71, Archives New Zealand.

and deceased son, Stanley, in the portrait gallery, along with his son, W.O. Berryman, who was awarded the MC in 1915.[38]

On the other hand, Thomson's collection was developed using an expansive definition of nationality. All NZEF medal recipients, New Zealand-born or not, qualified for the gallery, as did New Zealand medal recipients who had served or were serving in other imperial forces —Victoria Cross (VC) recipient Bernard Freyberg, for example (Fig. 3). These men were all members of the British empire, their valour and bravery recognised as uniting them in their shared commitment to its defence.

Although the scheme's national scope elevated its purpose and shaped its reception, this caused anxiety for some next-of-kin. In a climate of suspicion around what was (and was not) 'British', even a decoration for gallantry might not adequately prove imperial loyalty. This was the case for the family of Louis Noedl, a Woodville man of Hungarian descent who won the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and the MC as a member of the Australian Imperial Forces. Noedl was a 'foreign' sounding surname and his father Robert worried that, because the family's background was not known to museum visitors, they would judge his son by his name and not by his actions. To pre-empt any

Figure 3. Portraits of medal recipients were framed in groups like this one. In the centre is New Zealander Brigadier-General Bernard Freyberg, who was awarded the DSO and VC while serving in British units. R21921771, AALZ 902 item 20, Archives New Zealand.

38 Mr H.G. Berryman to Thomson, 26 April 1918; 1 November 1918; 26 November 1918. Thomson to Berryman, 14 May 1918; 4 December 1918. AALZ 907 box 2, ANZ.

Figure 4. Captain Lois Noedl. R24184040, AALZ 25044 2/F110, Archives New Zealand.

discrimination, Robert Noedl provided extensive details of the family's imperial credentials to accompany his son's portrait (Fig. 4). These were summed up in its caption: 'Captain Noedl is of Hungarian descent and his grandfather fought under the British flag and lost his life in The Crimean War'.[39]

Returned serviceman Tom Parsons demonstrated an alternative response to the scheme's national focus. Parsons, who served in the Field Ambulance, was awarded two medals for gallantry—the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and the Military Medal (MM). However, he politely refused to be included in the collection—the only person in the sample to do so. In his response to Thomson, Parsons stressed that he did 'not desire to perpetuate anything confined to a national state'. In declining the invitation to submit a photograph of himself, he also cited his humanitarianism as a reason for his refusal.[40]

'NO SOUVENIRS TO SEND YOU'

The generally positive reception to the scheme meant that the clerk administering it could not keep up with the work it created.[41] On the other hand, Thomson's call for First World War-related artefacts yielded little if anything for the museum. It seems that next-of-kin or surviving medal recipients preferred to keep memorabilia rather than surrender objects to a public institution. Sometimes—possibly to deflect Thomson's request—the material was described by owners as too trivial or personal for public consumption.[42] As the mother of MC recipient Joseph Venables (Fig. 5) put it: 'I have no souvenirs to send you; all he has sent are too sacred to me and would not appeal to any but a Mother.'[43]

Even original photographic prints were valuable mementoes that some families and soldiers did not want to surrender. Australian-born DCM recipient Joseph Ward, for example, had to remind the museum to return the one he had provided for copying. The snap, taken by an old friend of Ward's in Germany, was 'treasure[d] more than … the decoration'.[44]

Thomson's concurrent ambition—of locating historical records through related generations of soldiers—was also unsuccessful.[45] His attempts to 'rivet the links of the Pioneer Settlers, with their descendants', as he put it in one letter, did not stimulate the donation of 19th century material that he desired. Only two correspondents mentioned a family link to New Zealand's pioneering days, although it is unclear whether any donations came into the museum as a result of either exchange. One correspondent was the sister of MM recipient Robert Ure, who mentioned her brother's 'direct descent from one of our old pioneer families'. Thomson followed this up by sending Ure's sister the February 1917 circular, discussed above, and requested 'addresses of older members of the family'.[46] Another soldier who had a pioneering genealogy was MC recipient William McKail Geddes. Geddes' Scottish grandfather, William Webster, was described as 'one of

39 Robert Noedl to Thomson, 14 February 1919 and 25 February 1919, AALZ 907 box 13, ANZ. Such nervousness was unnecessary locally where Louis Noedl's allegiance was undisputed. Between January 1916 and December 1918, his name appeared 300 times under the heading 'The Call of Empire' in the *Woodville Examiner*, along with those of other loyal servicemen in the district.

40 Tom Parsons to Thomson, 15 August 1920, AALZ 907 box 13, ANZ.

41 By June 1920, the museum had at least 1600 portraits, which staff were having difficulty in processing for display. Thomson, War Committee meeting minutes, 18 June 1920, AD1 19/45, ANZ.

42 See also Luckins, 'Collecting Women's Memories', 27–29.

43 Mrs C. Venables to Thomson, 31 March 1918, AALZ 907 box 16, ANZ.

44 Thomson to Ward, 1 July 1920; Ward to Thomson (reminder), 6 October 1920. Photograph returned to owner, 16 November 1920, AALZ 907 Box 14, ANZ.

45 Thomson to Vivian Riddiford, 28 April 1918, AALZ 907 box 14, ANZ.

46 Thomson to Miss L.M. Ure, 2 April 1918, AALZ 907 box 16, ANZ.

Figure 5. Captain Joseph K. Venables. R24184877, AALZ 25044 1/F719, Archives New Zealand.

the ancient landmarks of the Far North'.[47] He arrived in New Zealand in 1839 and settled at Kohukohu, in the Hokianga. In 1850, Webster married Hanapera (Annabella) Gillies, whose mother was Ngāti Toro of Ngāpuhi.[48] This whakapapa (genealogy) brought to light a more complex narrative of New Zealand's 19th century history that Thomson may not have anticipated.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND NEW ZEALAND'S EVOLVING MNEMONIC CULTURE OF THE WAR

Three observations can be drawn from the preceding evidence about the media and narratives that New Zealanders were using to make sense of the war. Firstly, there was general support for the collection and public display of photographs that illustrated people and qualities of which they were proud; secondly, there was a reticence towards donating war-related objects as these seemed to possess no public meaning or value; and thirdly, current events dominated most people's sense of history. These factors meant that Thomson's references to the 19th century history and a narrative of intergenerational fighting families fell on deaf ears.

Two related factors facilitated the unproblematic transfer of photographs from private hands into the museum. Firstly, photographs can be reproduced and multiples of one image can co-exist in many different contexts. The 'fluidity of both a photograph's form and meaning as it circulates through different social contexts and institutional spaces' makes it a versatile and dynamic medium, as Robert Dixon puts it.[49] Personal photographs of First World War soldiers retained in domestic settings 'intersected with the everyday, [with] the personal and the historical'. This allowed families to 'construct a complex way of memorialisation', writes Callister.[50] But re-contextualised within a thematically unified collection and displayed in the museum, the portrait of an individual medal recipient straddled the public and the private, the civic and the sentimental, the nation and the empire.

Format also explains why next-of-kin and returned medal recipients were reluctant to relinquish cherished personal objects—even to a respected national institution. This was because objects could not be copied nor occupy multiple contexts and spaces simultaneously. Nicholas Saunders, in his study of the meanings generated by metal trench art from the Great War, notes that '[f]or all concerned, artefacts taken home and placed in domestic spaces mediated between past and present lives, moving history into private time by juxtaposing it with a personalized present'.[51] Personal souvenirs—even those that owners deemed trivial or were seemingly disconnected from combat—were potent and singular touchstones of experience for their custodians, and was a private affair.[52] For this reason they were too valuable to surrender to collective ownership, even with Thomson's promise that in the museum they would be 'valued and safeguarded in a manner impossible to the average dwelling'.[53] In the museum, the emotions invested in these objects by next-of-kin and medal recipients would be overwhelmed by the weight of national meaning-making.

The difficulties Thomson experienced in acquiring objects could also be attributed to the prevailing historical imagination. In New Zealand there was still little

47 *Observer*, 2 December 1904, 4.

48 Jennifer Ashton, *At the Margin of Empire: John Webster and the Hokianga 1841-1900*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2015), 99.

49 Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake', 166.

50 Callister, *The Face of War*, 7.

51 Nicholas Saunders, 'Bodies of Metal, Shells of Memory: "Trench Art", and the Great War Re-cycled', *Journal of Material Culture* 5, no. 1, (2000), 59–60.

52 Luckins observation, that '[t]he very materiality of soldiers' diaries and letters helped the next of kin contextualise memories which were rendered invisible by language alone', describes how and why this attachment worked in an Australian context. Luckins, 'Collecting Women's Memories', 33.

53 Thomson to Mr W.J. Bassett, [19] December 1917, AALZ 907 box 2, ANZ.

appreciation of the role of museums and their collections as media for presenting and understanding the past, despite tentative attempts to collect documentary heritage for the Dominion Museum. And although one or two early settler groups had set up museums, they preferred social events as a media for historical recollection. These were occasions when they could re-live mutual experiences and share memories of the past in person.[54]

Finally—and warranting further research—it is worth noting that not all members of the NZEF had pioneering pedigrees nor were they necessarily New Zealand-born. It could be argued that the composition of the forces that fought on behalf of the Crown against iwi in the 1860s and 1870s contributed to the lack of familial connections to 'the heroes of today' that Thomson sought. This was a relatively small and mobile force, and its members may not have remained in New Zealand in significant numbers as military settlers.[55] But perhaps overriding these demographic factors was a simpler psychological one: comprehending the unprecedented nature of a geographically distant conflict was challenging enough without considering the legacies of previous conflicts at home. Eventually Thomson seemed to have acknowledged this; by April 1918 he had stopped referring to the past in his efforts to collect the present.

CONCLUSION

Photography's value, writes Hillary Roberts, 'particularly as a powerful medium of mass communication [was] clearly established' during the First World War.[56] Its early uptake by the IWM acknowledged both its power and pervasiveness. On the edges of empire and far away from the battle front, photography was just as influential in mediating the meaning of the war. Dominion Museum director Allan Thomson actively sought photographs, including those of New Zealand's medal recipients, in order to commemorate and construct a heroic narrative around this unprecedented event.

This article, which builds on the insights presented in Sandy Callister's history of New Zealand's Great War photography, has explored the degree to which the meanings of the photographs of medal recipients shifted and multiplied in the process of becoming a museum collection. It has also been a case study in understanding how photography was more successful than material culture in New Zealand, in 'providing the crucial narratives in which memories of the war became socially acceptable'.[57] Overall it suggests that, in the context of an antiquarian imagination and in the face of an embryonic public commemorative infrastructure, this collection of photographs temporarily and conveniently mediated and consolidated a reassuring way of thinking about the war in New Zealand.

Today, the situation is reversed: the portraits of medal recipients collected by Thomson, although digitised for the public by Archives New Zealand, went unnoticed during the hundredth anniversary of the First World War, whereas social history, conveyed through personal objects and stories, was and is fundamental to the presentation of the past in museums, including particular narratives related to conflict. Thomson's other goal, of giving prominence and due recognition to the New Zealand wars within the history of the nation, has not yet been realised. But it is unacceptable today to expect 'future generations to send out search parties… [to] discover and fill in the blanks' about the conflicts at home that forged Aotearoa many decades before the First World War.

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54 Hamilton, 'Pioneering History', 77.

55 For the Marsden-funded project that explores 'garrison and Empire in nineteenth century' and lives of the 12,000 imperial soldiers who fought in New Zealand in the 1860s and 1870s, see http://www.soldiersofempire.nz/ accessed 24 June 2019.

56 Roberts, 'Photography', accessed 18 June 2019.

57 Heathorn, 'The Mnemonic Turn 1122.

The Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry Casket in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

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Abstract

In 1917, English artist and actor Ernest Thesiger wrote to the Ministry of Pensions with what must have seemed a somewhat eccentric proposal that they establish an embroidery workshop to provide training and employment for disabled combatants returning from the war. Thesiger suggested the men could initially 'copy and mend old needlework' but eventually they should make and sell their own designs. The London War Pensions Committee quickly rejected Thesiger's proposal, a decision which he maintained reflected prevailing ideas that embroidery was too 'effeminate [an] occupation for ex-soldiers'. However, Thesiger's proposed workshop soon did become operative, under the auspices of a charity, as the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry. Within a decade it had become one of the most celebrated and successful luxury textile workshops in Britain making a central contribution to the renaissance of embroidery during the first half of the twentieth century. In 1927, almost a decade after Thesiger's initial proposal to the Ministry of Pensions, an exhibition showcasing the work of the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry was held in the London home of a prominent politician, industrialist, art collector and founder of the Imperial War Museum, Sir Alfred Mond. At this exhibition, Queen Mary was presented with a gift made by a man 'who had lost both legs' in combat, 'an exquisite little casket in black and gold Spanish work on a white silk background inspired by the embroideries brought to England by Queen Catherine of Aragon'. In 1946 Queen Mary presented this casket to the people of New Zealand. This article offers an interrogation of this unique object (now in the collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa) as a means to uncover how modern ideas about masculinity, disability, and craft were transformed by the First World War.

Keywords

charity; craft; disability; effeminacy; embroidery; masculinity; philanthropy; textiles

In May 1927 a small wooden casket covered in delicate and intricate embroidery was presented to Queen Mary at a needlework exhibition in London's fashionable Belgravia. The casket had been made by the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry, an enterprise set up in 1918 by the charity Friends of the Poor, to provide work for men disabled in the war. The casket comprises a simple wooden frame and is completely covered, in the style of a lady's workbox, with embroidery made from black silk thread and couched gold-wrapped thread, a technique largely associated with Tudor and Elizabethan times (Fig. 1). Such workboxes, however, generally date from the seventeenth century and were almost exclusively decorated with a form of embroidery known as stumpwork, which was often pictorial and generally brightly coloured. The blackwork featured on this casket, in contrast, is a form of counted thread embroidery that is generally known through its application to dress and rarely to such small domestic objects. All the casket's external surfaces are slightly padded and covered in embroidery, as is its curved lid. It also has brass hinges and four brass ball and claw feet and a working brass lock. There is a small key for the casket's lock through the end of which is attached a blue silk ribbon edged in gold. The quality of materials and the level of craftsmanship employed are extraordinarily high. The workshop's stitched label is attached underneath. The label reads 'SOLDIERS' EMBROIDERY INDUSTRY / MADE BY THE TOTALLY DISABLED / 42 EBURY STREET' (this was the Belgravia address in London from where the workshop operated) (Fig. 2).

The embroidery covering the casket is an all-over stylised pattern of vine leaves with bunches of grapes—typical of Christian liturgical symbolism common in historic religious textiles and popular in Victorian ecclesiastical embroidery. Grapes were often used to symbolise the Eucharist (Christ's blood) and the grapevine his mission, his good works, and it is an image used throughout the New Testament as in 'I am the vine, you are the branches'. There are few historic examples

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Figure 1. Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry casket, silk, thread, wood, brass, 172mm (height) x 265mm (length) x 142mm (width/depth). PC000875 © Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced with permission of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

from England of grape and vine imagery in textiles aside from a few embroideries surviving from the Tudor court such as the Culpeper tapestries. These were commissioned by a family associated with Catherine Howard, the fifth wife of Henry VIII, and depict various fruits including grapes on the vine.

The embroidered casket was presented to Queen Mary by Sir Alfred Mond, a wealthy British industrialist, politician, and philanthropist, on the 9 May 1927, almost a decade after the idea of the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry had been suggested to the Ministry of Pensions.[1] In 1946, Queen Mary gifted the casket to New Zealand's Dominion Museum in celebration of the end of the Second World War and in recognition of the change in status of former colonies and dominions under the United Trust of Territories in that same year.[2] The only other thing known for certain is that this 'exquisite little casket in black and gold Spanish work on a white

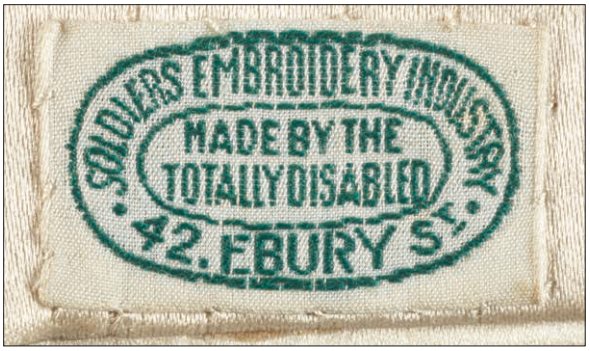

Figure 2. The Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry label. PC000875 © Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced with permission of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

1 The presentation of the casket by Mond to Queen Mary was widely reported in the press—or a detailed discussion of this, and for a history of the organisation, see my '"The work of masculine fingers": The Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry, 1918–1955', *Journal of Design History*, 31, no. 1 (February 2018): 1–23 [doi:10.1093/jdh/epw043, advance access, October 2016].

2 This was simply accessioned into the museum's collection as a gift from Queen Mary with no other details recorded. I am grateful to Sara Guthrie, of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, for providing access to the museum's accession list for 1946. I am also very grateful to Sara and especially to Claire Regnault for organising the casket to be taken out of storage and put on display during my paper at *The Myriad Faces of War: 1917 and its Legacy* symposium on 27 April 2017.

silk background inspired by the embroideries brought to England by Queen Catherine of Aragon', was made by a man 'who had lost both legs' in the war and had travelled the whole way from Suffolk the day before the presentation in the hope of meeting the King and Queen.[3] The craftsman's name was not recorded.

The Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry was proposed by English actor and artist Ernest Thesiger, who first wrote to the London War Pensions Committee in November 1917 seeking support for a 'Needlework by discharged soldiers' scheme. The programme would retrain and employ wounded men to 'copy and mend old needlework', and subsequently to create original designs, which would then be offered for sale through a London outlet.[4] At thirty-five years of age, Thesiger himself had signed up to fight, joining the 9th London Battalion in September 1914. That New Year's Eve he and his battalion took refuge in a deserted barn which was subsequently shelled. Thesiger sustained serious hand injuries that took almost a year to heal. Needlework played an important part in his rehabilitation. His experience, however, was commonplace during the long years of the First World War, even during its initial few months. It is estimated that of the quarter of a million men from the British armed forces who suffered severe debilitating injuries, 69% lost one leg, 28% lost one arm, and nearly 3% lost both arms and legs. Statistics about psychological injuries, such as neurasthenia or shell-shock, are harder to ascertain.[5] As historian Joanna Bourke has shown, '[t]he decisive impact of the Great War on men's bodies can be seen most clearly by looking at the war-maimed. Irrevocably re-moulded by their experiences, these men struggled to create new lives that challenged their status as physically disabled'.[6] The impact of the war on the ravaged bodies of combatants could be registered in the rapidly transformed fields of psychiatry and orthopaedics but also in the re-invention of craft, with its potential to engage both tacit knowledge and haptic pleasure on an intimate scale, as occupational therapy and later remunerative employment.

The language used to describe wounded and convalescing soldiers who sustained life-changing injuries during the conflict was often triumphant and not passive like that often deployed to describe the congenitally, or accidentally, disabled. For example, one man who had been 'in the Royal Artillery' had '…to wear a collar with a support for his chin which prevents his bending his head to do his work, and does it by hanging it on the door and standing looking up at it. All of them suffer much pain, and often have to put the work on one side for long periods'.[7] 'The first thing a man wants to work', another report stated, 'is his regimental crest. After that he turns out something pretty—a flower piece, or a dainty figure. There is no need to give out Kindergarten work, for the men have … tackled petit point and Jacobean work quite successfully'.[8] Initially, as Thesiger had suggested, the workshop's output would centre on the reproduction of the historic styles and techniques of English embroidery. The men subsequently became so skilled at recreating such styles that they then were often asked to repair historic embroideries. Aside from verifying the quintessential Englishness of the workshop's output, there was some concern about the potential of embroidery to emasculate men, as it was historically so associated with ideals and stereotypes of femininity.

If the wounded men of the workshop were perceived as feminised through their subordination to women (who taught them to embroider and ran all other aspects of the enterprise) this was further reinforced through disability's destabilising of masculine authority and autonomy. The masculinity of the men in the workshop was, therefore, utterly transformed by the war in that their economic subjugation and physical impairment combined to divest them of their inherent masculine privilege. The complex mediation of modern masculine identity in, and through, the workshop was further highlighted by two of the organisation's key male supporters who further embodied aspects of hegemonic and marginalised masculinity. These were symbolised in notions of masculinity as 'paternalism' and masculinity as 'perversion'.

Ernest Thesiger, the workshop's founder, was a well-known society figure. Charismatic, camp, and aristocratic, he was also a leading figure in early 20th century London's homosexual subculture. He maintained that the Government's initial rejection, in November 1917, of his scheme to teach wounded men embroidery reflected prevailing ideas that embroidery was too 'effeminate [an] occupation for ex- soldiers'.[9] By the time of the war, men's interest in embroidery was well established in legal-medico discourses as a sign of a man's 'inversion' (i.e., his inherent femininity) or his 'perversion' (his desire to be a woman). Thesiger's interest in embroidery is often believed to have been an outcome of his rehabilitation for the injuries he

3 'Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery: The King and Queen at Exhibition', *The Times*, 10 May 1927: 13.

4 See correspondence between Ernest Thesiger and the London War Pensions Committee, especially later dated 15 November 1917 about the 'Needlework by discharged soldiers' scheme, in Ministry of Labour Papers, National Archives, Kew, London [hereafter National Archives], LAB 2/626/TDS6705/1919/PartsI&II.

5 Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion, 1996), 31.

6 *Ibid.*, 15.

7 'Disabled Soldiers as Master Embroiderers', *The Queen*, 5 June 1929: 5.

8 'Netley Hospital: Crippled Soldiers as Skilled Embroiderers', *Daily Sketch*, undated press clipping (prob. November 1916), Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry Archive.

9 Ernest Thesiger, *Practically True* (London: William Heinemann, 1927), 122.

sustained on the western front. In fact, he had developed a keen interest in needlework well before the war.[10] Embroidery was a hobby he shared with many of his queer social circle such as the 7th Earl of Beauchamp, a Liberal politician who had served as Governor of New South Wales in Australia, and William Ranken, the Scottish-born painter who Thesiger met at the Slade School of Art and with whom he had a lifelong relationship. Although it seems that it was Ranken, who first started to embroider, after historic models, it was Thesiger who became the leading embroidery expert.

The decision of the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry to use the blackwork technique most certainly came through Thesiger's influence. Blackwork, as applied to dress, is known through 16th century paintings especially those by Hans Holbein the Younger, such as his 1535–40 portrait of Simon George of Cornwall, a country nobleman and minor figure in the Tudor court.[11] Thesiger was the only male teacher in the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry workshop and he regularly took the men to museums and galleries to look at historic examples of embroidery including surviving examples from the Tudor and Elizabethan courts. Blackwork was believed to have been introduced into English needlework from Spain, where it was thought to have originated under the influence of Moorish design. It comprises a running thread stitch worked in a single colour of silk thread, usually black, on a white or cream background, usually of linen, often highlighted with precious metal threads such as gold or silver. It was used exclusively in the decoration of dress textiles such as in shirts, ruffs, collars, caps, and chemises. Popular legend has it that blackwork was first introduced into England when Catherine of Aragon married Henry VIII in 1509, as it was a common feature in the fashions of the late 15th- and early 16th-century Spanish court. However, some of the aristocratic figures that Thesiger hoped to attract to the workshop such as Sir John Carew Pole, a notable collector of English historic embroidery, were interested in establishing an English pedigree for blackwork. In his detailed analysis of the Carew Pole embroidery collection, Alan Wace, the Deputy Keeper of the Department of Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum and a leading figure in the interwar embroidery revival, claimed that the Spanish origin of blackwork was, in fact, a myth.[12] Since Wace first suggested blackwork had existed in England previous to the arrival of Catherine of Aragon several other historians have argued that it emerged, during 16th-century England, as a result of other internal influences. It was suggested that the rise of pattern books and monochrome woodcut prints was an equal, if not more significant, stimulus for much textile design in the period.[13] By the 1920s blackwork was increasingly seen as an essentially English technique.

The embroidery of the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry casket is known to have been copied after examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum where Thesiger often brought the workshop's men to study historic textiles.[14] Here, the men studied several examples including a woman's coif or nightcap made between 1600 and 1625, of linen with black silk thread in stem, chain and speckling stitches. The pattern of coiling flowers and vines reflect those found in an English garden: foxgloves, carnations, roses, honeysuckle, cornflower and strawberries. Its simple materials and design are made luxurious through the use of silver-gilt thread. However, a small pillow-cover dating from c.1600, featuring coiling vines, in 'back, chain, cord, braid and buttonhole stitches', provided the specific model for the motifs and stiches employed on the casket[15] (Fig. 3). This had been acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1924 during a period when they actively sought to collect important examples of English textiles.

By the 1920s the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry were well known for their work in historic textile conservation and reproduction. They became especially associated with the revival of interest in the so-called Sheldon tapestries, a series of large late 16th-century maps believed to have been made in the 1580s by the first major English weaving workshop, founded by the Sheldon family. Their provenance is now thought to be attributable to other, possibly continental, workshops as well as the Sheldon family's own weavers. However, after the First World War the Sheldon tapestries held an especially important place in discussions of English patrimony, examples being acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bodleian Library, Oxford.[16]

10 For Thesiger, and his interest in embroidery, see my '"Nothing is more terrifying to me than to see Ernest Thesiger sitting under the lamplight doing this embroidery": Ernest Thesiger (1879–1961), "Expert Embroiderer"', *TEXT: Journal for the Study of Textile Art, Design and History*, 43 (2015/16): 20–26; and my 'Queer Hobbies: Ernest Thesiger and Interwar Embroidery', *Textile: Cloth and Culture*, 15, no. 3 (September 2017): 292–322 [doi.org/10.1080/14759756.2017.129482, advance access, March 2017].

11 Collection of Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main.

12 See A.J.B. Wace, 'English Embroideries Belonging to Sir John Carew Pole, Bart.', *The Volume of the Walpole Society Annual*, 21 (1932–33): 43–65; see 58 [note 2] for discussion of the origins of blackwork.

13 See Lanto Synge, *Antique Needlework* (London: Blandford Press, 1982), 58–60; and Rosemary Muntus, 'Blackwork Revisited', *Embroidery* 53 (September 2002): 23.

14 For this see Ernest Thesiger, 'Work for Totally-Disabled', *The War Pensions Gazette* 37 (May 1920): 497–498.

15 Richard Box, *Drawing and Design for Embroidery: A Course for the Fearful* (London: B.T Batsford, 1988), 24.

16 For these tapestries see A.F. Kendrick, *Catalogue of Tapestries* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1924); Hilary L. Turner, 'Pride and Patriotism Mapped in Wool', in Peter Barber (ed.), *The Map Book* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005), 128–129; and Hilary L. Turner, *No Mean Prospect: Ralph Sheldon's Tapestry Maps* (Derby: Plotwood Press, 2010).

Figure 3. 17th century English pillow cover in blackwork. T.81-1924 Victoria and Albert Museum.
Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The blackwork casket in Te Papa's collection, then, on several levels represents not a simple needlework activity done by a recuperating soldier as occupational therapy but functions within the wider reconstruction of British national identity in the post-war period. Its projection of English embroidery as a form of national patrimony drew a parallel between modern Britain and the historic Tudor dynasty that subliminally bolstered British nationalism in the unstable years after the war's end.

In gifting the casket to the reigning monarch (and thus symbolically to the nation) Sir Alfred Mond, who hosted the garden party in 1927 where the presentation took place, was not making a simple gesture of gratitude to the Queen for her charitable interest. He was deploying the products of the workshop to authenticate his own public identity as 'English' through the linkage of his beneficence to enduring notions of Victorian cultural philanthropy and to a much longer and distinguished history of English textile production.[17] Mond was a Lancashire-born industrialist and Liberal politician who occupied an important role in Lloyd George's pre-war cabinet, but he was also the son of a highly successful German Jewish chemist who had moved to England to escape growing anti-Semitism in Europe. His father Dr. Ludwig Mond had taken British citizenship in 1880 and his main business, Brunner, Mond & Co., became Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI), at one time the largest chemical manufacturer in Europe, and Britain's competitor with DuPont and IG Farben. The Monds were acutely aware of the importance of cultural philanthropy and were especially influenced by the Royal family's example. Of the various philanthropic endeavours associated with their incredible wealth they are best remembered today for their bequests to King's College and the National Gallery, in London.[18] Just as Ernest Thesiger's charitable instruction to the men of the workshop acted as a mask deflecting attention away from his effeminacy and his queer sewing circle so too did Alfred Mond's philanthropic paternalism veil other, personal, motives. Mond's desire to authenticate his 'Englishness' through philanthropic acts in an atmosphere of increasing anti-German hostility was explicit in his patronage of the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry

17 Victorian cultural philanthropy has been broadly defined as the systems of 'vocational training or […] liberal education, applied or high art, [and] recreation' designed for the poor by middle- and upper-class benefactors in the absence of adequate state support during the long nineteenth century, see Regenia Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization: On the Relationship of Part to the Whole, 1859–1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 122.

18 See Jean Goodman, *The Mond Legacy* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982); Charles Saumarez Smith, *Ludwig Mond's Bequest: A Gift to the Nation* (London: National Gallery, 2006); and Thomas Adams, *Transnational Philanthropy: The Mond Family's Support for Public Institutions in Western Europe from 1890 to 1938* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). In 1928, Alfred Mond received a peerage in part for his cultural and charitable activities. He was so well known in the interwar years that he inspired characters in the work of T.S. Eliot and Aldous Huxley.

and further in his suggestion, in February 1917, to Lloyd George to establish a national museum to commemorate the war.[19] Mond also made proposals to the government for schemes to support the war wounded in terms of training and employment. Indeed, in September 1917, he wrote to the Ministry of Pensions in support of a scheme of employment and possible retraining for disabled veterans which was not that dissimilar to that proposed by Thesiger.[20]

Between its foundation in 1918 and its closure in 1955, the Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry became arguably the leading embroidery enterprise in the country. It also clearly played some part in the changing conceptualisation of masculine identity as a result of the war. This can be seen not just in how the men of the workshop were perceived as being feminised, through the loss of authority and autonomy, but further in the contrasting models of paternalism and effeminacy embodied by the organisation's key male promoters, Sir Alfred Mond and Ernest Thesiger. The blackwork casket in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, a unique surviving object from the workshop's history, provides an opportunity to understand the complex mechanisms that deconstructed and reconstructed modern masculinity in the aftermath of war.[21] The fact that it is the work of 'masculine fingers', as Queen Mary's commented upon receiving it as a gift in 1927, continues to stimulate surprise as well as debate almost a century later.[22]

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19 This was formally established by Act of Parliament in 1920 and housed at the Imperial Institute in South Kensington until 1936 when a new designate museum building was opened on Lambeth Road, south London, now known as the Imperial War Museum, see Gaynor Kavanagh, 'Museum as Memorial: The Origins of the Imperial War Museum', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23, no. 1 (January 1988): 77–97.

20 See correspondence from Sir Alfred Mond to the London War Pensions Committee, especially letter dated 28 September 1917, with the 'Memorandum of the possible utilisation of Wounded Soldiers in sedentary occupations', National Archives, LAB 2/626/TDS6705/1919/PartsI&II.

21 There is one single object by the workshop in the collection of the Imperial War Museum and one in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. All other known surviving examples of the workshop's output are in private collections. A second blackwork casket was bought by Queen Mary at the workshop's annual exhibition and sale in 1931 and is presumably in the Royal Collections.

22 The press often recorded the surprise of Queen Mary, and other notable visitors, that such work was produced by 'masculine fingers', see 'Beautiful Embroideries by Disabled Soldiers', *The Queen*, 29 April 1925; 'Embroideries by Disabled Ex-Soldiers: An Interesting Exhibition', *The Queen*, 18 May 1927; and G.B.H., 'Embroideries by Disabled Soldiers', *The Queen*, 27 May 1931; all Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry Archive.

Competing Visions of World Order: Woodrow Wilson and The Hague in 1917

Thomas Munro

Abstract

Throughout the First World War, neutrals and belligerents publicly defined what they believed their nation's role in the conflict to be and what they hoped the post-war world would look like. The public discussion in the United States about the structure of post-war international relations drew on a discourse about the nation's role in world affairs that the Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 had significantly shaped. The conferences dealt with a range of issues, such as disarmament, the laws of war, and the development of international organisations, and provided the opportunity for these ideas to be debated in a more public manner than ever before. It is clear from American newspaper coverage during the First World War that The Hague continued to be seen by some as the best way to achieve peaceful relations. However, it is also clear that from early 1917, people in the United States were coming to view Wilson as the likely architect of any post-war international organisations. Wilson did not suggest, as others did, that The Hague should be used as the foundation for such an organisation, nor did he advocate the creation of an international court; instead, he argued for something separate, something new. 1917, therefore, marks and important transition whereby ideas of world organisation in the United States came to be dominated by a vision different from The Hague.

Keywords

American newspapers; international courts; international organisation; The Hague Peace Conferences; Woodrow Wilson

In his excellent work on the League to Enforce Peace (LEP), Stephen Wertheim argues that historians have reduced early 20th century internationalism to a 'one-dimensional, polarizing, and, not least, inaccurate' caricature.[1] Historians' focus on the United States' rejection of the League of Nations Covenant has led to the propagation of a simplistic isolationist-internationalist dichotomy, Wertheim argues, and such an approach obscures the nuanced debate among American politicians such as Elihu Root, William Taft, and Theodore Roosevelt that occurred in the United States throughout the First World War. Central to the views of these legalists, as Root, Taft, and Roosevelt can be loosely grouped, was the desire 'to create an international league dedicated to developing international law and enforcing judicial settlement upon member states'.[2] The focus on international law and international courts was anathema to President Woodrow Wilson, and his disputes with the legalists over these issues, Wertheim suggests, are key to understanding American politics during the formation of the League of Nations.[3]

While demonstrating the breadth of internationalist thought among American politicians during the First World War, Wertheim's focus on prominent political figures, such as Taft, Roosevelt, and Wilson, ignores the extensive and sophisticated public engagement in the United States with ideas of the future world order.[4] Roosevelt's public diatribes, Taft's plans for the League to Enforce Peace, and Wilson's famous speeches and declarations did not create the public discussion in the United States about the structure of the post-war world; rather, they joined an existing conversation, the contours

1 Stephen Wertheim, 'The League That Wasn't: American Designs for a Legalist-Sanctionist League of Nations and the Intellectual Origins of International Organization, 1914–1920', *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 5 (November 2011): 798.

2 *Ibid.*, 798.

3 *Ibid.*, 798. A similar argument was made 30 years earlier by David Patterson in his article 'The United States and the Origins of the World Court', *Political Science Quarterly* 91, no. 2 (Summer, 1976): 279–295.

4 Wertheim claims that in the United States the public debate on the post-war world 'proved sterile'; *ibid.*, 802.

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https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/munro
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of which had been significantly shaped by the ideas of the Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907. The American public were far more engaged with international relations than historians have acknowledged, and the First World War saw a continuation of the public discussion about international relations, not its beginning. It is clear from the American newspaper coverage during the First World War that The Hague remained a reference point for those interested in world organisation, and continued to be seen by some as the best way to achieve peaceful relations. However, it is also clear that from early 1917 people in the United States were coming to view Wilson as the likely architect of any post-war international organisation. Wilson did not suggest, as others did, that The Hague should be used as the foundation for such an organisation, nor did he advocate the creation of an international court; instead, he argued for something separate, something new. 1917, therefore, marks an important transition whereby ideas of world organisation in the United States came to be dominated by a vision different from The Hague.

This article traces the transition in 1917 that saw Wilson's ideas take prominence over the ideas of The Hague. The purpose of this article is not to offer a new interpretation of Wilson's ideas or their effect on the international order; there is a vast and ever-expanding historiography that does exactly that.[5] Instead, this article specifically argues that Wilson's rhetoric had a significant effect on the discussion of The Hague in American newspapers in early 1917. In 1917 a number of peace activists and international lawyers continued to believe in the value of The Hague, but their attempts to promote it to the American public fell victim to Wilson's emergence as a global leader and the influence of his post-war vision. Despite the efforts of peace activists and prominent figures like Taft to promote the expansion of The Hague, in the early months of 1917 the conferences and courts associated with them were subsumed by Wilson's ideas.

The Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907, historian Sandi Cooper argues, created 'an open forum on international issues', and generated an unprecedented and very public global discussion of issues related to war and peace.[6] The public discussion began with the Tsar's Rescript of 1898, which was Nicholas II's invocation to the world to meet and discuss the crippling levels of expenditure on armaments. The conference that convened at The Hague in 1899 in response to the Tsar's request discussed a much broader range of issues than the crushing cost of armaments, and included subjects such as the pacific settlement of disputes, the development of international law, the creation of international courts, and the regulation of the rules of war.[7] The conventions adopted at the 1899 conference would be refined and expanded at a second conference in 1907, at which a significantly larger number of nations were represented. The debates among the delegates at The Hague were mirrored in American newspaper editorials, articles, and letters to the editor and the United States public utilised the language of The Hague to enthusiastically discuss the development of international law and organisations.[8] The outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 reinvigorated the public discussion in the United States about the utility of international organisations. The Hague was presented in the newspapers as a potential means of stopping the conflict and being the foundation on which to build peaceful international relations.[9]

As the war dragged on, Americans continued to draw on The Hague in their discussion of plans to stop the conflict and prevent something similar occurring again. In a pamphlet published in January 1916, Arthur Deerin Call, secretary of the American Peace Society, argued that The Hague had been a key moment in the development of international organisation. The 1907 conference had, he believed, created 'a draft convention for the establishment of a permanent court of justice—in other words, a supreme court of the world'.[10] He argued that there would likely be a third Hague conference at the end of the war and that the duty of every intelligent American 'would be to lend every ounce of his support to the greater perfection of the congress and court of nations existing there in embryo'.[11] Similar ideas appeared in American newspapers throughout the war, often in response to statements from peace activists like Deerin Call or from Taft and Roosevelt. The two ex-presidents loomed large over the public discussion of the post-war international order. Roosevelt had outlined plans for a

5 For example, see Arthur Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, Peace* (Arlington Heights: Wiley Blackwell, 1979); Thomas Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1992); John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009); Ross Kennedy, *The Will to Believe: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and America's Strategy for Peace and Security* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2009).

6 Sandi Cooper, 'Peace and Internationalism: European Ideological Movements Behind the Two Hague Conferences (1889–1907)' (PhD diss., New York University, 1967), 291.

7 For an excellent account of the origins, proceedings, and consequences of the Hague Conferences see Maartje Abbenhuis, *The Hague Conferences and International Politics, 1898–1915* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).

8 Thomas Munro, 'The Hague's War, 1914–1918: British and American Newspaper References to The Hague During the First World War' (PhD diss., University of Auckland, 2019), 27-51.

9 *Ibid.*, 53–74.

10 Arthur Deerin Call, 'The Patriotic Duty Facing the Americas' (Pamphlet, January 1916), in International Peace Movements, Nippold Collection, Box 102, File 4, United Nations Archives, Geneva.

11 Call, 'The Patriotic Duty'.

great-power league as soon as the war had started and Taft became the lead activist for the League to Enforce Peace (LEP), which grew to be one of the largest pro-league organisations in the world.[12] Although their visions of the post-war world differed in a number of respects they both suggested The Hague had an important role to play in the development of international organisation. Both stressed the importance of an international court but disagreed on the manner in which such a court's decisions should be enforced.[13] The plans of people like Taft and Roosevelt joined the public discussion about the structure of international relations that had taken place in American newspapers since the start of the war.

The period from December 1916 through to April 1917 saw the nature of the discussion about the structure of international relations change. This period saw Wilson's ideas and proposals come to dominate the public discussion of the post-war international order, and Wilson's vision did not include The Hague. Wilson articulated his plans for the future—vague as they still were at this stage—in a number of speeches and notes to belligerents from late 1916 onwards.[14] International organisation featured in these statements, but notions of legalism were replaced with more nebulous concepts like 'freedom' and 'justice'. In his note requesting all belligerents to offer concrete peace terms in December 1916, Wilson said the objects of the statesmen on all sides of the conflict were virtually the same: they wanted to protect the rights of their people and were prepared to consider the creation of 'a league of nations to insure peace and justice throughout the world'.[15] Wilson stated that the American people would 'cooperate in attaining such goals' when the war ended.[16] In his famous address to a joint session of Congress on 22 January 1917, Wilson stressed the need for 'peace without victory'.[17] He called for an end to military and economic alliances, for the limitation of armaments, for freedom of the seas, and for the right of all peoples to choose the governments under which they would live. And he called for a 'covenant of cooperative peace', an international organisation that alone could foster and ensure 'an organised common peace'.[18] Wilson's language was similar to those advocating the expansion of The Hague machinery, but the absence of an international court was a key difference. Wilson refused to endorse the calls for regular international conferences to codify international law and, David Patterson argues, 'displayed a particular aversion to the internationalists' dream of a world court'.[19] An international court was central to The Hague idea, but in Wilson's view The Hague was 'old world' and a symbol of legalism, two things he opposed.[20]

The American press reprinted Wilson's speeches and notes to the belligerents in full, and the newspapers extensive discussion of Wilson's ideas largely omitted any reference to The Hague. On 23 January, for example, the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *New York Evening World* all gave significant front page coverage to Wilson's 'peace without victory' speech in Congress the day before.[21] The *Washington Post* provided a summary of over 30 other newspapers' varied editorial reactions to Wilson's speech.[22] The same day the *New York Evening World*'s editorial claimed Wilson had espoused 'nothing less than the greatest plan—though still but partly formulated—that civilisation has yet evolved out of the bitterness and tragedy of experience'.[23] Absent from the newspapers' coverage of Wilson's speech on how to achieve peaceful

12 For Taft and Roosevelt's activism during the war, see Wertheim, 'The League that Wasn't', *passim*; Patterson, 'Origins of the World Court', *passim*.

13 Wertheim, 'The League that Wasn't', 804; Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York: Penguin, 2012), 120–121.

14 There is a vast historiography on Wilson and the development of his political vision. This article engages with the newspaper discussion of Wilson's public statements rather than offering a new interpretation of Wilson's ideas. See note 6 for some of the key texts on Wilson.

15 Justus Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of America's Entry Into World War I* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 230.

16 *Ibid.*

17 Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of Global Order* (Milton Keynes: Penguin, 2014), 53.

18 Robert Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 48.

19 Patterson, 'Origins of the World Court', 290.

20 For a good discussion of Wilson's views on international law, The Hague, and a world court see Patterson, 'World Court', 291–294; Wertheim, 'The League', 829–830; and Calvin D. Davis, *The United States and the Second Hague Peace Conference: American Diplomacy and International Organization, 1899–1914* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975) 345–356.

21 'Peace Plea Stirs World', *Chicago Daily Tribune*; 'Peace Plan of President', *St Louis Post-Dispatch*; 'Wilson Would Forbid a Peace of Victory', *Los Angeles Times*; 'Wilson's Peace Plan Taken Up by the Senate', *New York Evening World*, 23 January 1917, 1.

22 'Editorial Views on Peace Address by the President are of Wide Divergence', *Washington Post*, 23 January 1917, 5.

23 'The President on Permanent Peace', *New York Evening World*, 23 January 1917, 16.

international relations was any reference to The Hague. Prior to 1917, The Hague would invariably be referenced whenever ideas of international organisation were discussed. This changed during the early months of 1917 as Wilson came to dominate discussion of the post-war world. The omission of The Hague and international courts from Wilson's plans meant they also began to disappear from the public discussion.

The ideas of Taft, Roosevelt, and other proponents of international organisation were to a large degree subsumed by Wilson as he came to dominate the discussion of the post-war international order. In early February, for example, the *St Louis Post-Dispatch* produced extensive analysis of Wilson's speech to Congress in which he announced that the United States had severed diplomatic ties with Germany in response to the resumption of unrestricted U-boat warfare. An editorial in the newspaper argued that Wilson was correct to assert that the principles underlying American politics were in 'accord with the ideas of peace'.[24] The editorial noted that despite Wilson's noble intent, it was difficult to make the ideas of sovereignty and independence fit with structures created to ensure world peace. The newspaper thought 'ultimate government by a judicial tribunal' was the main object of the world court movement, and that Wilson was right to not commit himself to such a goal despite his inclinations towards the plans of the LEP.[25] The editorial went on to question how a league of peace could create machinery to ensure peaceful relations given the irregular growth and development of nations worldwide. While it expressed uncertainty that this would ever be possible, the editorial noted that Wilson had in any case revived the belief held by many that future wars could be prevented. This extensive and well-considered piece made no reference to The Hague machinery for the pacific settlement of disputes, and only referenced the conferences as an example of the diplomatic difficulties attendant on international conferences. The editorial approach of the *St Louis Post-Dispatch* was not unique, as other prominent newspapers provided similarly extensive discussion of what Wilson's ideas might mean for international relations without referencing The Hague.[26]

Days after Wilson announced that the United States was severing diplomatic ties with Germany another *St Louis Post-Dispatch* editorial demonstrated how Wilson's ideas were coming to dominate the public discussion on international organisation and how such organisations were presented as key to preventing war and spreading justice. The editorial continued to discuss the structure of the post-war world and Wilson's role in shaping it, describing Wilson's proclamations as part of a move 'towards a league of nations to enforce just peace and preserve the fruits of civilization'.[27] The end of the war would see a 'union of nations joined to prevent lawless warfare and to enforce justice and liberty'.[28] Despite the appeal to justice, there was no reference to an international court or international law.

Despite calls for greater American involvement in international affairs from people like Taft and Roosevelt, Wilson's programme was espoused in the newspapers with much greater vigour. An editorial in the *New York Evening World* argued that Wilson's second inaugural speech, in March, was a call for Americans to recognise that the nation had 'new duties and responsibilities in a disordered world'.[29] This editorial is an example of what John Milton Cooper Jr. called 'the shock of recognition', which was the realisation of Americans during the First World War that they were involved in international politics whether they liked it or not.[30] The editorial in the *New York Evening World* agreed that the United States would have to play a more expansive role in international affairs and thought Wilson's speech was 'an impressive exposition' of the 'new Americanism' that this entailed.[31] The editorial demonstrates the remarkable change in the discussion about the United States' role in the world that occurred during the First World War. It also shows the extent to which Wilson had come to be associated with American internationalism long before he made his 14 points speech.[32]

Wilson's prominence only increased after the United States' declaration of war, and his speech to

24 'Analysis of the President's Call for World Peace', *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, 4 February 1917, 10. The article starts on the front page and continues across multiple pages.

25 *Ibid.*

26 For example, see 'Congress Thrilled by Historic Speech', *New York Times*, 4 February 1917, 1; 'Chicago Hopes for Peace, But Backs Wilson', *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 4 February 1917, 2.

27 'A League of Neutrals', *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, 5 February 1917, 12.

28 *Ibid.*

29 'The New Americanism', *New York Evening World*, 6 March 1917, 14.

30 John Milton Cooper, Jr., 'The Shock of Recognition: The Impact of World War I on America', *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 76, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 567–584.

31 'The New Americanism', *New York Evening World*, 6 March 1917, 14.

32 Erez Manela argues that 'by mid-1917, Wilson had clearly emerged on the world stage as the champion of the new diplomacy of liberal internationalism'; Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 37.

Congress in early April 1917 generated a considerable public response in the United States. Newspapers reproduced Wilson's speech in full and provided articles and editorials analysing its contents.[33] The speech was important not just because of American entry into the war, but because it offered a clearer vision of why the war was being fought and what form of international society would emerge at its conclusion. Wilson emphasised democracy and justice as the guiding principles for American participation in the war. Although The Hague had often been invoked as a symbol of civilisation during the war, it was not strongly associated with democracy.[34] Protecting or enabling the spread of democracy and self-determination had not been a feature of the discussions at The Hague in 1899 or 1907. The deliberations at The Hague had been focussed on regulating relationships between nations, rather than fundamentally changing their political structure. The Women's Congress at The Hague in 1915 had produced a vision of The Hague that presented its courts and conferences as potential vehicles for democracy, but newspaper reporting suggests that The Hague continued to be associated with international courts and the regulation of warfare.[35] International courts did not feature in Wilson's vision, in which democracy could be served by the concert of nations he proposed rather than by The Hague. As Wilson rose to prominence in the discussion of post-war international relations, the number of references to The Hague in American newspapers diminished.

The opportunity for American opinion to be mobilised behind a plan to develop international law through an international court was missed in 1917, as Wilson chose not to encourage the development of The Hague system. The Permanent Court of International Justice, or World Court as it was often known, was established by the League of Nations in 1920 but the United States never accepted the court's jurisdiction. A number of Americans continued to promote the World Court and agitate for American involvement, but they struggled to generate the same level of public engagement with the issue that had occurred during the war. The key moment had passed. In 1917 the structure of international relations had been at the forefront of American news reporting. How international affairs should be structured and what role the United States should play was discussed with a high degree of sophistication on newspaper front pages, editorials, and letters to the editor. The discussion drew on the ideas of The Hague conferences and can be seen as the continuation of the international forum created by the Tsar's Rescript in 1898. Woodrow Wilson subtly but significantly changed the nature of the public discussion and, by doing so, changed the course of early 20th century liberal internationalism.

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33 For example, see 'Full Text of the Address by the President to Congress', *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1917, 1; 'For Freedom and Civilization', *New York Times*, 3 April 1917, 12.

34 Munro, 'The Hague's War', 153–177.

35 For more on the Women's Congress at The Hague in 1915, see Thomas Munro, 'The Courageous Conference: British and American Newspaper Coverage of the 1915 Women's Peace Congress at The Hague', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 64, no. 3 (September, 2018): 422–435.

1917 in Latin America: Between Pan-Americanism and Anti-imperialism

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Abstract

1917 was a decisive year in the diverse theatres of the First World War, contributing to the globalisation of the conflict. In Latin America, the entry of the United States into the conflict was the most significant event, which triggered essential developments in the diplomatic, economic, political, and cultural fields. The United States displayed an active campaign to align the countries of the subcontinent behind its foreign policy, led by the principle of Pan-Americanism. As a result, most Latin American states severed diplomatic relationships with, or declared war against, the German Empire, in the context of heated internal debates.

This article aims to analyse the impact of the United States' entry into the war on the Latin American intellectual field. It will tackle two main reactions unleashed by that event. On the one hand, it led many intellectuals to support the notion of continental unity under American leadership, reinforced later by the so-called 'Wilsonian moment'. On the other hand, it also gave rise to the rejection of American interference in the subcontinent's domestic affairs and the revival of anti-imperialism, a vigorous ideological trend that appeared after the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Keywords

anti-imperialism; belligerence; First World War; intellectuals; Latin America; neutrality; Pan-Americanism; United States; Wilsonian moment

INTRODUCTION

The year 1917 was a crucial year in the different theatres of the First World War, contributing to the globalisation of the conflict.[1] Although that date tends to be automatically identified with the Russian Revolution, the impact of this outstanding event was neither immediate nor direct everywhere. The dynamics of different spaces of the world were determined by many other factors happening simultaneously, the influence of which on local war experiences differed from one latitude to another. Examining the impact of events of 1917 from the margins of Europe may help to elucidate the complex entanglements between global and local dynamics during this critical year.

In 1917 Latin America, the most decisive event was undoubtedly the United States' entry into the war. In February, Germany relaunched unrestricted submarine warfare, which affected every ship—including those from neutral countries—sailing in the exclusion zone surrounding the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and the eastern Mediterranean.[2] Two months later, the United States entered the war on the Allied side, triggering a series of similar reactions all around the globe. In Latin America, it led to the widespread abandonment of neutrality, intensely defended until then by the subcontinent's states.[3] At the United States' request and—to a large extent—due to its diplomatic and economic pressures, most of the Latin American nations aligned themselves with its foreign policy, declaring war on Germany or, at least, severing diplomatic relations with it. Only six countries remained neutral until the end of the Great War, despite the obstacles and challenges posed by local and international circumstances.[4]

1 Ian F.W. Beckett, ed., *1917: Beyond the Western Front* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

2 Paul Halpern, 'The War at Sea', in *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 141–155.

3 Olivier Compagnon, 'Entrer en guerre? Neutralité et engagement de l'Amérique latine entre 1914 et 1918', *Relations Internationales* 137 (2009): 31–43; Stefan Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 38–107.

4 In 1917 Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama declared war on the German empire, although only Brazil and Cuba had a symbolic participation in the conflict. On the other hand, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay decided to break off relations with Germany, while Argentina, Colombia, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela stayed neutral until the end of the Great War.

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https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/tato
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/14

TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITIES

In addition to this significant change in the subcontinent's foreign affairs, different transnational ideas spread widely in Latin America and fostered renewed debates about the definition of national and regional identities. In various world locations, the First World War encouraged the circulation of several pan-national ideologies born in the 19th century, which sought to transcend geopolitical boundaries bringing together culturally or ethnically defined peoples. That was the case of Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism in the multicultural European empires,[5] but also of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Africanism, and Pan-Asianism in some colonial contexts.[6] In the Americas, Pan-Latinism, Pan-Americanism, and Pan-Hispanism—also developed from the nineteenth century—were reactivated during the Great War, experiencing fluctuations, especially after 1917.

Pan-Latinism was probably the most successful transnational configuration and contributed to reinforce the connections with France and—by extension—with its allies in the war. According to this representation, France and the Latin American nations belonged to the same cultural and spiritual race—Latinity—founded on a linguistic root and sharing a common origin and a common fate. During the wars of independence from their former mother countries, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in America found their model in the French Revolution of 1789. In the last decades of that century, during the building of their national states, they adopted a republican political paradigm and a civic pedagogy that mirrored the French ones.[7] France was also perceived as mother of the arts and literature, an image that encouraged a considerable exodus of intellectuals to Paris. In effect, since the turn of the century, a massive flow of writers and artists from the subcontinent settled in the French capital, where they formed a stable colony. Paris was considered 'the Mecca of the artistic pilgrimage', a cultural circuit that validated the intellectual merits and facilitated professionalisation and international recognition.[8] Although Latin American intellectuals made frequent allusions to the contributions to the war from France's occasional allies, in general terms, they addressed their primordial loyalty to France, which was the basis of the solidarity granted to the other Allied powers. As the Argentine pro-German writer Ernesto Vergara Biedma noted, the admirers of France 'acclaimed aristocratic Russia; acclaim revolutionary Russia, England, Japan, Serbia, and the rest of the Allies, because they defend France. There are not pro-Allies here, there are Francophiles, and even this is not the entire truth, because if we dig a bit, we find out that there are only Parisianphiles'.[9] The influence of this representation of France explains that, in general terms, a pro-Allied stance prevailed among the subcontinent's intellectuals during the Great War.[10]

Nevertheless, other competitors to Pan-Latinism also made their re-emergence in wartime: Pan-Americanism and Pan-Hispanism. Pan-Americanism affirmed the unity of the Americas based on a geographical foundation and postulated the United States leadership on a continental scale, in line with the Monroe Doctrine.[11] Since the turn of the century, this political and ideological trend had attained a particular influence among the educated elites of Central America, the Caribbean, and Brazil, favoured by the United States' commercial links in the region and its interventionist foreign policy. After the country's entry into the war, this doctrine received a new boost to bring into line the Latin American states behind the United States' foreign policy. This development produced two different political and ideological reactions among the Latin American intellectuals: enthusiastic support to the 'Colossus of the North' and a comparable rejection.

5 Sarah Danielsson, 'Pan-nationalism Reframed: Nationalism, "Diaspora", the Role of the "Nation-state" and the Global Age', in *Nationalism and Globalisation: Conflicting or Complementary*, ed. Daphne Halikiopoulou and Sofia Vasilopoulou (London: Routledge, 2011), 41–61.

6 Cemil Aydin, 'Pan-nationalism of Pan-Islamic, Pan-Asian, and Pan-African Thought', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 672–693.

7 Denis Rolland, *La crise du modèle français. Marianne et l'Amérique latine. Culture, politique et identité* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2000).

8 Beatriz Colombi, 'Camino a la meca. Escritores hispanoamericanos en París (1900–1920)', in *Historia de los Intelectuales en América Latina*, ed. Jorge Myers (Buenos Aires: Katz Ediciones, 2009 I), 544.

9 Ernesto Vergara Biedma, *Guerra de mentiras: el discurso de Wilson y el peligro yanqui* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos L.J. Rosso, 1917), 44.

10 María Inés Tato, 'The Latin American Intellectual Field in the Face of the First World War: An Initial Approach', in *A Civil War of Words. The Cultural Impact of the Great War in Catalonia, Spain, Europe and a Glance to Latin America*, eds. Xavier Pla, Maximiliano Fuentes, and Francesc Montero (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), 99–120.

11 Mark T. Gilderhus, *The Second Century: US-Latin American Relations Since 1889* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2000). In 1823 the President of the United States, James Monroe, addressed a message to the Congress rejecting European intervention in the Americas, summarised in the celebrated phrase 'the Americas for the Americans', and better known as Monroe Doctrine or Monroism. This anticolonialist doctrine legitimised the United States expansion on the subcontinent during the rest of the century. See Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-century America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2011).

GOD BLESS AMERICA

The first response to Pan-Americanism was the support for Woodrow Wilson. He acquired worldwide prestige due to his fourteen points and especially to the self-determination principle which led to the so-called 'Wilsonian moment'.[12] At least until the Treaty of Versailles, the American president was considered on a global scale to be the icon of a new and fairer international order. As a result, the United States started to be celebrated as a paradigm of freedom and as a liberating power of oppressed peoples, even in South America whose intellectuals used to resist its influence on the region. Hence, the 'Wilsonian moment' led to some Latin American intellectuals expressing a positive attitude towards Wilson's project, the revision of the previous prejudices regarding that nation, the assessment of the advantages of hemispheric cooperation, and a reappraisal of international alignments.[13] Thus, according to the Paraguayan Cecilio Báez, the United States' intervention in the war was motivated by its decision to 'ensure the freedom of the seas and to restrain the arrogance of Prussian militarism, which disrupts the order of law and threatens the independence of the civilised peoples'.[14] Báez emphasised the links between Latin American emancipation and American independence, and gave a new interpretation of historical events such as the Spanish-American war: 'North America was the land of liberty since its first origins, populated as it was by men persecuted in Europe for their free ideas and beliefs …. In the nineteenth century, the United States … protected the independence of Latin America…. [In 1898] it rescued Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines from the Spanish rule'.[15]

Doctrine was also presented in the same democratic and liberating light, as the Paraguayan Antolín Irala illustrates: '[The United States] goes to Europe to fight for the same principles that, in a certain way, protected the sovereignty of all the American peoples at the beginning of their independent life, the same principles that were expressed in the Monroe Doctrine…. [This] was not only the affirmation of American nationalities in the face of eventual European advances, but also the proclamation of democracy against the absolutist reaction victorious in the Old World'.[16]

Therefore, the American Revolution joined the French Revolution as a precedent for Latin America's independence process. These historical and ideological coincidences laid the foundations of a collective identity and imposed the moral obligation to support the United States' cause. In this same vein, the Argentine writer Ricardo Rojas celebrated the European legacy but, at the same time, distanced himself from it, seeking a new cultural reference in the American continent: 'The new generation recognises Europe's civilising deed in America, but it does not kowtow blindly to the so-called "European civilisation" … we believe in an America destined to surpass the ancestor civilisations'.[17] In his rediscovery of the Americas' unity, Rojas considered the United States the 'precursor and mentor of the emancipation, democracy, federalism, and immigrant fraternity among the colonies of the New World … we reaffirm our faith in the Pan-American ideal that was the numen of our national identity'.[18]

THE RISE OF ANTI-IMPERIALISM

On the other hand, the new impulse to Pan-Americanism also resulted in the accentuation of an anti-imperialist current that can be traced back to the Spanish-American War in 1898, when some sectors of the subcontinent's educated elites rejected the United States' growing interferences in Latin America's domestic affairs.[19] In parallel, they began to reconsider the Spanish legacy, giving shape to the 'first Latin-American anti-imperialism'[20] and an incipient rise of Pan-Hispanism.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó published his famous book *Ariel*, where he contrasted a materialistic and frivolous Anglo-Saxon America with a spiritual Latin America, forging an interpretation that would nurture later anti-imperialist

12 The so-called 'Wilsonian Moment' encompassed the period from the United States' entry into the war to the end of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919. See Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

13 Olivier Compagnon, *L'adieu à l'Europe. L'Amérique latine et la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Fayard, 2013), 326–328.

14 Cecilio Báez, 'Discurso del Doctor Cecilio Báez', in *En favor de los aliados: discursos pronunciados en la ocasión de la gran demonstración en favor de los aliados realizada en Asunción (Paraguay), el 11 de julio de 1917* (London: Hayman, Christy & Lilly, 1917), 8.

15 *Ibid.*, 8–9.

16 Antolín Irala, 'Discurso del Doctor Antolín Irala', *En Favor de los aliados*, 27.

17 Ricardo Rojas, 'Profesión de fe de la nueva generación', in *La guerra de las naciones* (Buenos Aires: La Facultad, 1924 [1919]), 274–275.

18 *Ibid.*, 279–281.

19 Alan McPherson, 'Anti-Americanism in Latin America', in *Anti-Americanism. History, Causes, Themes*, ed. Brendon O'Connor (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), 77–102.

20 Oscar Terán, 'El primer anti-imperialismo latinoamericano', in *En busca de la ideología argentina* (Buenos Aires: Catálogos, 1986), 95–98.

argumentations.[21] The First World War revived the anti-American perspectives. From 1914, the United States advanced its presence in Central America, taking advantage of the fact that Europe was concentrated on the conflict. Thus, a succession of military interventions took place in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Nicaragua. The Colombian José María Vargas Vila accused the United States of making the most of the Great War to rule the subcontinent without the European restraint:

> The Yankees devote themselves to the sharing out and the plundering of Latin America, and the world is unaware of the sharing out made by the pirates of Carthage…. Their brothers of Europe are ignorant of this disaster, which they could not prevent for now even if they knew about it…. The Yankee has chosen well the moment…. This tragic and crepuscular hour when nobody can assist the peoples devoured by it…. The merchants have become prowlers and steal, taking advantage of the European people's fight; Monroism is their slogan; robbing weak peoples, more than attacking them.[22]

Considering these facts, the Argentine writer Ernesto Quesada condemned the war's economic and geopolitical motivations, distinguished Germany's and the Allied ones, and highlighted the American control strategies: 'Germany has never pretended to play a political role in America. Among the three great rivals disputing the Latin American markets, only the United States shows political purposes, not in the sense of territorial conquest but a sort of an innominate tutelage or high diplomatic protectorate'.[23]

Besides distinguishing Germany from the Triple Entente's imperialism, Quesada warned against the United States' expansionist ambitions on the subcontinent: 'The United States, in successive advances on Mexico, has snatched California, Texas, and has received Puerto Rico as spoils of war, practising the protectorate on Cuba and Panama'.[24]

The Venezuelan Rufino Blanco Fombona echoed Rodó's dichotomy when he defined the challenges of the subcontinent:

> Latin America's traditional enemy, present and future, is the Republic of the United States. Two races are face to face: the Latin one and the Saxon one; two Americas: The one born in Southern Europe and that born in the Northern Europe; two conceptions of life: The idealistic one and the Sanchopanzist one;[25] two sects: Catholicism and Protestantism; two social ideas: Individualism and solidarity; two civilisations: The Mediterranean one and that from the Northern seas and lands.[26]

The condemnation of the United States' imperialism was usually accompanied by the claim of an alternative supranational identity, based on historical and cultural factors. Pan-Hispanism postulated the existence of spiritual unity between Spain and its former colonies, based on language, religion, and a shared past, and was very popular during the war. Many intellectuals started to extoll Spain as the mother country of the Latin American nations and a model to follow in wartime, a tendency also actively fostered by German propaganda in Latin America.[27] It was not a coincidence that neutral Spain was reassessed when intense pressures from the United States to abandon neutrality increased. As a result, 12 October—the date of the 'discovery' of the Americas by Christopher Columbus—started to be celebrated as a national holiday in many Latin American countries, explicitly invoking the Spanish legacy.[28]

CONCLUSION

During the First World War, the United States' image in Latin America was not univocal but two-faced: perceived as an oppressive, imperialist power by some intellectual sectors, while others considered it an emancipating force. The reactions of the local intellectual field in the face of the Great War were rooted in secular circuits of economic, demographic, and cultural exchanges with Europe and the Americas, and related to the very definition of national and subcontinental identities.

Pan-Americanism drew support from a growing number of Latin American intellectuals, surpassing the limits of the traditional American influence. The

21 Patricia Funes, *Salvar la nación. Intelectuales, cultura y política en los años veinte latinoamericanos* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006), 215–219.

22 José María Vargas Vila, *Ante los bárbaros. Los Estados Unidos y la guerra: el yanki, he ahí el enemigo* (Barcelona: Maucci, 1917), 6, 8–9.

23 Ernesto Quesada, *El 'peligro alemán' en Sud América* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de Selin Suárez, 1915), 53.

24 *Ibid.*, 53, 32.

25 Reference to the character Sancho Panza, from Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote*. While Don Quixote represents idealism, Sancho Panza incarnates the antithesis, materialism.

26 Rufino Blanco Fombona, 'Prólogo', in *El crimen de Woodrow Wilson*, ed. Carlos Pereyra (Madrid: Imprenta de J. Pueyo, 1917), IV–V.

27 Paul-Henri Michel, *L'Hispanisme dans les républiques espagnoles d'Amérique pendant la guerre de 1914-1918* (Paris: Alfred Costes Éditeur, 1930).

28 Miguel Rodríguez, *Celebración de 'la raza'. Una historia comparativa del 12 de octubre* (Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2004), 77–82.

admiration for Woodrow Wilson—in fact, a global phenomenon—captivated intellectual circles usually distant and distrustful of the United States' continental leadership. However, the renewed impetus of Pan-Americanism also encouraged an antipodal response: the denouncement of imperialist meddling in Latin America and the consequent menace to the independence of the national states. Anti-imperialism was revived and directed its attacks against the United States' growing pressures on the subcontinent's governments.

In sum, the Latin American intellectual field during the First World War demonstrates the intensity of transnational cultural connections and the circulation of different representations of the conflict, re-appropriated and reinterpreted according to the subcontinent's historical experiences. As a result, in the global moment of 1917, the linkages between Latin America and its northern neighbour were passionately debated and re-examined, showing that the war impacted on multiple dimensions even in neutral countries.

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Wool, Paper, Dye: 1917 and the Roots of the Synthetic Fibre Revolution

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Abstract
In the Great War, wool was as essential to success as steel and gunpowder. All combatant nations tried to ensure continuing supplies of this vital resource, but none so successfully as Britain, whose Australian and New Zealand dominions were key sources of the apparel wools sought after for military uniforms and blankets. Wool was a lynchpin in Allied planning in 1917 and the subject of negotiation, intrigue, and anxiety: how could the United States possibly send its troops—suitably attired for Europe's trenches—as soon as they were needed, in the face of raw materials shortages, including wool?

This article first addresses the complexities of British control of the Australasian wool clip during the First World War. It then looks at how this led the American and German textile industries to seek substitutes—shoddy (recycled wool), Peruvian cotton, paper yarns, regenerated cellulose, silk, and jute—and eventually, synthesised fibres. Next examined is why and how research and development in fibre technology was rooted in the field of dye chemistry, then largely controlled by Germany. Deprived of German dyes for a wide range of products, United States' companies, notably the DuPont Corporation, entered the field in 1917, setting the stage for later breakthroughs in synthetic fibre technology. It took several decades for wool to lose its primacy in war and peace, but the First World War hastened that end. 1917 was a pivotal year: its challenges, opportunities, and actions affected global textiles in ways that still resonate today.

Keywords
DuPont; First World War; strategic military resources; synthetic fibres; textiles; wool

WOOL AS AN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC RESOURCE IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

When the First World War erupted in August 1914, the realisation of how important supplies of raw wool would be to victory was still in the future. Ultimately, success in the Great War would depend as much on wool as on steel and gunpowder. Certainly, for many centuries, wool was the pre-eminent fibre for cold weather clothing, and for military uniforms and blankets (Fig. 1). But not until the production of wool textiles was mechanised in the 19th century, and paired with radical sheep husbandry that engineered sheep whose wool could easily feed the factory machines, was the stage set for mass cold climate war. It was in 1917 that wool's pivotal role as a strategic resource would become glaringly apparent.

The Germans and British entered the conflict with substantial stockpiles, and as both nations had important woollen textile industries, with significant export trade, they could turn that capacity to the domestic needs of both civilians and the military. While in 1914 optimists held that the war would be over by Christmas, the British government did act quickly, imposing a naval blockade of German ports to prevent wool, among other raw materials vital to the war effort, from reaching the Central Powers.[1]

Also disturbed by the possibility that the neutral United States, which had a sizable population of German descent, including a number of well-known woollen manufacturers, might supply Germany, Britain imposed an embargo in late 1914 on shipments of Dominion wool to the United States. In response, in early 1915 a group of American manufacturers formed The Textile Alliance, to oversee imports of wool to the United States, and reassure the British that buyers would not trans-ship either raw wool or finished products to Britain's enemies, for wartime use or post-war stockpiling. Contracts to

1 Pierre Chancerel, 'Raw Materials', in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, eds Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin), accessed 18 May 2019, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/raw_materials.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 99–108
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/shaw_fitzsimmons
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/15

Figure 1. Washing day for a New Zealand soldier, woollen socks and undergarments, near Ypres, Belgium, 1918. Photographer unknown. [Sanders, H.A.B. (1917)]. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-ALB-419-H357.

supply blankets and uniform cloth to the Allied armies and in 1917 to meet America's own preparedness needs, boosted American production but also magnified the supply chain weaknesses inherent in the major sources of raw wool being an ocean or two away.[2]

On the other side of the globe, war also disrupted Australian and New Zealand sheep pastoralism and the countries' secondary and tertiary wool industries. Beginning in the 1880s, Australia's steady increase in sheep numbers prompted wool buyers from around the world to live and work there. By 1914 Australia had overtaken London as the most important centre for wool auctions.[3] The toll that naval warfare would take on this trade, and wool's importance as a strategic commodity, earned attention in October 1914 when the British cargo ship *Troilus*—heading to England laden with West Australian wool—was sunk by the German ship *Emden* in the Indian Ocean.[4] In 1915 woollen mills in Australia and New Zealand were brought under their respective governments' control to meet local defence requirements.[5] The Australian Commonwealth Government complained to London in September 1916 that restrictions on shipping wool from Australia to the United States were 'greatly embarrassing Government and causing pastoralists heavy losses'.[6] The British government became more aware that the unprecedented

2 See, for example, S. Banks Rollings, 'The Wool and Woolen Trade as Administered in Wartime', *Bulletin of the National Association of Wool Manufacturers*, XLV1II (October 1918): 343–345. US textile industry trade journals document minutely the difficulties of the woollen business during the war, in getting purchase approvals for wool from abroad, finding shipping, price hikes, labour unrest and shortages, trade disruption, etc. *The Boston Globe*, a daily newspaper in the seat of the American woollen industry, also featured articles on the challenges of wartime production, and statistics on imports and exports of raw wool and finished products.

3 See Simon Ville, 'The relocation of the international market for Australian wool', *Australian Economic History Review* 45, no. 1 (2005): 73–95; and David Merrett and Simon Ville, 'Institution Building and Variation in the Formation of the Australian Wool Market', *Australian Economic History Review*, 53, no. 2 (July 2013).

4 Christopher Fyfe, *Gentlemen's Agreements: Australian Wartime Wool Appraisements* (Dalkeith, W.A.: Lana Press, 1996), xxiii.

5 Mills in Tasmania were turned over to blanket manufacturing for the Defence Department in late 1914. Julian Burgess, *The Outcome of Enterprise: Launceston's Waverley Woollen Mills* (Launceston: Friends of the Library, Local History Series No 3, 2009), 69; S.R.H. Jones, *Doing Well and Doing Good – Ross and Glendinning – Scottish Enterprise in New Zealand* (Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press, 2010), 244.

6 Secretary, Attorney General's Dept., to Official Secretary to the Governor-General, 11 Sept 1916. Suggested text for cable to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, London. National Archives Australia. W29/2/99 A456/3.

size of the fighting force, the realities of trench warfare, and the severe Australian drought of 1914/15 had made wool a critical resource.[7] In late November 1916, having already instituted compulsory purchase of the United Kingdom's entire clip, the government finalised contracts to 'commandeer' the entire clip from Australia and New Zealand. The complex and often contentious negotiations encompassed purchase and appraisal prices, details of sorting, packing, storing, and shipping, and distribution of profits. The agreement applied to both crossbred wools preferred for many military uses, and the finer merinos used primarily for civilian products. It also meant the public wool auctions in Australia's port cities, that had been a mecca for wool buyers from all over the world, were shut down 'for the duration'.[8] Meanwhile, India agreed to send its clip of blanket quality wools to the United Kingdom.[9] Thus, as the year 1917 dawned, Britain controlled the majority of the world's supply of raw apparel wool.

WOOL, DYES, AND WAR IN THE UNITED STATES

Meanwhile, from early 1915 American industry began to worry in earnest about the economic effects of the war in Europe—particularly concerning materials and products not produced in sufficient quantity, or at all, in the United States. The first serious shortage Americans faced was a dearth of dyestuffs, with Britain's blockade of Germany, the world's pre-eminent producer of dyes and dye chemicals since the 1870s, reducing the flow to a trickle.[10] Franklin Hobbs of The National Association of Wool Manufacturers, exclaimed in January 1916: 'The situation was serious, not only in textiles, but in every business where colors were needed—ink, leather, paper, and even the ornamental cherry at the bottom of a famous American drink was threatened! It looked like an era of black and white.'[11]

In response to the dye shortage, the industry fell back on natural dyes and instituted new research efforts. The fashion industries made a virtue of necessity, touting 'black and white' as the height of chic (as opposed to mourning).[12] As anti-German hysteria grew, dye companies that had been founded by German immigrants found it expedient to change their names: Schoelkopf Aniline and Chemical, Beckers Aniline and Chemical, and the Benzol Products Company, for example, merged in 1917 to form National Aniline & Chemical Co. After the United States entered the war on the Allied side in April 1917, the dye sector—which also produced pharmaceuticals and other chemicals—benefited somewhat from 'compulsory licensing' of German-owned dye patents with the passage a few months later of the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 (40 Stat.411). But the chemistry of synthetic dyes is very complex, and since patent data is often deliberately incomplete to protect trade secrets, the American chemical industry did not immediately have the capacity to replicate German know-how.[13] The DuPont Company, whose main product, 'smokeless' gunpowder, required a chemical compound also used in dyes, responded the same year by building a laboratory to develop synthetic dyes. This relatively new focus on basic chemistry research and long-term research and development was supported by the huge profits made from selling gunpowder in the war. From this start, DuPont developed a broader chemical industry footprint, including dye making not only for textiles but also for paints and plastics. After the war, with German patent rights restored, DuPont's dye-works employed German chemists and took over companies whose laboratories had dye chemistry expertise. Lessons learned in this undertaking would support DuPont's shift between the world wars into synthetic fibre development.[14]

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7 Fyfe, *Gentleman's Agreement*, xxiii; Dorothy Zimmern, 'The Wool Trade in Wartime', *The Economic Journal* (Mar 1918): 13.

8 Kosmas Tsokhas, *Markets Money and Empire: The Political Economy of the Australian Wool Industry* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1990), 18–28; Fyfe, *Gentleman's Agreements*, 8.

9 South Africa's clip was left on the open market. South America also had substantial wool-growing capacity. Both regions were relative newcomers to the wool trade, but rapidly developed their markets under the shortages manipulated by the UK government. See for example, 'South African Letter', *American Sheep Breeder* 32, no. 2, (Feb 1912): 116–117; 'A Wool Trade Anomaly', *Financial Times* (London) Edition 8, no. 175 (Monday 14 Nov 1914): 2, *The Financial Times Historical Archive, 1888–2010*. Gale Document #: HS23000338783.

10 The UK government allowed two shipments of German dyes to the US via Rotterdam in 1915. 'An Import Company Organized', *Posselt's Textile Journal* XVII, no. 6 (December 1915): xv. See also: Edwin J. Clapp, Chapter XIII, 'The Import Situation (Continued)', in *Economic Aspects of the War: Neutral Rights, Belligerent Claims, and American Commerce in the Years 1914–1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915).

11 Franklin W. Hobbs, 'Textiles—The Backbone of New England. An Address Before the Boston Art Club'. *Bulletin of the National Association of Woolen Manufacturers*, LXVII, no. 1 (Jan 1917): 83.

12 'Germany's Dyestuff Industry', *Posselt's Textile Journal* XVI, no. 2 (Feb 1915): xv-xvi; 'The Dyestuff Situation'; 'Natural Dyestuffs'; and 'Swiss Dyestuffs for American Use', *Posselt's Textile Journal* XVII, no. 2 (August 1915): 39–41, 44, xv.

13 Peter J. T. Morris and Anthony S. Travis, 'A History of the International Dyestuff Industry', *American Dyestuff Reporter* 81, no. 11 (November 1992): 46–50.

14 14 'History', DuPont, accessed 16 May 2019, http://www.dupont.com/corporate-functions/our-company/dupont-history.html. Even so, it would take DuPont from 1927 until 1939 to develop nylon as the first fully synthetic textile, that would then be almost immediately pressed into service for use in the Second World War.

Even before the dye situation was resolved, the United States' textile industry fretted over supplies of, and substitutes for, wool.[15] American growers had never raised enough wool to meet even the domestic requirements of the nation's textile manufacturers in peacetime. The industry was therefore both heavily reliant on imports, and adept at eking out supplies of new wool by blending it with other fibres. Manufacturers worried about satisfying their domestic civilian customers, and also about their ability to meet foreign demand—not only the combatant nations, but countries which had purchased from those nations before the war and needed alternative sources of supply. American buyers snapped up the wool clips of South Africa, Argentina, and Uruguay—the only market sources the British did not control. After the United States entered the war, civilian shortages became critical. Government public relations encouraged the public to patriotic efforts to increase the wool supply. Small growers formed sheep clubs; President Woodrow Wilson even installed a small flock on the White House lawn (Fig. 2).[16]

In the United States, as in the other combatant nations, conserving wool was presented as a civic duty. Civilians were expected to substitute other materials or choose clothing that was slimmer, shorter, and plainer.[17] The armed forces contributed by repairing and re-issuing damaged and worn uniforms. Those beyond fixing were reclaimed as 'shoddy'—the textile industry term since the early 1800s for recycled wool fibre. In the United States, the use of shoddy was coloured by the national memory of the Civil War's 'shoddy scandals', when northern textile manufacturers, trying to outfit an army that had ballooned from 20,000 to 500,000 in a few months, mixed shoddy with virgin wool in such quantity that the yarn quality, and therefore the durability of the uniforms and blankets made from those yarns, was seriously compromised. The term shoddy became 'a synonym for miserable pretence in patriotism' and by extension, a metaphor for poor quality of any kind.[18] Even though for certain uses, such as blankets and overcoats, shoddy was perfectly acceptable, the aura of Civil War profiteering clung to it, and some feared that through the use of shoddy the recycled uniforms of dead soldiers would be given to those who followed.[19]

From an international perspective, fear of the wool uniforms of dead soldiers being reused to clothe a new 'batch' of soldiers, with or without being minced up and reformed into 'shoddy', was by no means fanciful. American journalist Isaac Marcossan observed that once the war was in 'full swing' and the value of wool obvious, the British government set up a Paris Ordnance Depot, with some 4,000 women employed by the 'Agency of Reconstruction'. Huge piles of battlefield salvage,—'eloquent, if odorous evidence of the life and death struggle in which they have figured'—were sorted into clothing reusable by new recruits after washing and mending, and rags and fragments only fit for conversion into shoddy. A third category, primarily overcoats, when 'beyond repair for a soldier … [were] … stained grey or black and served out to the Chinese, East Indian or Egyptian Labour Battalions, or to prisoners of war. Marcosson estimated that this saved US$12 million a year, and that without it shoddy wool prices would have risen even higher than they did during the war.[20] A similar depot was set up in Britain, in Dewsbury, Yorkshire, near the British woollen industry cities of Bradford and Leeds. Even the American army recovered wool in salvage operations at St.-Pierre-des-Corps, selling nearly one-and-a-half million pounds at 20 cents per pound to Britain.[21]

Although post-Civil War sensibilities limited American use of reclaimed wool for its military, United States manufacturers were adept at adulterating new wool for civilian uses, and actively sought new ways to

15 'Twenty Sheep Needed for Every Soldier: How the Government is Mobilizing the Wool Industry…', *Boston Daily Globe (1872–1922)*, 27 January 1918; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Boston Globe*, SM9.

16 They were shorn annually from 1918 to 1920, with the wool sold to benefit the Red Cross. 'Wilson to Sell 48 Prize Sheep', *The Washington Post (1877–1922)*, 1 August 1920. https://search.proquest.com/docview/145791499?accountid=46638.

17 See, for example, 'Government Wool Policy', and 'Army Cloth Shortage', *Textile World Journal*, (6 April 1918): 56–57. (Bound volume page numbers 4558, 4559)

18 Henry Morland, *The Days of Shoddy: A Novel of the Great Rebellion in 1861* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson & Brothers, 1863), 174. For a discussion of shoddy see Madelyn Shaw and Lynne Bassett, *Homefront & Battlefield: Quilts & Contexts in the Civil War* (Lowell, MA: American Textile History Museum, 2012), 117–118.

19 Shoddy was an important part of the UK's control of wool textile production. 'By means of a careful salvage system, old uniforms, hosiery articles, etc., are collected from all the theatres of war and sent to the Government Rag Depot at Dewsbury, where they are torn up into shoddy and issued to contractors for making army cloths, for which it is particularly suitable'. Dorothy Zimmern, 'The Wool Trade in Wartime', *The Economic Journal* (March 1918): 28. See also Consul Percival Gassett, 'Demand for Heavy Woolens, March 8', United Kingdom – Leeds. *Commerce Reports* No. 19c, (May 9 1918): 4–5; 'Substitutes Strong', *Textile World Journal* (6 April 1918): 146.

20 Isaac Marcosson, *The Business of War*. (New York: John Lane Co., 1918), 180, 183, 186. See also: Henry G. Sharpe, *The Quartermaster Corps in the Year 1917 in the World War* (New York: The Century Co., 1921), 171–189; 'The Dewsbury Army Clothing Depot' Consul Percival Gassett, March 8. 'Demand for Heavy Woolens'. United Kingdom – Leeds. *Commerce Reports* No. 19c, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office (9 May 1918): 5.

21 'Salvage Service', *United States Army in the World War, 1917–1919*. Reports by the Commander-in-Chief, Staff Sections, and Services 15. (Reprint) (Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, DC, 1991): 97.

Figure 2. 'More Sheep, More Wool' movement: Flock of sheep on the White House Lawn, 1918. Library of Congress; Prints and Photographs Division. 10788a.

do that. The American industry had long been (mis)using the word 'merino' to mean a yarn spun from a mix of wool fibres—possibly from merino sheep—and particular strains of coarse, long staple cotton obtained from China or Peru. With cotton also at a premium, other fibres, such as ramie (a bast, or stem fibre, also called China Grass), were tested.[22] The American silk industry—by production volume the largest in the world—jumped at the chance to wrest civilian market share from cotton and wool, and developed new ranges of weave structures and finishes to make silk fabrics suitable for active sports and daytime activities, usable in place of wool and cotton.[23] Textile fibre shortages were largely a civilian issue. The *National Association of Wool Manufacturers Bulletin* reported in April 1918: 'The soldiers are now sufficiently supplied with clothing to be kept warm and comfortable. No shoddy or wool substitutes are used in the 16-ounce Melton cloth from which the uniforms—the coats and breeches—are made, this cloth being a worsted made from all wool. The heavy, 30-ounce Melton used for soldiers' overcoats and the blankets contain about 35 per cent of shoddy mixed with 65 per cent of virgin wool.'[24] Normalising the use of substitutes in certain military textiles would have future ramifications for the later widespread adoption of synthetic fibres (Fig. 3).

In Germany and Austria, meanwhile, wool was increasingly scarce. From early in the war French wool textile factories in German-occupied areas were lost to Allied use.[25] Their stockpiles of wool were loaded onto railway cars and taken to Germany; some factories were stripped of equipment; others were turned to wool textile production for Germany.[26] A post-Armistice intelligence summary from the United States Third Army dated 20 November 1918 reported on the condition of the French in the regions occupied by Germany: 'The forced contributions of money on the towns drained most of the remaining wealth. Recent orders also required the taking of blankets, wool from the mattresses, and even

22 One 1915 example was the Superior Thread and Yarn Company's 'Stycos Wool Substitute' ramie fibre, according to the manufacturer, 'Suitable for mixing with the best 3/8 blood stock', meaning a cross-bred wool with 3/8 merino genes. Donation records for Superior Thread and Yarn Co., 1915. Accession 57996, catalogue number T2367. Textiles Department, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

23 See, for example, Madelyn Shaw, 'American Silk from a Marketing Magician: H.R. Mallinson & Co'. *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*, (2002): 245. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1545&context=tsaconf and, https://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/keeping-khaki-kool-during-world-war-i.

24 *National Association of Wool Manufacturers Bulletin*, (April 1918): 85.

25 Jacqueline Dwyer, *Flanders in Australia: A Personal History of Wool and War* (East Roseville, NSW: Kangaroo Press, 1998), 60.

26 'Silk looms in France now making woolen goods', *Posselt's Textile Journal* (Jan 1916): xxi.

Figure 3. Romanians in Craiova, packing wool to deliver to Germany, August 1917. *Official German WWI Photo*. US National Archives. From: Series: German Military Activities and Personnel, 1917–1918; Record Group 165: Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, 1860–1952. 17390988.

shoddy cloth'.[27] Other occupied regions of Europe suffered similarly. A photograph of Serbian villagers with a stockpile of wool they had hidden from the German army suggests this was one form of resistance in occupied territories.[28]

Confiscated wool, whether taken from storehouses or mattresses, was sent to Germany to be processed into yarn. Germany also pressed into service many substitute fibres, some in development before the war: artificial silk (regenerated cellulose); cattail or Typha fibre; stinging nettle (a bast or stem fibre like ramie); Posidonia (a regenerated fibre made from seaweed), and Solidonia (a treated ramie fibre used in blends with wool). Tough and scratchy jute fibres too were treated with caustic soda in a process dubbed 'woollenising' to eke out wool supplies—mixtures with as much as 60% jute were said to have been used.[29]

An unlikely but extremely common substitute in Germany and Austria was yarn spun from paper strips, called xylolin or textilose. German inventor Emil Claviez had patented his machinery to spin these yarns for weaving in Europe and the United States, many years before the war. The original product was used for table covers, wall coverings, rugs, and for sacking for substances which would pick up an offensive odor from jute bags. But when textiles ran seriously short in 1916, paper yarns were deployed for household furnishings and civilian clothing.[30] German efforts to improve the deficiencies of paper yarns led them to incorporate wool waste fibres—those too short to spin—into the slurry from which the paper was made, hoping to give it more body. Yarns were 'sized' to make them more water resistant and durable. This was important, because it was not only civilians who used spun paper textiles. During

27 Quoted in *United States Army in the World War, 1917–1919. Reports by the Commander-in-Chief, Staff Sections, and Services*. Volume 11. (Reprint) Center of Military History, United States Army (Washington, DC: 1991), 16.

28 U.S. Library of Congress Photograph. LC-A6195- 6207 [P&P] American National Red Cross photograph collection (Library of Congress), http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/anrc.03686.

29 See Pierre Grezac, 'Some War Substitutes in Germany', *The New France* 3, No 3 (May 1919) 507–508; 'Textile and Paper From Pine Needles; and The Land of the Ersatz', *Scientific American* 119 (2 November 1918) 368; 'German Substitutes', *Los Angeles Times (1886–1922)*, 13 May 1917.

30 Chauncey Depew Snow and J.J. Kral. *German Trade and the War: Commercial and Industrial Conditions in War Time and the Future Outlook*. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce; B.S. Cutler, chief. Miscellaneous series- no. 61. Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1918, 50–52.

Figure 4. Handwritten inscription reads: 'Germany's shortage of wool. Hun undercloths [*sic*] worn by prisoners captured by New Zealanders was made of material resembling sack cloth'. 15/4/17. Photographer unknown. [Sanders, H.A.B. (1917)] Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-ALB-419-H509.

Figure 5. New Zealand soldiers proudly show the undershirts and long johns that demonstrate what being a soldier from a nation with plentiful supplies of wool means at the front. Photograph April 1918. Photographer unknown. [Sanders, H.A.B. (1918)]. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-ALB-419-H510.

the war, New Zealanders expressed pride in having wool for their soldiers' underwear, especially in comparison to the standard issue German underwear, which they compared to sacking, and which may indeed have been woven of paper yarn (see Figs. 4, 5). A group of about 40 German army wagon covers, tool covers, slings, buckets, horse trappings, and other utilitarian objects, all of them woven, braided, or knotted from paper yarns, and salvaged by the United States Army at the end of the war, were acquired by the Smithsonian National Museum in 1923. Textile curator Frederick L. Lewton was likely alert to the fact that American anxiety over sourcing wool in wartime inspired a concomitant interest in alternatives.[31] Indeed, by the end of the war the British too had encouraged efforts at paper yarn and textile making. The Textilite Engineering Company exhibited its spinning machine and products at the August 1918 British Scientific Products Exhibition in London.[32]

FIRST WORLD WAR LEGACY

British control of so much of the world's wool supply during the Great War, the problems of dependence on foreign sources of textile fibres, and the resultant privations for soldiers and civilians pushed many manufacturing nations between the wars to continue the search for substitutes for the wool that another war would again put out of reach. In the 1930s Italy developed Lanital, a casein or milk-protein-based regenerated fibre. The American version of this, called Aralac, was tested by a number of companies and produced during the 1940s by a division of the National Dairy Products Corporation. Other substances—such as milkweed fibre, peanuts, soybeans, and chicken feathers—were tested, even less successfully.[33] Aralac itself had no lasting impact, as European nations did not make use of casein fibre during the Second World War, finding that milk was far more important as food.[34]

31 National Museum of American History, Smithsonian (NMAH), Division of Work & Industry, Accession No. 70063; Catalog No. AG23FP03.01-.20.

32 NMAH Accession No. 20253. Three photographs illustrating British paper yarn machinery and products, dated August 1918, from the British Scientific Products Exhibition, King's College, London; and Vice Consul Hamilton C. Claiborne, 'English Production of Paper Textiles', *Commerce Reports, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce* 3 (3 July 1917): 20.

33 The Textiles Dept, NMAH, Smithsonian Institution, holds many examples of experimental fibres from the interwar period and World War II. A suit made from a chicken feather fabric, formerly in the collection of the now-defunct American Textile History Museum, was transferred to the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan. The Henry Ford Museum also holds a 1941 photograph of Henry Ford in a soybean fibre suit (P.188.29414).

34 'New Fibers and their Applications in Germany During the War Period', *Field Information Agency, Technical. Final Report No. 44*. (United States Group Control Council, Germany, 14 September 1945) (Unclassified). Held in the Textile Dept. Library, NMAH/SI. T-863. Related reports also in the NMAH departmental library are: No. 50, 'General Developments in the German Staple Fiber Industry' (18 September 1945) T-864; and No. 154 'The German Woolen Industry' (1 October 1945) T-868.

As the search for natural fibre substitutes failed to produce fibres in quantities and qualities to insure against future shortages, attention turned instead and alongside the search for substitutes to chemically created synthetics. Wool's physical properties of flame resistance, durability, and warmth—even when wet—made it exceptionally difficult to imitate, but the manipulated shortages of wool in the First World War encouraged a long view. An early focus of synthetic textile chemistry was the further development of rayon, a man-made alternative to natural fibres based on chemically reworking cellulose wood fibres, first developed in the nineteenth century but little used until the 1910s. The filament extruded from liquid cellulose (there were four different processes) was called artificial silk until 1924, when the industry adopted rayon as a generic name, in part because the filament was shiny, like the sun. Even at their most desperate, no nation during 1914–18 sent soldiers to war in glossy, slick rayon, which lost strength when wet. But in 1927 a delustreing process was unveiled, and a year later staple fibre rayon—meaning short, spinnable fibres like cotton or wool—was introduced. World rayon production grew rapidly, from 33 million pounds in 1920 to 457 million pounds in 1930, to 1,818 million pounds in 1937. Rayon did not initially replace wool, but blended fabrics gradually increased market share.[35] In the 1939–45 war, rayon linings and part-rayon outer garments such as raincoats were used by the United States military, eking out supplies of cotton or wool.[36] Germany and Japan also used rayon for military purposes.

In the 1920s the DuPont Corporation's chemists turned from dyes and a cotton-based artificial leather known as Fabrikoid, developed in 1915, to fibre chemistry more generally.[37] Having made massive profits in the 1914–18 war, primarily from selling gunpowder to combatants on both sides of the conflict, DuPont had the capital and industrial capacity to invest in long-term research and development, and worked assiduously from around 1927 to develop the fibre that would become known as nylon. Nylon, an alternative to silk, was launched in 1939, used in hosiery immediately, and almost wholly replaced silk for parachutes in the Second World War, but was in no way a substitute for wool or cotton (Fig. 6).

Inspired by the huge success of nylon however, DuPont chemists early in the Second World War developed a new chemical synthetic based on carbon petrochemicals, known initially as Fibre A. The staple version of this fibre was developed in the late 1940s and trumpeted in a DuPont News Release as 'the most wool-like we know'.[38] In the 1950s this would be marketed as Orlon, but it was not ready for use in either the Second World War or the Korean War of 1950–53.[39] Eventually, the brand name slipped away and it became simply known as acrylic, a major source of current pollution in oceans and elsewhere.[40] The United States law called the Berry Amendment, first introduced in 1941 and still a permanent part of military procurement regulations, prohibits acquiring textiles or textile materials from foreign sources. In emergencies this is skirted by means of special licenses. The Korean War was one such exception, and a huge economic fillip for the wool producing nations of Australia and New Zealand. But the genie was out of the bottle, and synthetics were poised to make inroads into military markets, looking to bypass the supply chains that had caused so much anxiety back in 1917.

CONCLUSION

The soldiers and sailors of the First World War were, for the most part, clothed in wool or wool-blend fabrics. But this was a war on a scale almost impossible to imagine, with eventually nearly 70 million soldiers needing warmth and covering, along with their civilian populations, at a time when access to raw materials, and in some places such as occupied France and Belgium, textile production, was seriously compromised. In the course of this project we have wondered whether, without the industrialisation of wool production in the preceding

35 U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, *Report on Development and Use of Rayon and Other Synthetic Fibers* (October 1938). Held in the Textile Dept. Library, NMAH/SI. T-825.

36 Erna Risch, 'United States Army in World War II. The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services'. Volume I (Reprint). Center of Military History, United States Army. (Washington, DC:1995). Chapter III, 'The Development of Army Clothing'.

37 Ebenezer Kotei, 'Fabrikoid – A Game Changer', Hagley Museum & Library, accessed 12 December 2019, https://www.hagley.org/about-us/news/museum-fabrikoid-game-changer.

38 Joseph Quig, of DuPont's Rayon Department's Technical Division in 'News Release to Morning Papers of Thursday Dec 2, 1948', Orlon boxes, Hagley Library and Archive, Wilmington, Delaware.

39 An industry evaluation of the glories of man-made fibres can be found in: A. Frank Tesi, C.W. Bendigo, and Arthur Spiro. 'The New and Old in Synthetic Fibers', *The Analysts Journal* 8, no.1, Proceedings, Eastern Regional Conference, New York Society of Security Analysts, 8 November 1951 (January, 1952), 58–69. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40796933. Documents internal to the Du Pont Corporation about Orlon reveal a less glowing assessment, noting that DuPont was having trouble selling the fibre, due to market confusion about its continual chemical reformulation and problems with dye take-up 'coloration was not adequate'. The internal report concluded that the gap between these problems and its marketing as a 'miracle fibre' had made Orlon a 'barbed joke in the trade' from 'Report of "Orlon" Product Committee Study of "Orlon" Acrylic Staple – July 1953', Textile Fibers Department, 30 July 1953, Orlon Archive, Hagley Library, Wilmington Delaware.

40 Marc Bain, 'Deadly Spin Cycle: Our synthetic clothes are quietly polluting the oceans', *Quartz*, (28 September 2016), accessed 20 June 2019, https://qz.com/793760/synthetic-clothes-are-polluting-oceans/.

century, mass trench warfare on this scale could ever have arisen? A concomitant hypothetical is to ask if the use of paper and other substitutes allowed Germany and other Axis powers to continue fighting beyond the point when the lack of wool might otherwise have forced them to surrender? But the actual and perceived shortages of wool fibre in that war, and in particular the shortages in the United States and Germany that were biting deeply by 1917, precipitated a search for substitutes that lasted for decades and led directly to our contemporary reliance on petrochemical fibres, and the issues of pollution and sustainability that face all of us, civilian and military, in our use of textiles today.

Du Pont Announces for the World of Tomorrow...

a new word and a new material

NYLON

NO BETTER EXAMPLE of the fruits of research could be found than nylon—so new a material that a name had to be coined by Du Pont for it—so vast in the number of its possible uses that no list, however farseeing at present, can include them all—so promising in its first uses that Du Pont will spend $8,000,000 on a plant employing approximately 1,000 people.

Nylon is the generic name for all materials defined scientifically as synthetic fiber-forming polymeric amides having a protein-like chemical structure; derivable from coal, air and water, or other substances, and characterized by extreme toughness and strength and the peculiar ability to be formed into fibers and into various shapes, such as bristles, sheets, etc.

This is the newest of the synthetic materials. In its development a group of Du Pont chemists have been occupied for years. Nylon, though it springs from common raw materials that exist in abundance, can be fashioned into filaments possessing a beautiful luster, strong as steel, delicate as the fiber of a spider's web, yet more elastic than any of the natural fibers.

Toothbrushes with "Exton" bristles made from nylon are now available. Soon other forms of this new product will reach the public as a result of experimental work in progress.

Out of continued research in synthetic chemistry has come this development, as will others, to aid in the building of the World of Tomorrow.

Jobs...Jobs...

Still another important result comes from this contribution—as from other chemical developments. From these fruits of chemical research spring jobs for the men who build plants and machinery—jobs for the men who make the raw material—jobs for the men who convert it into numerous articles for everyday service. Thus science doubly aids man in his search for better living.

The Past Gives a Clue to the Future

During the past ten years, Du Pont developments have included (among many other uniquely useful products) such contributions as these:

Moistureproof "Cellophane" cellulose film to protect foodstuffs from dirt and germs, and to preserve freshness and flavor.

"Cordura" rayon yarn, the super-tough fiber for truck and auto tires.

Nitrogen compounds made from the air, to return vital elements to the soil.

Neoprene chloroprene rubber with the resilience, strength and toughness of natural rubber, yet superior in its resistance to gasoline, oils, sunlight, heat and aging.

Improved fire retardants to reduce fire hazards in home and industry.

"Zerone" anti-rust anti-freeze to protect automobile radiators from freezing in winter... from rusting and corroding in summer.

"Duluz" enamels, the tough, long-lasting finishes now used on automobiles, trucks, streamlined trains, ships, bridges, home appliances, interior walls, refrigerators.

Higher Wages...Lower Prices

Since 1929, Du Pont has developed scores of new products. Today Du Pont employs more people than in 1929, pays higher wages, and sells its goods in greater quantities and at lower prices. Last year, forty percent of Du Pont's entire sales was on twelve lines of products developed or improved since 1929.

Scientists believe this record of accomplishment, these contributions to better living, are a promise of things to come—a promise for the World of Tomorrow and for those who will inherit it.

Your Preview of a Better World

At the New York World's Fair, Du Pont's "Wonder World of Chemistry" exhibit will present some of the more spectacular chemical achievements. Here will be shown, for the first time, many of the intricate processes used in the development and manufacture of Du Pont products. Here those who look hopefully to the future will find proof of what orderly research has done to contribute to better living and more continuous employment for everyone.

Where to Tomorrow, Mr. Chemist?

And the chemist answers: "To a thousand untouched shores. To a land of tomorrow where rain won't wet your clothes, where everyone gets his vitamins, where fire won't burn your home, where insects won't steal your wealth, where life is easier, happier, and more complete in ways that can't even be dreamed of today."

How soon, Mr. Chemist? And the chemist answers: "Just as soon as I can make it come true. I build for the tomorrow that will be yours, and your children's and your grandchildren's. And when each of these tomorrows becomes a 'today'—there will still be tomorrows to work for!"

Such is the spirit and the meaning of the Du Pont pledge: "Better Things for Better Living . . . through Chemistry."

When you visit New York's World Fair in 1939, you will find nothing more fascinating than a tour through this building—The Wonder World of Chemistry, presented by Du Pont to give you a glimpse of the world of tomorrow.

DU PONT

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, Inc., Wilmington, Delaware

BETTER THINGS FOR BETTER LIVING...THROUGH CHEMISTRY

Reprinted from
The Women's Forum, Sunday, October 30th, Issue
New York Herald Tribune.

Figure 6. DuPont company advertisement: Public introduction of Nylon at the 'Wonder World of Chemistry' exhibit, 1939 New York World's Fair. Printed in the *New York Herald Tribune*, Sunday, October 30th, 'The Women's Forum' section. Courtesy of Science History Institute.

Madelyn Shaw is a curator and historian whose work explores history and culture through textiles and dress. Recent projects have ranged from the history of exoticism in fashion, to an examination of slave cloth and clothing in the pre-Civil War American South. Publications include an award-winning Civil War sesquicentennial book, *Homefront & Battlefield: Quilts & Context in the Civil War* (American Textile History Museum, 2012); *Clothing through American History: The British Colonial Era* (Greenwood Press, 2013); and the case study 'H. R. Mallinson & Company' in *American Silk: Entrepreneurs & Artifacts, 1830-1930* (Texas Tech University Press, 2007), winner of the Millia Davenport Award. She is currently Curator of Textiles at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. This paper is part of a larger project, *Fabric of War*, which she shares with Trish FitzSimons. ShawM@si.edu

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1917: Germany at the Crossroads

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Abstract
In late 1916 Germany stood at the crossroads. Though it had withstood heavy attacks by the Allies and won an unexpected victory over a new enemy, Romania, it was clear that Germany could not win a war without end. As a result, Germany offered a compromise peace. Whether this offer was genuine is still debated by historians. When the offer was rejected by the Allies, Germany unleashed a campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare, hoping to force Britain upon its knees within six months. Though this hope was not realised, the collapse of the Tsarist empire offered a new opportunity to win the war. However, the Russian Revolution coincided with increasing social and political unrest and demands for peace at home. Though Germany forced the new Bolshevik government to sign a harsh peace treaty in early 1918, it was an open question whether Germany would eventually win the war against the Allies in the West. When the German Spring Offensive, started on 21 March 1918 failed, final defeat was only a matter of time.

Keywords
collapse of the Russian empire; domestic unrest; final defeat; peace offer; unrestricted submarine warfare; US entry into the war

After the murderous battles of 1916 and the expansion of the war in southern Europe in connection with Romania's entry into the war alongside the Allies, Germany was indeed at a crossroads in late 1916/early 1917. What was to happen now? There were no signs of victory and the country's resources dwindled—both in personnel and material. At the same time, discontent increased. The following article focuses on these aspects.

* * *

Following these costly campaigns but also encouraged by the speedy victory over Romania, the German government unexpectedly decided in late 1916 to explore options for negotiations to end the war. On 12 December 1916, the Chancellor of the German empire, Bethmann Hollweg, once again addressed the plenum of the Reichstag after a lengthy break. He proudly looked back on the closing year of war praising 'the gigantic horse of the nation' and the firm decision of the German empire and its allies to continue the fight: 'Always ready to defend ourselves and fight for our nation's existence, for its free future and always ready for this price to stretch out our hand for peace'.[1] Just by mentioning the word 'peace' he was applauded from the Left. When he did make a peace offer in the further course of this session —which lasted but twenty minutes—the house was in an uproar. 'Conscious of their military and economic strength and ready to carry on to the end, if they must, the struggle that is forced upon them, but animated at the same time by the desire to stem the flood of blood and to bring the horrors of war to an end, the four allied powers propose to enter even now into peace negotiations'.[2]

After more than two years of war, this was an astonishing offer. In 1914/1915 the imperial government had explored through various channels whether it would be possible to remove Russia from the alliance of opponents. But these attempts failed due to the tsar's loyalty to his allies. The war therefore increasingly turned into brutal slaughter. Attempts by both the Germans and the Allies to end the standstill with large-scale offensives in the course of 1916 and bring about a victory had failed at Verdun, on the Somme, and in the East. The losses among soldiers—i.e., killed or wounded in action or taken prisoner—during these three offensives alone amounted to approximately 3.6 million. From the German perspective, the further increase in the number of enemies was devastating. On the assumption

1 Speech by Bethmann Hollweg in Parliament, 12 December 1916, accessed 30 September 2019, https://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/Blatt_k13_bsb00003404_00762.html.

2 *Ibid*.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 109–114
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/epkenhans
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/16

that the Central powers were headed towards collapse, given the failure near Verdun and the Allied offensives, Romania also had joined the war alongside the Allies.

This hope had been premature, however, and Romania had to pay a heavy price for its declaration of war. Following a quick campaign, the Central powers occupied the country and entered Bucharest in early December. They celebrated this victory with a festive parade and a memorial service.

In contrast to the 'peace resolution' of the Reichstag of 1917, the present offer by the chancellor of the German empire is little known. This is not least due to the controversial opinions as to its importance. For many this was, and still is, a not very straightforward attempt to legitimise the unrestricted submarine warfare demanded by the Supreme Army Command (OHL) and other agitators in the event that the Allies rejected the German offer, which was to be expected under the existing circumstances. The tenor of the speech, the lack of specific offers as well as the last paragraph of the note read by the chancellor, seem to confirm this view at first glance: 'If, in spite of this offer of peace and reconciliation, the struggle should go on, the four allied powers are resolved to continue to a victorious end, but they solemnly disclaim responsibility for this before humanity and history'.[3] But does this view do justice to the importance of the note? No doubt: the victory over Romania, which symbolised strength after all the losses, motivated the peace offer. And the German empire had taken some pressure off itself. The simultaneous consultations about the Hindenburg programme made it clear that much greater efforts were necessary to achieve a victory. Another motive was the all too obvious deteriorating situation within the country. The increasing war-weariness and rising poverty were unmissable. Protests and strikes had increased. The fortress truce (Burgfrieden) intended as a sign of internal strength was in danger of collapsing completely under the wild war aim demands from the Right, which questioned the myth of a defensive war on the one hand, and the infinite stubbornness displayed by the old elites in blocking any efforts at domestic reforms. In addition, the government of the German empire made this proposal not only to indicate to war-weary countries on the side of the Entente, like Russia, a readiness to negotiate and thus break up this alliance; above all it wanted to undermine an imminent American peace initiative.

After having been reelected president of the United States in early November 1916, Woodrow Wilson wanted to invite all warring powers to a peace conference. Unlike the chancellor of the German empire, Wilson intended to ask all warring states to declare their war aims. But this was exactly what the German government was unable or unwilling to do. Therefore, due to contradicting interests, the allies were not at all in agreement on what to demand. But of greater importance was the question of the future of Belgium. The Supreme Army Command and the Imperial Navy were—supported by increasingly loud right-wing politicians—not at all ready to make any concessions. On the contrary, prior to the speech of the chancellor, they had once again informed him of their far-reaching war aims in writing. For the Allies as well as for the neutral states, above all, the United States, the unrestricted reconstruction and independence of Belgium were more than just a symbolic *conditio sine qua non*. When the chancellor did not address this question in his speech, his offer lost a lot of its credibility.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to impute a tactically dishonest manoeuvre to Bethmann Hollweg from the outset. His 'Janus-faced character' was certainly a problem, but it would also not do to disregard the difficulties that confronted him, although, even the Left in the Reichstag were rejoicing. The diary entry of a naval officer about the reactions at the front after reading the peace offer speaks volumes: 'All were down and looked askance at the matter. If the Chancellor who seems to be the originator of the matter … had not always done the wrong thing, one would have trusted but as things are I believe nobody has any trust. The speech of the Chancellor of the German Empire … and the note are nothing but the usual claptrap of old women about God, humanity, blood etc. as if it were not the most Christian and most caring for his people who completely shattered his enemy'.[4] Against this backdrop the chancellor was unable to tell either how serious the situation really was or which objectives the German empire eventually pursued. The first would only have encouraged the Allies to fight to victory themselves despite their own increasing problems given a weakened enemy. The latter would have caused the German Right to turn against him and rendered any compromise in negotiations impossible from the outset.

Due to lack of sources we will probably never know what the chancellor had really thought. If he had hoped that on the enemy's side there could also be forces that in view of the general exhaustion were ready to take up the thread, and that the negotiations would then somehow take their course, this would have been an honourable approach from a moral point of view but mere speculation politically. What he can be reproached for, however, is that with his overhasty action he had basically torpedoed the forthcoming American offer of mediation. When President Wilson—despite the German action—requested all warring parties on 18 December to state their objectives, he ultimately came off empty-handed. With reference to his own initiative, the chancellor at first declined to reply instead of using the opportunity to force the hand of the Entente and at the same time gain ground with neutral and war-weary states. Like the Germans, the Entente would have had to show its colours

3 *Ibid*.

4 Letter of Vice Admiral Albert Hopman to his wife, 12 December 1916, 'Albert Hopman, Das ereignisreiche Leben eines "Wilhelminers"'. Tagebücher, Briefe Aufzeichnungen, ed. Michael Epkenhans, München 2004, 937.

regarding its noble motives of defending democracy, national autonomy, and expansionist ambitions if it did not want to assume the odium of the prolonger of the war. The Sykes-Picot Agreement of the spring of 1916, which partitioned the Middle East, was in this respect only an example of the inconsistency of their own actions.

The German offer as well as Wilson's attempt failed, therefore, within a few weeks. Wilson's offer was unacceptable to the imperial government as it feared that it would thus have to give up its war aims. The Allies, in turn, made it clear that a peace agreement would be impossible unless there was a guarantee for the reestablishment of the infringed rights and freedoms, for the recognition of the nationality principle and the free existence of small states. The positions could hardly be more irreconcilable.

* * *

The failure of the peace offer caused the imperial government to stake everything on one card. The explanations of an order by Kaiser Wilhelm II of 9 January 1917 read: 'From February 1, 1917 onward, every enemy merchantman met within the restricted zone is to be attacked without warning'. Although the sinking of enemy merchant ships might be somehow understandable, this did not apply to the subsequent provision that after a transitional period of fourteen days, neutral ships were also to be sunk without warning. The logic was that no ship that could be of use to the enemy should be able to reach the latter's ports. After the land war had already assumed a new quality of brutality with the use of poison gas in 1915, this was now also true for the war at sea. The previous practice of stopping merchant ships, searching them for contraband, and, depending on the result, either letting them go or sinking them after saving their crews—at least in theory—was well and truly over.

Although there had already been submarine warfare against the Allies in 1915/16, after several incidents where American citizens had been injured or lost their lives, it was discontinued. This was also true for the submarine warfare according to the Prize Regulations. The new commander-in-chief of the High Seas Fleet, Admiral Scheer, refused to subject his commanders to the risk of being sunk by the numerous armed merchant ships and decoy vessels.

The chancellor of the German empire was the driving force behind the prevention of unrestricted submarine warfare. In view of the increasingly difficult war situation, he wanted to avoid the United States' entry into the war. He was supported by the new Supreme Army Command under Chief of the General Staff Paul von Hindenburg, and Quartermaster General Erich Ludendorff. After the casualty-intensive offensives near Verdun, on the Somme, and in the East as well as Romania's entry into the war in August 1916, they had little interest in a further increase in the number of enemies.

The stabilisation of the fronts and the rapid victory over Romania in early December 1916 changed the field of force, however. The German empire would hardly be able to withstand another such year of war. This was even more true as the effects of the blockade became increasingly obvious. Scarcity of food and substitutes characterised everyday life. An increasing war-weariness and open protests against the war went along with this. But the chancellor also faced a lot of headwind from another side. Seconded by the navy, there were an increasing number of people who demanded ruthless submarine warfare to end the war victoriously. The prospect of ending the war within a few weeks(!)—as grand admiral and secretary of state of the German Imperial Naval Office, Alfred von Tirpitz said in early 1915—or five months victoriously was simply too tempting. A memorandum of late January 1917 written by an adviser to the navy for their own self-assurance suggested:

> The consequences of ruthlessly executed submarine warfare will be so terrible for England that it cannot subject itself to it. By assuming a possibility that they may enter, and continuing to fight England would play vabanque. If we begin again a ruthless submarine warfare, it will, in view of the previous experiences, at first doubt that we will persevere. But if it realises that against all odds we are able and willing each month to ruthlessly bring a number of tons to the bottom of the sea that is greater than the number of new tons it is able to produce, it will give in. And it must and will give in at all costs; the relinquishment of valuable colonies, payment of billions of reparations, declaration of full disinterest in the European continent are a trifle for England compared to the consequences of a lost submarine warfare.[5]

* * *

With the beginning of unrestricted submarine warfare, the United States' entry into the war was only a question of when and not if. But this was of no real interest. Most parties in the Reichstag were glad that after the lengthy debate back and forth in previous years, a decision was finally made. Like the imperial government, many believed that this would really bring the end of the war nearer and also counteract the rising poverty in the country.

The first reports about the successes of the submarines gave the impression that the all or nothing strategy of politicians and military would work out. Within a few weeks, hundreds of thousands of Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) of enemy and neutral merchant ships sank in the depths of the North Sea and the Atlantic: whereas in February 'only' 499,000 GRT were sunk, in March the figure was already 600,000 and in April had risen to 841,000 GRT. In early May, the chief of the naval staff declared in a briefing to the emperor that 'it is impossible

5 Memo by Dr Richard Fuß on submarine warfare, 30 Janary 1917, cited *ibid*, 955–956.

that England could cope with such an immense loss. For him 'victory' was therefore just a matter of time.[6]

But it was not only in relation to England, the nemesis of the German empire with its inexhaustible resources in the dominions and colonies, that the empire seemed to be on the road to victory. The Tsarist empire also suddenly faced collapse which had not been expected. Defeat, hunger, and social protest combined into a mixture which exploded in March 1917. The old order collapsed within a few days. The tsar, the hated symbol of oppression abdicated and made room for a bourgeois government. Although they were ready to introduce reforms in the country, it was not clear whether they would give up the war for lost. But this is what the radical left forces did who assembled around the Petrograd Workers' and Soldiers' Councils and made much further-reaching demands in a first manifesto published in late March.

From the perspective of the imperial government, further radicalisation in Russia was welcome. Finally, it seemed to happen what they had tried in vain in 1914/1915 when the general staff had used a lot of money to try to incite the peoples of the gigantic empire to rise against the tsar with little success. The Russian steamroller, of which they had all been so afraid, had obviously run against a wall through its own fault. To accelerate the final collapse, the imperial government smuggled the leader of the Bolsheviks, Vladimir I. Lenin, in a secret action into Russia from his Swiss exile where he had led an increasingly bleak existence. A year later it would turn out to be a bitter irony of fate that their actions had hastened their own downfall.

* * *

Against this backdrop, the imperial government was not afraid of the United States entering the war. Quite the opposite: Contrary to certain expectations, the severance of diplomatic relations after the beginning of unrestricted submarine warfare on 3 February did by no means result in a declaration of war. In November 1916 Wilson had won the election not least because of his promise to keep the United States out of the war. Even after the initiation of unrestricted submarine warfare, there was no appetite for war. This was what the imperial government banked on, and some leading officials interpreted the fact that although the United States government had severed diplomatic relations with the German empire they did not do so with its Austro-Hungarian ally as an encouraging sign.

Initially, Wilson had armed only American merchant steamers setting out for Europe. The hope that those as well as passenger ships would be spared by the submarines did not come true. In March alone, five ships sank in the restricted submarine area within one week. Unlike in the years before, the imperial government—trusting in the boastful promises of the naval staff and their own power—was no longer interested in making concessions to the United States and thus risking domestic conflicts: 'Now once and for all, an end to negotiations with America. If Wilson wants war, let him make it, and let him then have it' read a directive of the emperor to the Foreign Office of 18 March.[7]

Should there have been any chance to avoid war with United States, it was over with the Zimmermann telegram. This was probably one of the most foolish dispatches in the history of war. As early as mid-January—that is, before unrestricted submarine warfare was declared—State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Zimmermann had asked the German envoy to Mexico to offer the Mexican government an alliance in the event of America entering the war. If this happened, Zimmermann stated, the German empire would support Mexico to regain the territories it had lost to the United States in the nineteenth century. This was not about small border areas but federal states such as California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas, i.e., core areas of the big neighbour. The trouble was that British intelligence had deciphered this telegram and leaked it to the United States to get them into war alongside the Allies. When they used it in early March, the atmosphere in the country changed. The 'subtleties', i.e., the fact that German support would only be granted in the event of an entry into the war, were deliberately overlooked. President Wilson carefully prepared the United States' entry into the war.

In his famous address to Congress on 2 April he pressed every button: 'The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations', he declared. 'Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion'.[8]

But Wilson addressed not only his own people but also the population in the German empire: 'We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools'.[9]

Towards the end the sentence was uttered which was to become the American mission in the twentieth century:

6 Report by the Chief of the Admiral Staff, Grand Admiral v. Holtzendorff, to the Emperor, 4 May 1917, citied in: *Die deutsche Seekriegsleitung im Ersten Weltkrieg*, vol. 3, ed. Gerhard Granier, Koblenz 2000, 549–550.

7 Wilhelm II to Foreign Office, 18 March 1917, cited in: Joachim Schröder, *Die U-Boote des Kaisers. Die Geschichte des deutschen U-Boot-Krieges gegen Großbritannien im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Lauf an der Pegnitz 2000, 322.

8 Speech by President Wilson to Congress, 6 April 1917, accessed 30 September 2019, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson%27s_War_Message_to_Congress.

9 *Ibid*.

'The world must be made safe for democracy'.[10] The speech was received with great cheer, and on 6 April the declaration of war followed. The German empire received the declaration of war with surprising calmness. Many hoped that the war would be over when the US would be able to effectively intervene after long preparations.

* * *

The willingness of the imperial government and the Supreme Army Command to stake everything on one card, neglected that the situation had escalated not only on the fronts but also within the country. The winter of 1917 had been extremely long and harsh. Throughout the empire people had starved and been cold. They increasingly vented their displeasure through demonstrations and strikes. The final split of the Social Democratic Party in April was also an unmistakable sign that the fortress truce of the summer of 1914 had become increasingly fragile.

Against this backdrop the vague promise of reforming the symbol of the old state of subjects, i.e., the Prussian three-class franchise system, was no longer enough to calm the domestic situation and neither was the appointment of a constitutional affairs committee to discuss a reform of the imperial constitution. The people wanted real changes. And above all, they wanted peace. The formula of the Russian revolutionaries of 'peace without annexations and contributions' seemed to offer a way which more and more people deemed desirable.

This crisis worsened dramatically when it changed from latent to highly explosive in the top leadership. The Supreme Army Command under Hindenburg and Ludendorff used the general discontent to get rid of the chancellor. In their opinion, he was not the man to end a war—in which everything was at stake—as victor. With his everlasting concerns, his pessimism, and his indecision he increasingly grated on the nerves of the military. But strong nerves were required in view of a possible new winter of war. Furthermore, nobody knew how to explain the failure of the submarine warfare to the public. The 30th of June, the date the navy had predicted, came and went without the empire being one step nearer to victory.

While the military wanted to get rid of the chancellor, because, from their point of view he was in the way of a victorious peace, the majority in the Reichstag had completely different objectives. Under the impression of the enormous losses and the heated atmosphere within the country after the Russian revolution, they wanted to end the war before it was really too late. In July 1917, representatives of the parties attacked the chancellor with unexpected sharpness and demanded a decided move towards peace.

The general impression was that overnight the Reichstag seemed to reach for power. The previous majority in favour of a victorious peace to the right of the Social Democrats turned into a peace- and reform-ready majority to the right of the stubborn conservatives. The formation of the so-called Interfactional Committee, which consisted of representatives from all parties except for the Conservatives and the Independent Social Democrats, was a sign that the Reichstag did not only want to debate but really wanted to act. Within a few days this majority would—together with the German Supreme Command OHL—contribute to the overthrow of the unpopular chancellor.

While the OHL and Reichstag majority were happy about the removal of the chancellor, they were very disappointed with his successor, the rather unknown previous undersecretary of state in the Prussian ministry of economics, Georg Michaelis. The OHL, which the Reichstag majority also had wanted to put in their place, had prevailed and made it clear who ruled the roost.

The Reichstag majority accepted this decision without complaint. They were convinced that their impetus would be enough to make progress in the question of peace and in the domestic reform. Representatives of the parties made all possible efforts to achieve a peace resolution. After several days of negotiation, an agreement was reached; however, this was not supported by the national liberals, not to mention the conservatives.

On 19 July, the Reichstag passed a resolution, which at first glance was progress after all the war aim programmes; nevertheless, it left many questions open. 'The Reichstag strives for a peace of understanding, for durable reconciliation among the peoples of the world' it stated amid general approval of the majority.[11] But already the next sentence was not a clear commitment to peace without annexation and contributions. Instead it read: 'Territorial acquisitions achieved by force and violations of political, economic, or financial integrity are incompatible with such a peace'.[12] Although this was a rejection of the war aim catalogues, which had been compiled by industrialists, bankers, and pan-Germans, the wording deliberately allowed for a 'voluntary accession' of occupied territories or the 'securing of the border protection' through 'local displacements'.[13] In this manner, the left liberal Conrad Haußmann had attempted to refute the objections of the military against the resolution in the preliminary talks. But above all, there was no mention of Belgium, an extremely sensitive point especially for the neutral states, or of Poland, which had been an independent state from the German empire and its ally Austria-Hungary since late 1916, despite all declarations.

The other paragraphs are dedicated to the freedom

10 *Ibid*.

11 Protocol of Proceedings of Parliament, 19 July 1917, accessed 30 September 2019, https://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/Blatt_k13_bsb00003406_00478.html.

12 *Ibid*.

13 *Ibid*.

of the seas, demanded 'economic peace' or the 'creation of international legal organisations'. To avoid any misunderstanding about too much readiness for concession, the resolution concluded with sharp words: 'As long, however, as enemy governments do not agree to such a peace, as long as they threaten Germany and its allies with territorial conquests and violations, the German people will stand together as one man, persevere unshakably, and fight on until its right and the right of its allies to life and free development is guaranteed'.[14] These objectives were not realistic. At the session, the new chancellor made it clear that he did not even think of being guided by their spirit. His response to the Papal peace note a short time later made it clear to all the world that the imperial government was not ready to curtail its war aim demands.

It cannot be overlooked, however, that the peace note —as well-intended as it was—increased the polarisation within the country. It was the trigger for the foundation of the German Fatherland Party on 2 September, the symbolic Sedan Day in the equally symbolic city of Königsberg. Here, in the heart of old Prussia, where its kings had been crowned in former times, the new right gathered to openly demonstrate that it did not even think about compromising on either domestic or foreign issues. On the contrary, for them it was the starting point for a ruthless campaign against all supporters of a 'Scheidemann peace', which would betray the empire to its enemy, as was maliciously stated. This campaign foreshadowed the severity of their opposition in the event they would be able to prevail.

* * *

The collapse of Russia after a failed new offensive and a second revolution in November 1917 gave new hope to the proponents of a victorious peace. Despite the heavy losses in the murderous battles of Flanders, the empire appeared to be better off than before. Finally, it was able to focus on one enemy only, at least according to the military officials in charge. Although several army leaders warned against the risks of a large-scale offensive, Ludendorff prevailed with his plan for a decisive battle in the spring of 1918. This military offensive was the only way to bring about the 'victorious peace' that temporarily had seemed impossible. This 'victorious peace' was an indispensable requirement for the realisation of their annexationist war aim programme. The same was true for domestic policy: A 'victorious peace' was the only way to maintain the traditional conservative order of which the leading military considered themselves the guarantors.

Despite the success in Russia, the reality was different. When the offensive eventually failed despite several attempts, defeat was unavoidable. At the same time, the German empire collapsed. Against this backdrop, 1917 was indeed a year where Germany had been at the crossroads. Instead of looking for peace and paving the way for reforms in the country, the imperial government and the military leadership had decided in favour of an all or nothing strategy. A year later, they had to pay the price for it.

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14 *Ibid*.

The Spirit of 1776/1917: Town and Gown Go to War

Laura A. Macaluso

Abstract

In the summer of 1917 Americans began preparing to enter the European War. Cantonments and camps sprang up around the country, making doughboys out of farmhands, clerks, factory workers—and college students. New Haven, Connecticut was one such place: the site of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, makers of the Enfield and BAR rifles, home to Yale University and campsite of the 102nd Regiment of the Yankee Division. New Haven has had a sometimes productive, sometimes difficult relationship with the Ivy League school over the course of 300 years. The First World War helped to break down social and political barriers that had developed during the 19th century, when the city was becoming ever more ethnic, and the university was becoming ever more elitist. In 1917, soldiers made their first camp on the grounds of the Yale Bowl, Yale students and professors enlisted in the Yankee Division along with New Haveners and New Englanders, and Yale's great dining hall became the workroom of the New Haven chapter of the American Red Cross. Together, the New Haven Green and the Yale Campus became the centre for overt wartime preparations and both town and gown called upon the figure of Nathan Hale – America's first 'spy' – to instill a local and national sense of identity dating back to the American Revolution in 1776. The bronze Nathan Hale monument had been installed only four years earlier on Yale's Old Campus, but the figure of a Connecticut farm boy/university student/soldier-spy remains a focal point of university life even today, although few remember the ways in which the 'Spirit of 1776' was revived during the First World War. This article examines the relationship between town and gown in 1917, as both prepared to enter wartime Europe.

Keywords

Connecticut; First World War; monuments; Nathan Hale; New Haven; Spirit of 1776; USA; Yale University

In the summer of 1917, after fewer than three months of training at Camp Yale on the grounds around the Yale Bowl on the western edge of the City of New Haven, Connecticut, in the United States, a 'farewell program' was organised for the departing soldiers of the 102nd Regiment, the first time such an evening event had been held in the bowl (Fig.1).

Newspapers reported on the event the next day, calling it the 'most unique night event … that has even been seen out of doors in New Haven or this state'.[1] Fifty thousand Connecticut residents and departing soldiers were treated to a seven-act vaudeville and musical performance, where a 'perfect fairyland of electricity' created 'one of the most remarkable and indescribable pictures possible'. After the circus-like acts and the playing of the *Star-Spangled Banner* by the 102nd Regiment band, the soldiers (and some sailors, too) marched across the bowl, and out towards their station. According to the newspaper, 'the cheers of farewell that greeted them nearly drowned out the playing of the great band'.

The summer of 1917 changed everything for the United States. As of April, Americans were officially Allied participants in the Great War and as of June, the selective service or draft was enlisting men into regiments such as the 102nd. Preparations to enter the western front in France were in full force, and cantonments and camps sprang up around the country, making doughboys out of farmhands, clerks, factory workers, and college students. New Haven, Connecticut was one such active place: home to the Winchester Repeating Arms Manufacturing Company, maker of the M1917 Enfield and the M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle, as well as Yale University, the third oldest institution of higher learning in the country, now New Haven was also home to the newly formed 102nd Regiment of the 26th 'Yankee' Division of the US Army.

1 'Night Spectacle Seen by 50,000 in Yale Bowl', unknown newspaper, August 1917, in the European War folders, Local History Room, New Haven Free Public Library.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 115–122
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/macaluso
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/17

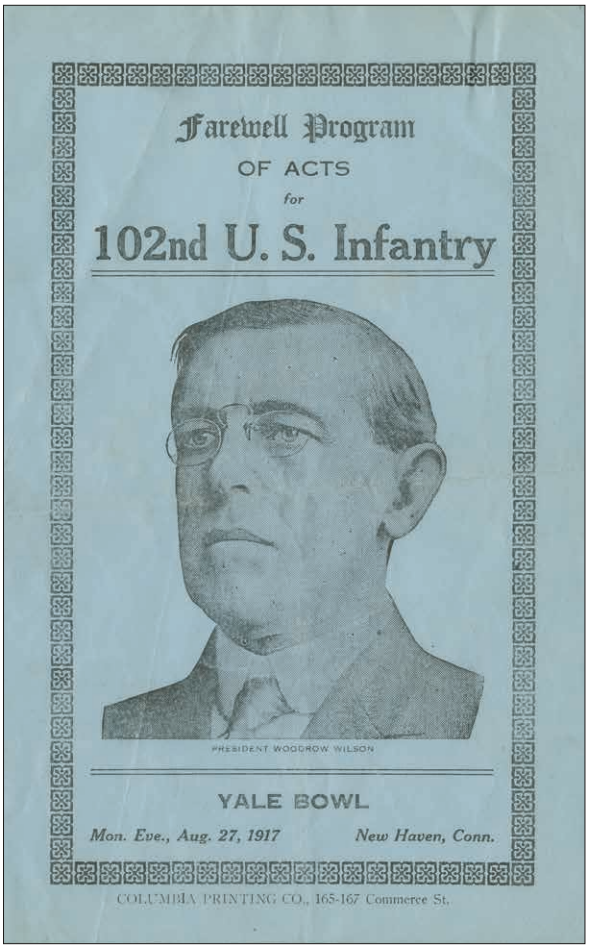

Figure 1. Program, Farewell Acts at the Yale Bowl. *Courtesy Yale University.*

Called the Elm City for its once glorious tree cover, New Haven had a sometimes productive, sometimes difficult relationship with the Ivy League school over the course of its 200-year history. This included fistfights and rioting between town and gown especially during the 19th century, reaching a low point in 1854 when a Yale student shot a New Haven firefighter during a fight. But beginning in 1917 with the force of the statewide 'preparedness' movement, city and university began to work together in ways never before seen.[2] On the home front, at least for the time being, the Great War helped to break down social, economic, and political barriers that had grown exponentially in the previous century, when the city was becoming ever more diverse and the university was becoming ever more elitist.

In 1917 the 102nd made their first camp on the grounds of Yale Field in the shadow of the Yale Bowl, with Yale students and professors enlisting in various arms of the military including the Yankee Division, along with New Haveners and New Englanders. Iconic places such as the New Haven Green, Yale's Old Campus and the Dining Hall became centres for publicly visible wartime preparations.[3] In this work, the revival of the 'Spirit of 1776'—a sentiment first expressed by Thomas Jefferson to give name to the self-determination and liberty expressed in the Declaration of Independence—served to unite town and gown with a common identity that would break down divisions that were part and parcel of American society, divisions clearly seen in the lives of townies verses gownies. The 'Spirit of 1776'—an idea later revived during the country's centennial in 1876—was a national one but could also be applied in regional and local contexts, something that Connecticut, as one of the thirteen original colonies and one of the five small New England states, could utilise.[4] Thus, statues such as the Defenders' Monument and the Nathan Hale Monument instilled a local and national sense of identity dating back to the American Revolution and the iconic year of 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was written, signed, and read aloud across the colonies. Hale is considered America's first 'spy' and was said to utter the words, 'My only regret is that I have but one life to give to my country'. He was hanged by the British, also in 1776.

The bronze Nathan Hale monument had been installed only four years earlier on Yale's Old Campus, but the figure of a Connecticut farm boy/university student/school teacher/soldier-spy remains a focal point of university life, although today few remember the ways in which the 'Spirit of '76' was revived locally during the First World War (Fig.2).

Even fewer recognise the Defenders' Monument, and the reach of history in which the figure of a farmer, a Yale student, and a militiaman defend the city from the enemy—a symbol of wartime cooperation most useful during the World War I years.[5] This article suggests that by looking at sites of communal significance for town and gown in 1917, as both prepared to enter wartime Europe under the aegis of the 'Spirit of 1776', we can see how different people across New Haven were able to unite in their work. The article concludes, though, with a problematic legacy. As much as the legacy of the First World War led not to a lasting peace, but eventually to violence spread from one side of the world to the other in the Second World War, so too the robust relationship

2 See 'Governor's Holcomb's Preparedness Message', in the European War folders, Local History Room, New Haven Free Public Library.

3 'Great Military Review on Green', *New Haven Register*, 2 June 1917.

4 Laura A. Macaluso, 'How the Spirit of 76 Became World War I Propaganda', New England Historical Society, 2017, http://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/spirit-76-became-world-war-propaganda/.

5 For New Haven and Yale's relationship to the American Revolution through the medium of bronze monuments, see George Dudley Seymour, *New Haven* (New Haven: The Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Company, 1942), 124–143; and Laura A. Macaluso, *The Public Artscape of New Haven: Themes in the Creation of a City Image* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2018), 71–88.

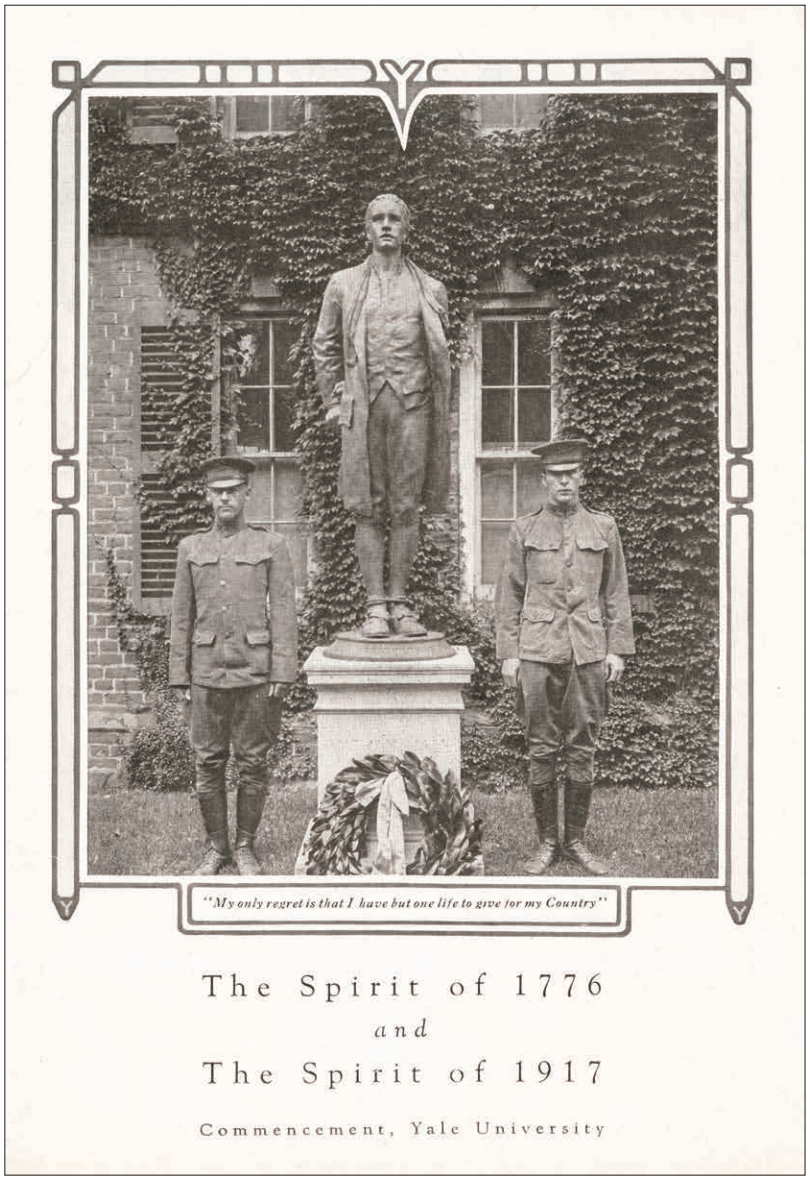

Figure 2. 1917 Commencement Cover. Courtesy Yale University.

between town and gown seen in 1917 in New Haven would also not last, eventually breaking down in violence.

Today New Haven, Connecticut retains some of the characteristics it possessed in 1917, some even reminiscent of its 17th century origins. The small city on Long Island Sound, halfway between New York City and Boston, was from the very beginning an ecclesiastical city of churches, education, and commerce—a triumvirate described clearly in a commemorative medal, made for the city's second centennial in 1838.[6] New Haven was founded by English Puritans who believed their chosen settlement site was blessed by God himself. The First Church of Christ, or more informally Center Church, whose spire anchors the design of the medal, touching the heavenly sky, is the very centre of the city's famous Nine Square Plan. To this day, the plan remains a central 'sacred' space around which the city revolves, with City Hall, municipal and county courthouses, the main library, commerce, and Yale University, located along its green squared edges.

Over the course of its existence, the New Haven Green—the centre square of the Nine Square plan—has been many things: graveyard, animal pasture, market-place for agricultural goods—including the sale of human beings—a parade route for all sorts of holidays from Columbus to St. Patrick, a concert venue, memorialising site and protest site, and from the very beginning, a space for militia musters, military parades, and even

6 See Laura A. Macaluso, 'New Haven's Second Centennial Medal and the Origins of City Identity', *Material Culture: The Journal of the International Society for Landscape, Place, & Material Culture* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 1–15.

the placement of cannon.[7] But, by the turn of the 20th century, this military use of the city's most public space had long fallen out of favour for other green spaces within the city, such as Grapevine Point and Bayview Park, both in use during the last great conflict on the home front: the American Civil War. The First World War reactivated the New Haven Green militarily, to become a primary public spectacle which demonstrated both town and gown's dedication to wartime efforts.[8] By 1917, the New Haven Green was once again alive to the spirit of 1776. Using the Green—even the upper area right next to Center Church, where hundreds of bodies lay interred beneath the grass in what was the city's first graveyard—was surely a form of propaganda for city residents, students, and the work force that travelled in and out of New Haven via trolley cars, trains, and even for some, automobiles (Fig. 3). The *New Haven Register* reported in 1917, 'the central green has become the drill ground for the city … Yale is taking a big part in this work'.[9] Several tents were put up on the Green, too, to 'inspire the people of this city with an appreciation of the fact that the men of the nation were being called to its defense'. Although New Haven had an urban core by 1917, there were plenty of green, open spaces at the edges of the city and a city park system which could have been utilised, therefore the choice to use the Green was more than ease of location—it was a political and social statement. Inside Center Church, pastors gave 'Recruitment Sunday Sermons' while outside the church, Walter Camp, the father of American football and the Yale director of athletics, designed a 90-day exercise regimen for men between the ages of 45 and 60, in order to 'fit older men for work that will release their juniors to the front'.[10] Not surprisingly, an army recruitment office was located close by the green on Chapel Street. Within a few short months, it was as if the Defenders of New Haven stepped off their bronzed base, bonding together against a common enemy.

As suggested, New Haven was primed to appreciate not only the spectacle of such sights, but also to accept and further the coming together of town and gown in the war effort. Public art in the form of parade performances, prints, and the installation of bronze monuments reshaped town and gown attitudes that were sour, if not outwardly hostile in the previous century. Two years

Figure 3. New Haven Green with canon. Courtesy of Yale University.

7 Eric D. Lehman, *Connecticut Town Greens: History of the State's Common Centers* (Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot Press), 133–137.

8 'Drilling on the Green Now and in Civil War', *New Haven Register*, 9 December 1917.

9 *New Haven Register*, 7 December 1917.

10 See 'Urge Recruiting in the Churches, Pastors in Many of Them Lay Emphasis on Second Regiment's Needs', *New Haven Register*, 1917 and for the Walter Camp stories, see 'Rugged Drills Put Senior Service Corps Men in Fine Shape', *New Haven Register*, 1917, both found in European War folders, Local History Room, New Haven Free Public Library. See also 'Making Middle-Aged Men Fit to Help in War', *New York Times*, 24 June 1917.

before Nathan Hale was installed on Yale's Old Campus in 1913, the City of New Haven erected the Defenders' Monument. Although mostly forgotten today, the Defenders' Monument is really a local story about the revival of the Spirit of 1776, the spirit of patriotism and liberty through cooperation. The monument celebrates the cooperation between town and gown, representatives of each depicted loading a cannon aimed at stopping the British invasion of New Haven. This was one of the long-standing New Haven legends about the American Revolution, which had endured for more than 125 years. By the 1910s, the waning years of the Gilded Age, these local legends were getting the bronze treatment.

The monuments, such as Nathan Hale and the Defenders, point to the relationship between town and gown after the turn of the 20th century, when the American melting pot took in millions of immigrants, and New Haven itself had changed considerably due to the influx of the Irish, Italians, Poles, and Hungarians among others. The city had its first Irish mayor in 1899 and would have its first Jewish mayor during the war years of 1917–1918. Some may read the installation of these bronze monuments as one way to hold on to white, Protestant culture that was coming under pressure from new people but, on the other hand, these bronzes also represent the idealisation of town and gown working together, both in the sense of the actual commission process and as a bandage to the lingering problems of the previous century. In support of this statement, one of the agents behind both the Defenders' Monument and the Nathan Hale Monument commissions was a non-Yalie named George Dudley Seymour. Although Seymour himself was not a Yale alumnus, he was a patent lawyer with an interest in all things historical. However, his cousin Charles Seymour was President of the University, and George Dudley Seymour believed that town and gown were better served if they worked more closely. Towards this end, Seymour worked on small ideas and big ones, advocating to Yale that its art gallery open on Sundays to make it easier for working class New Haveners to visit, as well hiring the well-known landscape architects Frederick Law Olmstead and Cass Gilbert to work on a city-wide urban redesign that would create better connections between institutions, city green spaces, transportation hubs, and the people they served.[11]

The Spirit of '76 revived not only in New Haven but also across the United States in 1917, with a role to play both on the home and the western front. Soldiers from the Yankee Division painted insignia on their Brodie helmets that referenced the American Revolution, while the American public saw hundreds of propaganda images of Lady Liberty, Uncle Sam, and other symbols of independence and cooperation as they went about their everyday lives (Fig. 4). They dressed as the Spirit of '76 for parades in 1917 and 1918, and sang patriotic songs published by Tin Pan Alley in New York City. It is no surprise then that with commencement in the late spring of 1917, Yale College put on its programme cover not images of students in their caps and gowns or Yale's storied Neo-Gothic architecture, but a picture of doughboys standing next to the Nathan Hale Monument. The Spirit of 1776 worked, and has always worked, on the American mind and attitude. This is why political groups even well into the 21st century reference the American Revolution and an easily digestible idea of liberty as a currency. These images, co-opted by groups such as the Tea Party's use of the historic Gadsden 'Don't Tread on Me' flag, are sentiments embedded very deeply in American culture.

But, how long did this feeling of town and gown cooperation exist during the First World War era? Although we might automatically think (or hope) that the legacy of 1917, of a year in which New Haveners and Yalies crossed boundary lines and became one force, continued on, allowing town and gown to work for the good of the whole, this was not to be the case. In the recent three-part documentary 'America in the Great War', a Public Broadcasting Station programme first aired in April 2017, filmmakers noted that though the war had ended successfully for the Allies—and even more so

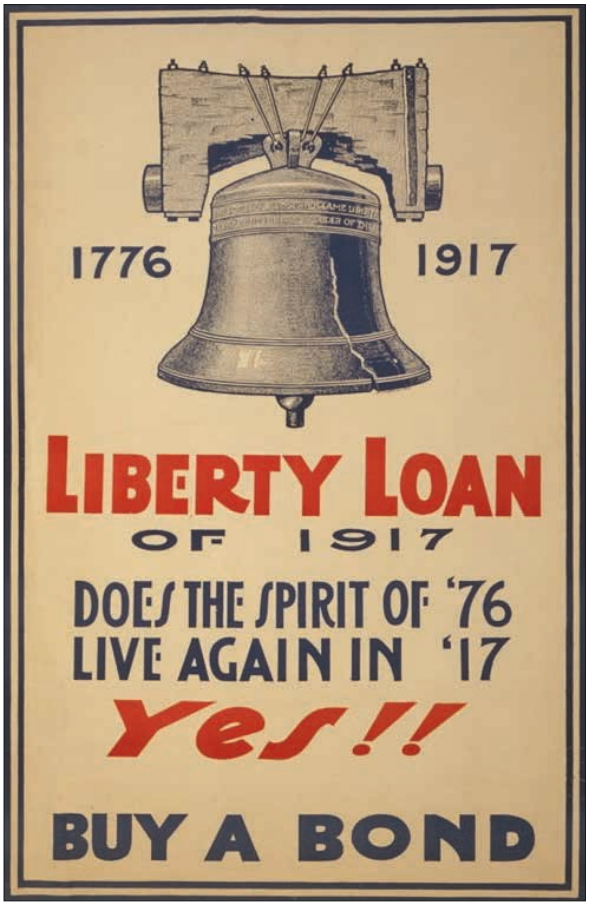

Figure 4. Liberty Bond poster. Library of Congress, 1917.

11 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and Cass Gilbert, *Plan for New Haven* (facsimile edition, San Antonio, Texas: Trinity University Press, 2012).

for the Americans, who had proved their worth on the battlefield—tensions and anxieties remained intact on the home front, leading to a resurgence in antagonistic behaviours between different groups of Americans. This resulted most visibly in race riots. The documentary suggested the deep suspicions and distrust Americans felt towards each other were exacerbated during the war years thanks to President Woodrow Wilson's curtailing of free speech. Wilson's administration put into place a series of impactful laws, first the Espionage Act of 1917 and then the Sedition Act of 1918, which were aimed at oppressing free speech, the antithesis to an open and democratic society and very things the United States claimed to be fighting for, across an ocean.[12]

Thus, after Armistice and the return of doughboys to the United States, places like Washington, DC, and Atlanta, Georgia, and more than 25 other American cities were embroiled in race riots during the so-called 'red summer' of 1919. The Spirit of 1776/1917 took a hit both nationally and locally. New Haven, Connecticut, did not see these race riots, but experienced an emphatic resurgence in something that had been put to bed in 1917: antagonism between town and gown reared its ugly head, on, of all days, the homecoming parade of the 102nd regiment to New Haven. Yale professor and historian Rollin Osterweis calls 24 May 1919 'one of the most tragic incidents in New Haven history, the town-gown battle of May 1919'.[13] Although Osterweis, writing in 1952, noted that it was impossible to report on the full facts of the incident, local stories suggested that as veteran troops paraded past the Yale Campus an 'exchange of insults took place', with the soldiers calling the students slackers, and the students calling the soldiers 'tin soldiers'.[14]

But this wasn't the end of it. Over the course of the weekend, people were getting more agitated, and two nights later, townies stated that they heard Yale students hissing at the 102nd Regiment band which was playing at Poli's Palace Theater. The next day, the New Haven *Union*, printed the notice, 'It is said that plans have been made to have the servicemen gather at the Bennett Fountain (on the New Haven Green) at 8 o'clock tonight and from there it is claimed they intend to proceed to campus'. Five thousand New Haveners marched to campus, but the university was already on lock-down and the group—only 300 of whom were veterans—resorted to breaking windows and beating up unsuspecting males found in the street. The group tried to return the next night for another round of vandalism and brutality but were dispersed by 'armed platoons of state guardsmen' and fire trucks with hoses at the ready.

Although Osterweis tried to downplay the division of town and gown in 1919 as an 'unfortunate deviation from the normal trend', assigning blame to the 'pent-up emotions of people who had just passed through the trying experience of a World War', if we look to find the Spirit of 1776/1917 in 1919 and after, the sentiment is gone.[15] Yale University, growing in size and stature in the 1920s and 1930s, always included gates to keep town and gown separate.[16] The gates remain shut and locked to townies to this very day.

To further the division, and pushing aside the Spirit of 1776/1917, town and gown erected separate monuments to the Great War in the succeeding decades. Yale was the first entity in New Haven to erect a monument to the First World War, choosing a cenotaph for Hewitt Quadrangle with inscriptions of the major America battle sites above, resting on the entablature of the Yale Dining Hall building, which had, during wartime, served the New Haven Red Cross[17] (Fig.5). The City followed suit in 1929 with a memorial flagpole on the New Haven Green, its base inscribed with the same French names (Fig. 6). Neither monument makes note of the other. Today, one hundred years later, if one were to read the history of New Haven in the First World War from these two central monuments, the relationship between town and gown during wartime would not be known.

But, one marker does exist—in the most out of the way, difficult place to access—that reminds us of town-gown cooperation during the Great War, and not surprisingly perhaps, it was erected during the Second World War by veterans themselves. It is likely the concrete tablet was placed there to remember that Derby Avenue was the street that members of the 102nd Regiment used for marching between the New Haven Green and Camp Yale. But today, the road is used as a fast vehicle access route into the city, discouraging walking on the dusty street. Further, there is no parking lot, nor is there a sign to let anyone know that this marker and its accompanying empty flagpole are there. Like the Spirit of 1776/1917, the memory of town-gown cooperation during wartime, especially important for the First World War, when the United States entered the world stage, has been forgotten. Although townies and gownies no longer fistfight or shoot at each other, they also do not come together to celebrate their shared heritage, nor that special night in August of 1917 when everyone came together under the electric lights of the Yale Bowl.

12 To see how national laws meant to dissuade public anti-war sentiment were utilized to curb the speech and movement of residents in localities such as New Haven, see 'Uncle Sam Draws Sharp Line on Aliens' Movements Here', *New Haven Register*, 1917, and 'Uncle Sam Has Eye on New Haven Waterfront', *New Haven Register*, 8 September 1918.

13 Rollin G. Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven, 1638–1938* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 407.

14 *Ibid*.

15 *Ibid*, 409.

16 Catherine Lynn, 'Building Yale & Razing It, from the Civil War to the Great Depression', in *Yale in New Haven: Architecture & Urbanism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2004), 107.

17 'Yale's Famous Dining Hall Now a Very Busy Hive of Red Cross Gauze Workers', *New Haven Register*, 5 May 1918.

Figure 5. World War I Memorial, Hewitt Quadrangle. Photograph by Bill Sacco, courtesy of the author.

Figure 6. World War I Memorial on the New Haven Green. Photograph by Bill Sacco, courtesy of the author.

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‘Won’t You Meet Us Half-Way?’: The New Zealand Military Service Boards and Conscientious Objectors

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Abstract

The treatment of conscientious objectors is one of the biggest blots on New Zealand’s First World War record. Many of these individuals were imprisoned and deprived of their civil rights, some were brutalised while confined in domestic army camps, and a few were even forcibly transported to the western front. Historians have identified the nine military service boards, established to determine appeals for exemption from conscription, as playing a significant enabling role in this persecution. Labelled as over-zealous and ignorant jingoists, the boards’ members are said to have been far more concerned with ridiculing conscientious objectors’ beliefs than with properly assessing their claims.

This article evaluates such assertions by reference to the exemption hearings that took place during 1917. Although conscription was first implemented in November 1916 and continued until the Armistice, 1917 was the year in which government policies towards conscientious objectors came to be defined, and in which the boards formulated the approach that would guide them throughout their operations.

While not denying the boards’ questioning of objectors could be provocative and unsavoury, this article suggests that matters were more nuanced than the historiography indicates. Despite the tightly worded provisions of the Military Service Act, the appeal bodies did at least try to keep many objectors out of prison by offering to recommend them for non-combatant service in the Medical Corps. Moreover, the boards focused the majority of their questioning not on delivering indignant tirades, but on implementing a measured approach that corresponded with their wider efforts to achieve an equality of sacrifice.

Keywords

Conscientious objectors; conscription; equality of sacrifice; exemption; Military Service Act; military service boards; New Zealand

Despite their relatively small numbers, conscientious objectors have dominated the historiography surrounding New Zealand’s 1916–1918 implementation of conscription. Archibald Baxter’s autobiography *We Will Not Cease* has become established in the literary canon, while the experiences of other objectors—particularly those who, like Baxter, were forcibly transported to the western front—have also been extensively documented.[1] The picture that emerges from these works is one of hostility, prejudice, and brutalisation, with many objectors being subjected to harsh treatment by the civil and military authorities, and by society at large.

Historians have identified the nine military service boards, established to determine appeals for exemption from conscription, as playing a significant enabling role in this persecution. It has been generally acknowledged that the 1916 Military Service Act was intended to limit relief on conscientious grounds to only a handful of Christian

1 Archibald Baxter, *We Will Not Cease* (Whatamongo Bay: Cape Catley, 1983); David Grant, *Field Punishment No. I: Archibald Baxter, Mark Briggs & New Zealand’s Anti-Militarist Tradition* (Wellington: Steele Roberts, 2008); Barry Gustafson, *Labour’s Path to Political Independence: The Origins and Establishment of the New Zealand Labour Party, 1900–19* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1980), 108–119; P.S. O’Connor, ‘The Awkward Ones – Dealing with Conscience, 1916–1918’, *New Zealand Journal of History* 8, no. 2 (1974): 118–137; Christopher Pugsley, *On the Fringe of Hell: New Zealanders and Military Discipline in the First World War* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), 225–235.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 123–130
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/littlewood
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/18

denominations.[2] However, P.S. O'Connor argues the boards further circumscribed the scope of the legislation by arbitrarily refusing to exempt additional Christian groups on the basis that they did not possess written articles against bearing arms.[3] While Paul Baker differs in claiming that the appeal bodies pushed the boundaries of the Act by agreeing to recommend non-combatant service for some 'genuine' religious objectors, he maintains that other deserving individuals were denied such endorsements.[4] Even stronger criticism has fastened around the boards' conduct during hearings. Gwen Parsons finds they were more concerned with abusing an objector's beliefs than with assessing his eligibility for exemption.[5] Similarly, David Grant claims the boards likened conscientious scruples to 'a failure of citizenship', Ian McGibbon suggests 'humanitarian arguments against involvement in war cut no ice', and Graham Hucker maintains objectors were routinely 'treated with disdain'.[6]

This article contends that the boards' treatment of conscientious objectors was more liberal than the historiography indicates. The wording of the Act made it inevitable that only a few, small religious groups would stand a chance of exemption. Certainly, the boards placed considerable emphasis on a written constitution against bearing arms, yet the notion that they were wrong to dismiss appeals from denominations that did not possess such articles is highly questionable. Rather than curtailing the application of the Act, the boards' most important action was to facilitate its extension, by offering to recommend many religiously-motivated appellants for overseas non-combatant service. Undoubtedly, the questions directed at conscientious objectors were often harsh and sometimes distasteful. Yet the boards' overwhelming focus was on testing men's eligibility for exemption as part of a wider effort to achieve an equality of sacrifice.

THE INITIAL GROUNDS FOR EXEMPTION

The majority of New Zealand's MPs would accept only a limited provision for appeals on conscientious grounds. Whereas Britain's Military Service Act had recognised 'conscientious objection to the undertaking of combatant service' as a permissible basis for exemption, the New Zealand Bill initially contained no such allowance, even for religious objectors.[7] However, the minister of defence, James Allen, subsequently concluded that obtaining the widest possible support for conscription required a concession to be made.[8] He therefore introduced an amendment to the House of Representatives that would permit appeals from a man who 'objects in good faith to military service on the ground that such service is contrary to his religious belief'.[9] Several MPs had already insisted it would be 'monstrous' if the views of Christian pacifists were not provided for.[10] However, most were thinking only of the Quakers, and emphasised that any provision must be tightly worded to prevent 'shirkers' from benefitting.[11] Such misgivings prompted these MPs to join with the opponents of any exemption on religious grounds in defeating Allen's proposal.[12]

The government then introduced a modified amendment in Parliament's appointed upper chamber, the Legislative Council. On the condition of agreeing to perform non-military work in New Zealand, this would exempt men who, since the outbreak of war, had been members of a religious body, the tenets and doctrines of which declared military service to be 'contrary to divine revelation'.[13] Some councillors lamented that this wording was far more restrictive than the original. It would disqualify all individually held objections, alongside men who belonged to the many denominations that were not opposed to military service.[14] That exemption would definitely be confined to only two or

2 Paul Baker, *King and Country Call: New Zealanders, Conscription and the Great War* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1988), 172–174; Stevan Eldred-Grigg, *The Great Wrong War: New Zealand Society in WWI* (Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2010), 326–327; David Grant, *Out in the Cold: Pacifists and Conscientious Objectors in New Zealand during World War II* (Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1986), 18; Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003), 302; Elsie Locke, *Peace People: A History of Peace Activities in New Zealand* (Christchurch: Hazard Press, 1992), 59; Steven Loveridge, *Calls to Arms: New Zealand Society and Commitment to the Great War* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2014), 164; O'Connor, 'Awkward Ones', 132–133.

3 O'Connor, 'Awkward Ones', 132–133.

4 Baker, *King and Country Call*, 176.

5 Gwen A. Parsons, '"The Many Derelicts of the War"?: Repatriation and Great War Veterans in Dunedin and Ashburton, 1918 to 1928' (PhD thesis, University of Otago, 2008), 37.

6 Grant, *Field Punishment No. I*, 44; Ian McGibbon, 'The Price of Empire, 1897–1918', in *Frontier of Dreams: The Story of New Zealand*, ed. Bronwyn Dalley and Gavin McLean (Auckland: Hachette Livre NZ, 2005), 239; Graham Hucker, 'The Rural Home Front: A New Zealand Region and the Great War, 1914–1926' (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2006), 169–70.

7 British Military Service Act, 1916, 5 & 6 Geo. 5, c. 104, sec. 2(1)(d).

8 Allen, 175 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 334.

9 175 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 694.

10 T.A.H. Field, 175 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 563.

11 Isitt, 175 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 541; Hudson, 546; T.A.H. Field, 563.

12 *Evening Post* (Wellington), 10 June 1916, 4.

13 176 NZ Parl. Deb., L.C. (1916), 238.

14 Paul, 176 NZ Parl. Deb., L.C. (1916), 353.

'three small bodies' convinced a majority of councillors to vote in favour, as it would guarantee 'shirkers' could not escape.[15] Yet even this proved too liberal for the elected House, and a compromise had to be produced stating the alternative service would be non-combatant rather than non-military, could include the Army Service or Medical Corps, and could be 'in or beyond New Zealand'.[16] MPs clearly recognised the additional limits these stipulations would impose. One proponent of exemption on religious grounds complained they 'practically left very little provision at all', while other members labelled the modified amendment pointless, as the few denominations it was intended to benefit would refuse non-combatant service in the military.[17] This perceived irrelevance persuaded many opponents of an allowance for religious objectors to vote for the amendment, as it finally passed by 44 votes to 17.[18]

THE ACT'S RESTRICTIONS IN PRACTICE

After the boards had heard several cases, it emerged that only two denominations definitely qualified for exemption: the Society of Friends and Christadelphians. These groups possessed long-standing traditions of refusing military service and had been officially recognised as *bona fide* religious objectors in Britain.[19] Whenever a member of either denomination came up for hearing, he was offered relief upon demonstrating that his affiliation dated back to 4 August 1914.[20] However, the Quakers and Christadelphians were relatively small groups, with only five of the former and eight of the latter making appeals before April 1917.

As MPs had foreseen, the fact an appellant was deemed eligible for exemption was not the end of the matter, as he still had to sign the undertaking to perform non-combatant service. The Society of Friends held that non-combatant roles were incompatible with their principles, as they entailed 'supporting and becoming part of the vast military machine'.[21] Likewise, the Christadelphians informed Allen that while they were prepared to 'do ANY CIVIL DUTY', their determination to avoid being yoked within an earthly body meant 'we cannot enter any Branch of Military Service'.[22] So, despite the boards' willingness to exempt Quakers and Christadelphians, New Zealand's first religious exemption provision was virtually a dead letter.

In conjunction with the boards, the Defence Department therefore endeavoured to make the conditions of exemption more acceptable. On 24 April 1917, modifications to the undertaking eligible objectors were required to sign removed any mention of the Medical Corps or Army Service Corps, and stipulated that the men would not be compelled to wear military uniform.[23] Informally, the Defence Department went even further, promising work on the state farm at Levin.[24] In addition to making exemption more attractive to future appellants, objectors who had previously refused to sign the undertaking had their cases reheard to give them the chance to accept the revised version.[25] These measures proved successful for the Christadelphians, with those individuals who had rejected the old undertaking being willing to sign the new one, and all but one member who was subsequently deemed eligible for relief also choosing to accept it.[26]

Another important rehearing involved David Jackson, a Seventh-day Adventist. Members of this denomination had previously been refused exemption, as they did not possess a written constitution against bearing arms and 'as a body had not objected to being called up'.[27] This position changed in June 1917, when documentary evidence arrived from the United States proving the Adventists' creed was opposed to combatant service.[28] Jackson was granted, and accepted, exemption at his rehearing, an outcome that was repeated whenever members of this denomination appealed subsequently.[29]

The situation regarding the Quakers was somewhat different. While they continued to be offered exemption in every instance, members of this denomination proved less well disposed towards the amended undertaking. The Society's officials were suspicious that agricultural

15 Barr, 176 NZ Parl. Deb., L.C. (1916), 347–349; Carson, 363.

16 176 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 519; 177, NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 331.

17 Isitt, 177 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 335; McCombs, 336; Hornsby, 337; Herries, 337–338; Rhodes, 339; Sykes, 340.

18 177 NZ Parl. Deb., H.R. (1916), 341–342.

19 John Rae, *Conscience and Politics: The British Government and the Conscientious Objector to Military Service, 1916-1919* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 72–74.

20 *Otago Daily Times*, 18 January 1917, 6; *Press* (Christchurch), 13 March 1917, 2.

21 Statement to Auckland Military Service Board, January 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington (ANZ).

22 Such to Allen, 10 September 1916, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ (emphasis in original).

23 *New Zealand Gazette*, 1917, 1399.

24 Gray to Military Service Board Chairmen, 24 May 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ.

25 Tate to Director of Recruiting, 11 June 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ.

26 *Otago Daily Times*, 16 May 1917, 6; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 19 July 1917, 6; *Evening Post*, 23 August 1917, 3.

27 *Press*, 20 February 1917, 3; *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 28 February 1917, 5.

28 Meyers to Osburne-Lilly, 11 July 1917, AD 1 734 10/407/2, ANZ.

29 *Auckland Star*, 9 July 1917, 2; *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 10 August 1917, 3; *Waikato Times*, 4 May 1918, 4.

work had been mooted, but not guaranteed, and concerned that exempted men would still come under military authority.[30] These issues were raised by Edward Dowsett, whose appeal had to be disallowed after he voiced an unshakable refusal to obey military orders.[31]

While these groups were eventually given the opportunity to benefit from the exemption provision, its restrictions meant two large categories of appellants never had any prospect of doing so. The first consisted of individuals who belonged to a religious denomination, but one whose principles were manifestly not opposed to performing combatant duties. In terms of the major denominations, the First Wellington Board refused Robert Jones, who admitted there was nothing in the Church of England's tenets that prohibited military service, while the Second Auckland Board described Robert Watson as a 'perfect humbug' for suggesting bearing arms was contrary to the teachings of Catholicism.[32] Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians met with the same rebuttal, as did members of a plethora of smaller sects, such as the Auckland Central Mission, Church of Christ, and International Bible Students' Association.[33]

A second category of clearly ineligible men was those who did not belong to a religious body. This included some whose objections were based solely on a literal reading of the Bible. Hugh King was rejected by the Second Wellington Board once he admitted to being guided 'purely by the teaching of the Holy Gospel', while several appellants who referenced the commandment 'thou shalt not kill' also received short shrift.[34] A much larger proportion of the second category was made up of men who advanced political arguments. David Williams was turned down after asserting conscription was contrary to the interests of the working classes, and Hugh Gray fared no better by stating that he objected to killing his German comrades at the behest of a capitalist elite.[35] A different kind of argument, but the same result, occurred in the appeal of Thomas Spillane. When he advanced a refusal to protect Britain while its troops were oppressing his Irish homeland, Spillane was informed he had 'no ground for appeal – nothing to sustain it at all'.[36]

The boards also had to deal with cases that were less straightforward. The Brethren, Testimony of Jesus, and Richmond Mission are the three denominations O'Connor identifies as having fallen foul of an 'arbitrary' insistence that a written constitution prohibiting military service was essential for exemption.[37] The lack of such a document certainly played a role in the boards' decisions. One chairman exclaimed that 'even a football club has something printed', while another responded to an appellant's admission that the Brethren had nothing to show they were against fighting by charging 'well, how are you going to prove it?'[38] As the Act did not specify that a written constitution was necessary, O'Connor is somewhat justified in criticising the boards for allocating it so much importance.

However, this was far from the boards' only reason for deciding the Brethren did not qualify for exemption. They also considered the testimony given by its members, which cast significant doubt on whether the denomination was opposed to performing combatant service. Whereas one reservist told the First Otago Board it was contrary to the teachings of the group to join the infantry, another admitted to the First Wellington Board that although 'some members' adhered to the principle of not bearing arms, 'others do not'.[39] The President of the Auckland Brethren Bible Class Union renounced claims it was against their doctrine to fight, while even the New Zealand head of the denomination stated the question of enlisting had been left to each individual's conscience.[40] Another consideration was the disconnect between the Brethren's alleged opposition to combatant service and the fact several of its members had volunteered. Questioning on this matter again produced ambiguous replies. Gordon Rose maintained that all members believed it was wrong to enlist, but when asked 'how is it some of them have joined', he simply answered 'I don't know'. Rose went on to assert these men withdrew from the Brethren, but another appellant would only concede the issue had caused 'a lot of trouble'.[41]

The boards used the same multifaceted tests to reject appeals from members of the Testimony of Jesus and Richmond Mission. One preacher of the former

30 Gill to Tate, 11 July 1917, AD 1 734 10/407/2, ANZ.

31 *New Zealand Herald* (Auckland), 3 October 1917, 6.

32 *Evening Post*, 13 December 1916, 3; *New Zealand Herald*, 22 April 1918, 6.

33 Baughan to Allen, 17 January 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ; *Evening Post*, 13 December 1916, 3; *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 11 January 1917, 3; *New Zealand Herald*, 22 February 1917, 8 and 14 August 1917, 6; *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 7 November 1917, 3.

34 *Evening Post*, 20 April 1917, 8; *Auckland Star*, 4 May 1917, 6.

35 *New Zealand Herald*, 21 February 1917, 8 and 22 September 1917, 6.

36 *Hawke's Bay Tribune*, 11 May 1917, 6.

37 O'Connor, 'Awkward Ones', 127.

38 *Evening Post*, 25 July 1917, 8 and 14 December 1916, 3.

39 M.J. Kelly, *Military Board Appeals: Otago Witness, Dec 1916 to Feb 1917* (Auckland: Old News Publications, 1993), 13; *Taranaki Herald*, 30 January 1917, 7.

40 *Auckland Star*, 1 December 1916, 6; Compton to Allen, 9 February 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ.

41 *Evening Post*, 14 December 1916, 3 and 10 February 1917, 5.

denomination told the First Canterbury Board there was no definite doctrine on military service, while another informed Allen they had no leader or headquarters, and had only adopted a name for administrative convenience.[42] Then, on 25 July 1917, sixteen men from the Testimony of Jesus whose appeals had been dismissed were granted a rehearing to determine finally their eligibility for exemption. The Third Wellington Board's questioning centred on whether the denomination was opposed to combatant service. In reply, one appellant claimed this policy had only been agreed at a conference in 1915, prompting a furious response from their solicitor, who knew this was not enough to satisfy the Act. Another reservist then further muddied the waters by stating the conference had not achieved a resolution and that the Testimony of Jesus possessed no definite creed.[43] A similar impasse occurred surrounding the Richmond Mission, whose members were at least consistent in verbally opposing combatant service. However, they were unable to supply proof that their sect was actually a 'religious body', or that they had any 'constitution or tenets' against joining the army's frontline units.[44]

PUSHING THE ACT'S BOUNDARIES

While the boards ruled that only three denominations were entitled to exemption, they were prepared to offer a form of relief to other objectors. From January 1917, they began questioning men who fell outside the Act's scope, but whose scruples they considered to be based on a 'genuine' religious faith, about their willingness to perform overseas non-combatant service. Although an amenable objector still had his appeal dismissed, this was accompanied by a recommendation he be assigned to the Medical Corps.[45] The main proponent of this initiative was again the Defence Department, which chose to proceed despite the Solicitor-General's assertion it amounted to a dangerous step that contradicted the spirit of the Act.[46] The fact all nine boards were prepared to make recommendations indicates their willingness to satisfy the scruples of many religious objectors, even if this meant pushing the boundaries of the legislation.

The extent of the boards' willingness to afford at least some relief can also be illustrated statistically. Of the 501 men who were reported in the newspapers as appealing due to conscientious objections, 73 were exempted on religious grounds: 36 Christadelphians, 7 Quakers, and 30 Seventh-day Adventists. Another 391 were deemed to fall outside the scope of the Act and had their claims rejected, while the remaining 37 were granted exemption on the grounds of 'undue hardship' or 'public interest'.[47] Significantly, of the 391 objectors who had their appeals dismissed, 149 accepted a recommendation for overseas non-combatant service, while another 62 refused the offer after being questioned on their attitude towards it. Therefore, the boards either exempted or offered non-combatant service to 321 out of 501 conscientious objectors; a striking 64.1 percent.[48]

A MEASURED AND HOLISTIC APPROACH

The boards were undoubtedly critical of the beliefs many conscientious objectors espoused. One individual was informed that 'unpatriotic people like you don't deserve to belong to the nation', and a second that his religious ideals were nothing short of 'madness'.[49] Likewise, John Olley, assistant school master of Hastings, was advised that 'it is a disgrace to the community that a man holding such views should be teaching our young'.[50] Further appellants were lambasted for a perceived willingness to enjoy New Zealand's freedom and prosperity while others fought on their behalf. The First Wellington Board told one objector 'you get all the benefits and good of this earth, but will take no share in the work', while the First Otago Board charged Jesse Morris with being 'prepared to take all the benefits and stand by and let others bear the brunt of the fighting'.[51] If the boards' tactics could be brutal, then some of their questions were simply unsavoury. Perhaps the worst was put to Eric Badger, who was asked 'if the Germans came here

42 *Press*, 4 January 1917, 8; Holtham to Allen, 23 May 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ.

43 *Evening Post*, 25 July 1917, 8 and 26 July 1917, 7.

44 *Press*, 6 February 1917, 4.

45 *Evening Post*, 26 January 1917, 8; *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 13 March, 1917, 2.

46 Tate to Gray, 5 May 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ; Salmond to Tate, 22 May 1917, AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ.

47 In addition to tightly defined religious objections, the Military Service Act specified four other grounds for exemption. Appellants were permitted to cite any number or combination of these in support of their claims. The first two grounds pertained to the fact a man had been called up incorrectly by virtue of his age, nationality, or marital status. The third was that 'by reason of his occupation his calling-up for military service is contrary to the public interest', and the fourth that 'by reason of his domestic circumstances or for any other reason his calling-up for military service will be a cause of undue hardship to himself or others'. New Zealand Military Service Act, 1916, 7 Geo. 5, no. 8, sec. 18(1).

48 David Littlewood, *Military Service Tribunals and Boards in the Great War: Determining the Fate of Britain's and New Zealand's Conscripts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 141.

49 *Evening Post*, 23 August 1917, 3; *Press*, 6 February 1917, 4.

50 *Hawke's Bay Tribune*, 20 June 1917, 2.

51 *Wanganui Chronicle*, 19 July 1917, 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 29 September 1917, 5.

and attempted to violate your women, kill children and destroy the country, would you attempt to stop them?'[52]

Nevertheless, the overwhelming impression derived from the boards' operations is of a measured approach. Their primary concern was always to determine a man's eligibility for relief. Each hearing began with an assessment of the objector's claim to come within the Act, during which he was allowed to state his beliefs, press his arguments, and call witnesses.[53] If this segment of the appeal was inevitably brief when the objector did not belong to a Christian denomination, or was the member of a church that countenanced military service, the extensive investigations into the Brethren, Testimony of Jesus, and Richmond Mission demonstrate the boards did endeavour to reach informed decisions.

When the appeal could not be allowed, the second concern was whether the objections were sufficiently 'genuine' to warrant a recommendation for non-combatant service. It was here that questions about responses to the rape of womenfolk and the killing of infants were usually employed. However, any judgement of the boards must take into account the circumstances under which they operated. Sittings were busy, even hectic, occasions, with large numbers of cases up for hearing.[54] Under these pressures, the boards simply did not have time to conduct a detailed investigation of every objector's sincerity. Instead, they had to rely on crude tests of his consistency. Asking what an appellant would do if his wife was attacked was a means of determining whether he was opposed to force in every circumstance. In a similar vein, farmer objectors were asked if they had 'not been helping the war by growing oats and wheat', with others being challenged to explain parts of the Bible that seemed to promote military service.[55] Those appellants who explained any apparent inconsistencies by reference to their religious faith were usually offered a recommendation for the Medical Corps, those who floundered, or who relied on political precepts—whether socialist, internationalist, or Irish nationalist—were invariably denied one.

Moreover, the frequency with which the boards criticised the beliefs held by objectors has been overstated. In many cases it was not reported to have taken place at all, with the sole focus being the appellant's eligibility for relief.[56] When ridicule did occur, it constituted a short part of the proceedings, and usually only came after the objector had refused service in the Medical Corps. The boards could not comprehend the reluctance of Christian men to help those in distress, with one chairman at a loss to 'understand how succouring the wounded can be regarded as contrary to the teachings of the Bible'.[57]

The boards' attitudes towards conscientious objectors were also compatible with their wider efforts to promote an equality of sacrifice. What the appeal bodies always set out to discover was how much a man could reasonably be expected to do to help the war effort, and whether he was prepared to make the necessary sacrifices. If an objector demonstrated that he came within the scope of the Act then he was entitled to exemption, but must be prepared to do agricultural work. If he had personal religious scruples then he should be excused from combatant service, but must be amenable to treating the wounded. If he did not have 'genuine' religious objections then the best place for him was the front line. When viewed as part of the boards' overall methodology, it becomes apparent that this means of assessing conscientious objectors was largely the same as that used for men who appealed on the other available grounds. Any individual who demonstrated a need to look after his family, or to continue in his occupation, was awarded the appropriate form of relief, whereas one who exaggerated his circumstances or was unwilling to do his bit was dispatched to camp. The attacks made on certain conscientious objectors were not fundamentally different from the comments levelled at other individuals whom the boards perceived as 'shirking'. Families who were unrepresented at the front were berated for letting others make the sacrifices, miners were criticised for going on strike, and employers who argued their staff could not be replaced were accused of a selfish dereliction of duty.[58] While objectors were challenged on their beliefs rather than their actions, they were not singled out especially.

A final consideration is that the boards' approach towards conscientious objectors was probably more lenient than most of the public would have wished. While there were individuals and organisations—largely among the major Christian denominations and on the political left—who spoke up in support of objectors, most New Zealanders regarded their arguments and behaviour with disdain.[59] How, it was frequently asked, could there ever be an equality of sacrifice if some men were allowed to decide they simply had no wish to fight, particularly when so many others were giving up their businesses and leaving their families behind in order to do so. Religious and moral critiques of warfare were often seen as a cover for 'shirking' or outright

52 *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 13 January 1917, 7.

53 *Evening Post*, 25 July 1917, 8 and 26 July 1917, 7.

54 Assistant Adjutant-General to Moorhouse, 6 March 1917, AD 82 1 1/5, ANZ; *Evening Post*, 5 October 1917, 6.

55 *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 9 January 1917, 2 and 11 January 1917, 3.

56 *Evening Post*, 13 December 1916, 3, 26 January 1917, 8 and 24 April 1917, 7; *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 7 November 1917, 3.

57 *Evening Post*, 31 January 1917, 8.

58 Littlewood, *Tribunals and Boards*, 117–123.

59 See the correspondence in AD 1 733 10/407/1, ANZ; Gustafson, *Labour's Path*, 115.

cowardice, with a significant number of individuals who lodged appeals on those grounds being ostracised by their communities, forced out of their jobs, or even subjected to violence.[60] This means that if the boards had carried out their work in line with public opinion, they certainly would not have recommended non-combatant service for so many men who fell outside the Act, and might well have refused exemption even to those who were covered by its provisions. Instead, all nine appeal bodies adopted a more nuanced conception of equality of sacrifice – one that saw them follow the letter of the Act regarding exemption, and work in concert with the Defence Department to try and keep most religiously-motivated objectors out of prison.

CONCLUSIONS

When a conscientious objector appeared before the Second Auckland Board in August 1917, he signalled his willingness to serve the state in a civil capacity, but refused to wear military uniform or perform non-combatant duties. In dismissing the appeal, the board chairman remarked: 'I respect every man's religious principles, no matter how foolish and futile; but surely you must realise what a foolish stand you are taking. Every fit man is called upon to serve his King and country, and … it would be a Christian duty to look after wounded men.'[61] This statement encapsulates the key elements of the boards' approach towards conscientious objectors. On the one hand, it demonstrates bafflement that New Zealanders might refuse to fight, and scorn for individuals who would not 'meet us half-way' by accepting non-combatant service. On the other hand, it acknowledges that some men could have 'genuine' religious reasons for refusing to bear arms, and indicates a willingness to push the boundaries of the Act by offering the compromise of ambulance work. The reference to every man being called upon to serve also showcases how the boards assessed the appeals of conscientious objectors as part of a wider effort to ensure an equality of sacrifice.

It seems, therefore, that historians have been altogether too harsh in their judgements of the military service boards. Whether the same can be said for those individuals who were responsible for hearing appeals during New Zealand's second major experience of conscription between 1940 and 1945 is another matter requiring further assessment.[62]

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60 Baker, *King and Country Call*, 173, 176; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 27 June 1916, 4; *Taranaki Herald*, 14 October 1916, 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 14 March 1917, 4.

61 *Waikato Times*, 24 August 1917, 4.

62 David Littlewood, Marsden Fast-Start Research Project, MAU-1602, '"A Union of Hearts and Wills"? Second World War Conscription and New Zealand Society'.

The 'Rules of Engagement': The Great War's Legacy on Law and Order

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Abstract

This article will examine New Zealand laws that were introduced during the First World War, and which evolved out of a need to bring order to society at a time of world-wide chaos. It will consider the introduction of laws that dealt with sedition and 'intoxicating liquor', issues that challenged the government's ability to maintain law and order, and the leading legal cases of 1917 arising out of those new laws. These cases helped determine the legality of New Zealand's role in the Great War, and the extent of the Government's right to make laws committing New Zealand to conflicts outside its three-mile limits. Also considered will be the ongoing legacies of those laws, how long they continued to be used as a means to control society after the First World War had ended, and whether there are aspects of those laws that have continued to have effect in law and on society up to the present day.

Keywords

Intoxicating liquor; liquor; prohibition; sedition; seditious utterance; six o'clock closing; treating; War Regulations; War Regulations Amendment Act 1916

INTRODUCTION

In a speech delivered on 16 March 2017, Lord Neuberger, the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, helpfully summarised the fundamental way that good government works: 'the legislature makes the law, the executive carries the law into effect, and the judiciary interprets and enforces the law'.[1] This paper looks at how the judiciary in 1917 interpreted and enforced the laws that were introduced during the Great War to bring order to New Zealand society at a time of world-wide chaos.

The decisions considered in this paper reflect the attitudes of the judiciary during a time of war. In 1992, Justice Michael Kirby, a former judge of the High Court of Australia, who at the time was the President of the New South Wales Court of Appeal, noted in a judgment that '[o]ften, judicial approaches betray common attitudes to the proper function of the law and of the courts'. His Honour also noted that judicial attitudes needed to be assessed within the context of the time in which those attitudes were expressed: 'Such attitudes reflect the times in which the opinions were stated and the conception then held concerning the roles of the courts and of the law in upholding the suggested rights of parties and performing functions as part of the third branch of government'.[2]

On 2 November 1914, three months after war had been declared, the New Zealand Government enacted the War Regulations Act, which empowered the Governor in Council to 'make such regulations as he thinks necessary': 'For the purpose of better securing the public safety, the defence of New Zealand, and the effective conduct of the military or naval operations of His Majesty during the present war'.[3]

By 10 November 1914, the War Regulations were gazetted into law, and a new legal regime was in force. During the course of the Great War, and for a short period thereafter, the War Regulations governed everything from dealings with 'enemy aliens', contracting with the government, the sale and exportation of goods, coal, wheat, and wool, and extended to some 221 pages of rules by which society was to be bound. Those rules included the reversing of the burden of proof—with

1 'Reflections on significant moments in the role of the Judiciary', Lord Neuberger, President of the Supreme Court, 16 March 2017, published in *The New Jurist*, 25 March 2017, http://newjurist.com/reflections-on-significant-moments-in-the-role-of-the-judiciary.html, accessed 24 April 2017.

2 *Hartigan Nominees Pty Ltd v Rydge* (1992) 29 NSWLR 405 (NSWCA).

3 Section 2 of the War Regulations Act 1914.

Bulletin of the Auckland Museum 21: 131–138
https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/publications/bulletin/vol21/bennington
https://dx.doi.org/10.32912/bulletin/21/19

some offences requiring the defendant to prove he or she was not guilty of the alleged offence—and the relaxing of the rules of evidence, such that the Court could 'admit such evidence as it thinks fit, whether such evidence is legally admissible in other proceedings or not'.[4]

This paper will focus on two aspects of the War Regulations that had a significant impact on New Zealanders at home—the regulations regarding intoxicating liquor and sedition.

NO TREATING!

We will start at the beginning of 1917. The third of January to be precise. It was a rough morning, cold and wet. At 9:00 a.m., Frank Bond, Stanley Naylor, and Daniel Peck entered the Royal Oak Hotel at Weber, within the Pahiatua Licensing District, where the licensee of that establishment, Mr Welch, was present with another elderly patron. Frank Bond asked Mr Welch to supply him with 'intoxicating liquor' for the four men present. Following that drink, Daniel Peck ordered the next round. Then Mr Welch 'gratuitously' supplied the third round, which was followed by a fourth round, purchased by the old man at the bar, whose name was not disclosed. These were apparently very quick drinks, as Stanley Naylor and Frank Bond reportedly left the Royal Oak Hotel by 9:15 a.m. Daniel Peck also left the hotel about this time, but returned shortly afterwards, where he cashed a cheque, and became embroiled in an argument with Mr Welch on the riding prowess (or otherwise) of a Mr Power, since deceased. The argument escalated, with Mr Welch casting doubt upon the value of Daniel Peck's cheque. Outraged at the besmirching of his character, Daniel Peck took himself off to the local police constable to complain about Mr Welch.

Five months earlier, on 7 August 1916, the War Regulations Amendment Act had been passed into law, which had given the Governor in Council the right to make regulations suppressing the practice of 'treating'.[5] The War Regulations on Intoxicating Liquor came into force on 28 August 1916. So, unluckily for Mr Welch, by 3 January 1917, it was an offence under the War Regulations: (a) to buy 'intoxicating liquor' for any person other than yourself; (b) to sell 'intoxicating liquor' to someone who was buying it for someone else; and (c) to consume 'intoxicating liquor' that someone had bought for you.

The War Regulations on Intoxicating Liquor also placed the burden of proving that the offence had not been committed on the defendant. Normally, criminal cases place the burden of proof—to the standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'—on the prosecutor.

This was the issue before the Magistrates Court in Dannevirke in February 1917, in the case of *Police v Welch*.[6] In Mr Welch's defence, his patrons gave evidence in an attempt to undo the allegations made by Daniel Peck, who, the Magistrate acknowledged was 'an elderly man, used to the consumption of alcohol, who is easily provoked when he has had liquor', and who had acted out of 'pique' and was now 'sorry for his action'.[7] Unfortunately for Mr Welch, the Court found the integrity of his witnesses wanting, with the Magistrate finding those witnesses' statements to be 'untrue', 'having been concocted for the purpose of this case', 'shadowy and inconclusive', and 'too ridiculous for serious consideration'.[8]

The Magistrate explained in his judgment what the reversal of the onus of proof meant for a defendant who was now required to establish his innocence: 'The result of this is, that if, under such circumstances, a doubt exists in the mind of the court as to defendant's guilt or innocence, that doubt must be resolved in favour of the informant and not the defendant'.

In assessing the evidence before him, the Magistrate found Mr Welch guilty of the offence of treating and convicted him accordingly. The Magistrate also observed that, 'Not only has [the] defendant been guilty of an offence but he has endeavoured to escape punishment by indiscriminate perjury and subornation of perjury. Further the evidence shows that the defendant has been openly flaunting the regulation'. Mr Welch was fined £50 and ordered to pay court costs.[9] To be fair to Mr Welch, he did not really have many options when it came to defending the charges.

WAR REGULATIONS — LEGISLATION OF A 'SPECIAL KIND'

A month prior to that early-morning drinking session, the War Regulations on Intoxicating Liquor had been upheld by the Supreme Court, which in 1917 was the equivalent of today's High Court. In *Hackett v Lander and Solicitor-General*,[10] Justice John Hosking was asked by the applicant, Hackett, to find that regulation 8(1) of

4 Section 3 of the War Regulations Amendment Act 1915.

5 Section 3(1)(h)(iv) of the War Regulations Amendment Act 1916.

6 *Police v Welch* [1917] MCR 33.

7 *Ibid.* at 34.

8 *Ibid*.

9 According to the Reserve Bank's inflation calculator, £50 in 1917 would be worth $6,569 today.

10 *Hackett v Lander and Solicitor-General* [1917] NZLR 947.

the War Regulations on Intoxicating Liquor[11] was '*ultra vires*'[12]. Under regulation 8(1), anyone convicted of an offence under those Regulations received a six-month disqualification from being employed as a bar attendant.

His Honour declined to make the order sought by Hackett—that the regulation was *ultra vires*—as his Honour had found that the War Regulations were legislation of a 'special kind':

> It is conceived in the interests of the public safety, the defence of New Zealand, and the effective conduct of the war. Its unusual and comprehensive terms indicate that Parliament considered that while it was not in session there must be authority somewhere to act as with the authority of Parliament to meet the exigencies of the moment. The ultimate issue at stake is whether we are to maintain our power as a community to govern ourselves or make any laws at all. To this end and in the circumstances mentioned the powers referred to have been given to the Governor in Council, and on the grounds stated they are in my opinion pre-eminently powers to which that large and liberal interpretation should be given which the Acts Interpretation Act prescribes, and if any doubt exists or alternative interpretations are open in relation to their exercise the inclination should be in favour of the powers.[13]

The Judge also noted that the powers granted to the Governor in Council authorised him to 'prohibit acts which *in his opinion* are injurious, and in regard to the suppression of treating and other matters to make such regulations *as he thinks advisable*' [the Judge's emphasis].[14] This language, said Justice Hosking, removes from the Courts all competence to pronounce upon the advisableness or propriety of any particular regulation.[15]

PROTECTING OUR SOLDIERS – THE INTRODUCTION OF SIX O'CLOCK CLOSING

One commentator has argued that the various War Regulations on 'intoxicating liquor' were targeted towards the young soldiers. Jock Phillips, in *A Man's Country*,[16] states that: 'The enlistment of young men into the Army artificially created a new and exclusive male community. Respectable New Zealanders with memories of old frontier male communities and more recent worries about gangs of urban larrikins were uneasy about how these men would behave once they were away from the moral supervision of their mothers. In particular, people were nervous about what would happen when soldiers were on the loose and came to town'.[17]

The need to control these young men so recently separated from their mothers resulted in a number of regulations that restricted the sale and provision of alcohol for the duration of the war:

- On 16 February 1915, the War Regulations were amended to include the prohibition of the sale of, or the provision of, any intoxicating liquor to any member of the Defence Forces or Expeditionary Forces, when in uniform, for consumption elsewhere than on the premises where it was sold.[18]
- On 15 November 1915, the War Regulations were again amended, this time to prohibit the taking of any intoxicating liquor onto a troop train.[19]
- On 29 November 1915, new War Regulations made it an offence to bring or send intoxicating liquor into a camp, or to have possession of intoxicating liquor in a camp.[20]
- In addition to the no treating law, the amendments to the War Regulations dated 21 August 1916 introduced a further prohibition – women were no longer allowed to enter or remain in a bar after

11 Regulation 8(1) provides: 'Every bar-attendant, other than a member of the family of the licensee, who is convicted of an offence against these regulations shall be disqualified for the period of six months thereafter from being employed or serving in any capacity in or about the same or any other licensed premises'. On 2 April 1918, this regulation was amended, such that a Magistrate had the power to remove or vary the disqualification, where the bar-attendant had not previously been convicted of an offence under those regulations.

12 'A thing is done by a public authority, a company, or a fiduciary person, ultra vires, when it is not within the scope of the powers entrusted to such authority, company, or person'. John S. James, *Stroud's Judicial Dictionary of Words and Phrases*, Volume 5, S-Z, Sweet & Maxwell Limited, London, 1986.

13 Supra note 10 at 949.

14 *Ibid*.

15 Supra note 10 at 949–950.

16 Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country: The Image of the Pakeha Male – A History*, rev. ed. (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1996).

17 *Ibid*, 70–71.

18 Regulations 1 and 2 of the Additional War Regulations dated 16 February 1915.

19 Regulation 14 of the Additional War Regulations dated 15 November 1915. 'Troop train' was defined as 'any railway-train or railway-carriage which for the time being has been set apart for the exclusive use of the Defence Forces, or which is for the time being exclusively or chiefly occupied or used by members of those Forces'.

20 Regulation 2 of the Additional War Regulations dated 29 November 1915. 'Camp' was defined as 'any land occupied or used, or in course of preparation for occupation or use, as a place for the training or exercise of an expeditionary force under the Expeditionary Forces Act, 1915'.

> 6 pm, or to loiter about the entrance of any such bar, unless they were the licensee, a servant of the licensee, or a member of the licensee's family. This regulation was supposed to protect young men from the lascivious nature of prostitutes.

Another of the restrictions which was aimed primarily at soldiers was that of six o'clock closing. The government had originally proposed an 8 pm closing time, but this was amended to 6 pm following 'indignation meetings' like the one held in the Auckland Town Hall and chaired by Auckland Mayor, Mr James Gunson in September 1917.[21] At that meeting, Mr Robert A. Laidlaw, a prominent Auckland businessman, moved the following resolution before over 3,000 citizens at a meeting of the Business Men's Committee: 'That this meeting of Auckland citizens enters the strongest protest against the Government's attempt to thwart the will of the people by proposing to close hotel bars at 8 p.m., when the known and expressed will of the electors is that hotel bars be closed at 6 p.m. during and until six months after the war'.[22]

In support of his resolution, Mr Laidlaw declared that drinking after 6:00 pm was pro-German in its character, and that drink was the enemy of national efficiency in time of war. Drinking was also causing, together with the German submarines 'by their inhuman piracy', the threat of famine in Britain, with British women and children forced to queue outside shops for hours in the cold and the wind, from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon. In support of this argument, Mr Laidlaw explained that the 800,000 gallons of spirits imported from Britain by New Zealand in 1916 wasted 20,000,000 lb of grain, which would have been enough to make 13,000,000 2 lb loaves of bread.

Mr Laidlaw proclaimed that by reducing the drinking hours to six o'clock, New Zealand would also increase the efficiency of its soldiers and civilians—who were a sober lot, he was quick to acknowledge—from 90 per cent to 100 per cent. That 10 per cent increase in efficiency, declared Mr Laidlaw, would give New Zealand 'its share in the margins the allies need for an overwhelming victory'. According to the *New Zealand Herald*, Mr Laidlaw's speech was met with 'prolonged' and 'vigorous' applause, and his sentiments were echoed throughout the country.

And so, on 2 December 1917, the Government introduced six o'clock closing. Designed initially to expire six months after the war ended, it became permanent in 1918, and remained in law until 1967.

SEDITION

The War Regulations not only controlled how and when New Zealanders could drink, they also imposed serious restrictions on what they could say. The Additional War Regulations made on 19 July 1915 made it an offence to:

> publish, or cause or permit to be published, any statement or matter likely to interfere with the recruiting, training, discipline, or administration of His Majesty's Forces, whether by sea or land, or with the effective conduct of the military or naval operations of His Majesty or his Allies in the present war, or likely to be injurious to the public safety in the present war, or to prejudice His Majesty's relations with foreign Powers, or any false reports relative to the present war and likely to cause alarm, or any statement or matter which in any manner indicates disloyalty or disaffection in respect of the present war.[23]

This regulation was further expanded on 4 December 1916, so that it became an offence for any person to 'publish, or cause or permit to be published, or do any act with intent to publish or to cause or permit to be published a seditious utterance'. A 'seditious utterance' was 'any utterance which is published with a seditious intention, or the publication of which has a seditious tendency'.[24]

The War Regulations, having provided this seemingly opaque definition, went on to further define the meaning of seditious intention and seditious tendency by providing 14 different offences which would fall within these meanings.[25]

The common law offence of sedition existed prior to the War Regulations coming into force and had been codified in New Zealand in the Criminal Code of 1893, and in the Crimes Act 1908, but it required an element of incitement to violence. Of the 14 seditious offences introduced by the December 1916 War Regulations, only one concerned incitement to violence. The rest were designed to stamp out those 'utterances' that, to name but a few:

- 'excited disaffection against His Majesty or the Government of the United Kingdom or of New Zealand, or of any other part of His Majesty's dominions';[26]
- interfered 'with the recruiting, training, discipline, equipment, or administration of His Majesty's

21 'Six O'clock Closing', *New Zealand Herald*, Volume LIV, Issue 16647, 18 September 1917.

22 *Ibid*.

23 Regulation 4 (1) of the Additional War Regulations dated 19 July 1915.

24 Regulations 1–9 of the Additional War Regulations dated 4 December 1916.

25 A further offence was added by Regulation 4 of the Additional War Regulations, made on 18 June 1918, which made it an offence to 'insult, offend, annoy, or discredit, whether in New Zealand or elsewhere, the subjects, or any class or classes of the subjects, of any State which is in alliance with His Majesty in the present war with Germany, or which is at peace with His Majesty'.

26 Regulation 4(a) of the Additional War Regulations dated 4 December 1916.

Forces, or with the effective conduct of the military or naval preparations or operations of His Majesty or his allies, whether in New Zealand or elsewhere';[27]
- prejudiced 'His Majesty's relations with foreign Powers';[28] or
- excited 'disloyalty, whether in New Zealand or elsewhere, in respect of the present war'.[29]

That was the law at the beginning of 1917, and it was enforced, with over 200 men being convicted of sedition. Those who found themselves with criminal records for 'sedition' included:

- Sidney Briden, a chauffeur, who was convicted for starting a rumour about the torpedoing of a troopship;[30]
- Michael Cusack, a freezing worker, who was convicted for encouraging his fellow workers at the Horotiu freezing works to go on strike. The Magistrate found this to be seditious because 'it had a tendency to interfere with the supply of frozen meat required by His Majesty for purposes in connection with the present war'. His Worship also found it unbelievable that anybody could be 'so selfish, so unpatriotic'.[31]
- Mr Fitzgerald, a Greymouth publican, who was convicted for making certain statements to about six other men while in a bar of a hotel, which 'indicated disloyalty in respect to the present war'. The Magistrate considered that this was not a case requiring imprisonment, but it was, when looking at the position of the defendant and the manner in which he gave expression to his sentiments, a serious one. Mr Fitzgerald was fined £20 and court costs.[32]
- John Arbuckle, a union official, was convicted for writing to the unions to tell them that the Denniston Miners Union would go on strike if any of its members were conscripted.[33]
- Patrick 'Paddy' Webb, the Labour MP for Greymouth, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment following his conviction for opposing conscription.[34]

THE CASE OF *SEMPLE V O'DONOVAN*

In addition to the many cases that came before the Magistrate's Courts, the issue of sedition also made its way to the Full Court of the Supreme Court. The case involved Robert Semple, an Australian, who came to New Zealand in the early 1900s having been blacklisted in Australia following a long, bitter, and violent industrial dispute on behalf of the Victorian Coal Miners' Association.[35] Robert Semple fought for miners' rights in New Zealand, and with the outbreak of war, became a strident opponent of compulsory military training. In 1916, he sought to use the industrial bargaining power of the miners to force the government to back down on compulsory conscription. Robert Semple had stated: 'Conscription and liberty cannot live in the one country. Conscription is the negation of human liberty. It is the beginning of the servile state'.[36]

The government was not going to allow Robert Semple to challenge its authority—especially when the country was at war. He was charged and convicted of sedition and sentenced to 12 months' hard labour.

But Robert Semple did not accept his conviction. He appealed, and on 27 March 1917, Mr G. Hutchinson, counsel, appeared before the Full Court of the Supreme Court in Wellington, and asked the Court to grant the appeals sought by Robert Semple, and four other gentlemen who had also been convicted of 'uttering seditious utterances', Tom Brindle, Peter Fraser, Fred Cooke, and James Thorne.[37] Hearing their appeals were the Chief Justice, Sir Robert Stout, and Justices John Denniston, Theophilus Cooper, and Frederick Chapman.

The case was important less for its ruling on sedition, and more for its ruling confirming the Government's ability to make laws that could be enforced beyond New Zealand's three-mile limit.

There were seven points of appeal, one of which included whether or not the War Regulations were *ultra vires*. The Court found that they were not. But the main argument against the convictions was that the New Zealand Government did not have the power or jurisdiction to enact the Military Service Act 1916. It was an interesting point of appeal, because, as was

27 Regulation 4(e) of the Additional War Regulations dated 4 December 1916.

28 Regulation 4(i) of the Additional War Regulations dated 4 December 1916.

29 Regulation 4(n) of the Additional War Regulations dated 4 December 1916.

30 *Grey River Argus*, 26 May 1917, cited by Eldred-Grigg, *The Great Wrong War: New Zealand Society in WW1* (Auckland: Random House, 2010), 330–331.

31 *Canterbury Times*, 21 March 1917, cited by Eldred-Grigg, *The Great Wrong War*, 330–331.

32 *Police v Fitzgerald* [1917] MCR 35.

33 *Grey River Argus*, 21 April 1917, cited by Eldred-Grigg, Stevan, *The Great Wrong War*, 330–331.

34 Eldred-Grigg, *The Great Wrong War*, 330–331.

35 'Semple, Robert', Te Ara The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3s11/semple-robert, accessed 24 April 2017.

36 Law Commission, *Reforming the Law of Sedition*, Report 96, March 2007, para 47.

37 *Semple & Ors v O'Donovan & Anor* [1917] NZLR 273.

noted by the Chief Justice, the regulations under which the men had been convicted were not made under the Military Service Act, and nor were the seditious utterances wholly a criticism of that Act.

However, the appeal having been raised in respect of that point, the Court was then able to give its opinion on the matter, and in the Chief Justice's opinion, the New Zealand Parliament did have the power to pass the Military Service Act:

> The Parliament in New Zealand has power "to make laws for the peace, order and good government of New Zealand". It cannot therefore be suggested that it could not make laws to defend New Zealand beyond the three-mile limit of New Zealand. It could create a navy for the defence of New Zealand. An enemy might carry war into New Zealand without ever landing sailors or soldiers. Could New Zealand not take steps to prevent an enemy's navy attacking our country? The proper defence of New Zealand might require New-Zealanders to go many thousands of miles beyond its territory to defeat its enemies. Our defence and the defence of our trade depends mainly upon the British Navy. Can it be suggested that we could not send help to our defenders? To uphold the contention of the appellants would mean that New Zealand was helpless to keep its own peace.[38]

Sir Robert Stout's opinion was shared by all four Supreme Court judges, with Justice Chapman stating in his judgment:

> A Dominion is empowered by its constitution to defend itself, and for that purpose to pass the necessary legislation. It would be absurd to suggest that this must be limited to maintaining a Force within its own borders, when as a matter of common knowledge it must be evident that it is essential in many cases that an enemy should be attacked elsewhere if the defence is to be effective. A necessary power in connection with the defence of the Dominion is the power to take part in the defence of the Empire as a whole, and that may and at present does involve sending Expeditionary Forces to other parts of the Empire and to foreign countries.[39]

Justice Denniston was also not impressed by the arguments raised on behalf of the appellants, and his Honour stated:

> It seems to me futile to contend that the power of the General Assembly of the Dominion to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of New Zealand is limited to matters and things done by its inhabitants within the Dominion, and precludes it from legislating with a view to use the resources of the Dominion, whether in men, materials, or money, beyond its territorial limits. The peace of the Dominion is part of the pax Britannica – its safety is involved in and depends on the safety of the Empire. This was in fact hardly challenged by counsel for the appellants.[40]

Justice Denniston also noted that 'An offensive war is often really defensive. It would be poor policy for every member of a scattered Empire to wait until it was individually attacked'.[41]

Of the four Judges presiding over this case, Justice Denniston was particularly appalled by the 'seditious' actions of the men before him.

> We are engaged, in common with the greater part of the civilized world, in the most gigantic war the world has ever known – in a life-and-death struggle for our national existence. In older days, at moments of supreme necessity, the Romans, a people who reverenced law, handed over control to a Dictator. At a last extremity recourse is had to martial law, which is really the negation of law. Short of these, and to prevent recourse to these, there is the recourse to special war legislation, which may involve the inversion of the ordinary rights of citizenship. Under these, in Britain, powers hitherto undreamt of have been bestowed upon and exercised by the Executive, and cheerfully accepted and obeyed. The Administration there and here has been a machine devoted to the task of meeting a deadly national peril. Those of us who cannot see their way to assisting its working can at least refrain from applying sabotage to the machinery.[42]

It will come as no surprise that the Court found that all five men had failed in their appeals. Each of their appeals were dismissed, and their convictions of 12 months' imprisonment, some with hard labour, remained unchanged.

SEDITION OR A RIGHT TO CRITICISE?

Despite the growing number of convictions for sedition, people did not give up their right to criticise the government and the laws it had put in place to maintain order during the war. Also prosecuted for sedition was miner Hubert Armstrong, who was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment in 1917 for a speech that contained the following words:

38 *Ibid.* at 281.

39 Supra note 37 at 290.

40 Supra note 37 at 283.

41 Supra note 37 at 284.

42 *Ibid*.

> I claim the right to criticise the government of the country. I claim the right to criticise any piece of legislation enacted by the government of this country, that, to my mind is against the interests of the people of the country, whether military service, or any other Act and I am going to do so … Semple, Cooke and the rest of them are in gaol today because they are said to be disloyal to their country … I say their names in the near future will be honoured when the name of the Wards and the Masseys will be looked on as the greatest gang of political despots that ever darkened the pages of this country's history.[43]

Patrick Webb, having already served three months following his 1917 conviction, also continued to fight against conscription. In 1918, he was sentenced to two years' hard labour following a court martial, where he declared that conscription was not backed by the mandate of the people, and that because of the sedition laws, he was being denied the right to criticise the government.[44]

AUSTRALIA AND SEDITION

Australia also had its own issues with sedition, and in 1917, the case of *Pearce v Jones*[45] came before Australia's highest court, the High Court of Australia. Pearce and Smith had been charged under regulation 28(b) of Australia's War Precautions Regulations, which made it an offence for 'any person who by word of mouth makes statements likely to prejudice the recruiting of any of His Majesty's Forces'.

Pearce and Smith had been present at a meeting of the Trades Hall Council, where Pearce, as Chairman of the meeting, put to the meeting a resolution 'that in the opinion of the Trades Hall Council the Political Labour Council Executive should call upon all Labour Members of Parliament to refuse to assist in recruiting'. Smith seconded the resolution.

The issue was, therefore, whether, in putting the motion to the meeting, Pearce had made a statement that was likely to prejudice the recruiting of any of His Majesty's Forces, and whether Smith, in seconding it, had done the same. The High Court of Australia was unanimous. Pearce, said Justice Barton, had not breached the law:

> By putting the resolution I do not think he, by word of mouth or in any other way, made the statement contained in the resolution. He invited the meeting, as he was bound to do, to give their affirmance or negation of that view. It was no concern of his, as chairman, whether they affirmed or denied it, and he does not appear to have voted. They happened to affirm it, and it is alleged now that because the affirmance was illegal he in putting the resolution to the meeting did an illegal act. Even if the affirmance of the resolution was an illegal act, I do not think that the chairman was in the relevant sense a party to making it.[46]

Pearce's appeal was allowed, and his conviction overturned. Smith, however, was not so lucky. Said Justice Barton:

> The case of Smith is different. He seconded the resolution. In my judgment, and I think I have the concurrence of my brothers, a proposition affirmed in a resolution is equally affirmed by the person who moves the resolution and the person who seconds it. Whether a statement is absolutely repeated in words or whether agreement with it is merely expressed by word of mouth is in common sense and, I think, in law, absolutely the same thing. To have affirmed, by seconding, a resolution that the Political Labour Council should call upon all Labour Members of Parliament to refuse to assist in recruiting, is to become a party to it in the sense of expressing verbally his approval of it. He makes the statement his own.[47]

Justices Isaacs and Gavan Duffy concurred. Smith's appeal was dismissed, and his conviction was upheld.

THE LEGACY

Despite being introduced as temporary measures during the war, both sedition and six o'clock closing survived the revocation of the War Regulations in 1920. So what was the legacy of these laws, which were introduced supposedly as temporary measures, but which both outlasted the Great War by decades?

In a national referendum held in 1949, the majority of voters supported the continuation of six o'clock closing, but by September 1967, 50 years after that 'indignation meeting' held in Auckland, a second national referendum garnered the support of 67 percent of voters to not only extend drinking hours to 10pm, but also to allow women back into the public bar for the first time since the war.[48]

One recent commentator has suggested that the six o'clock closing time, rather than moderating the drinking of New Zealand men, was the cause behind our binge-drinking culture. 'Faced with a maximum of an hour's drinking between the knock-off hooter and 6pm, workers

43 Law Commission, *Reforming the Law of Sedition*, Report 96, March 2007, para 49, citing B. Kendrick, "Hubert Thomas Armstrong: Miner, Unionist, Politician" (MA Thesis, University of Auckland, 1950).

44 *Grey River Argus*, 16 March 1918, cited by Eldred-Grigg, *The Great Wrong War*, 330–331.

45 Pearce v Jones [1917] HCA 50; (1917) 23 CLR 438 (24 September 1917).

46 *Ibid*.

47 *Ibid*.

48 Tom Hunt, 'Referendum ended the 6 o'clock swill', *The Dominion Post*, 13 October 2012.

learnt to guzzle as much as possible before time ran out. What we now call binge-drinking was institutionalised, fuelled by the early-closing law. Grizzled old men would show fresh-faced 21-year-olds the ropes. Techniques were refined; habits were formed, all in the name of getting blind drunk in a matter of minutes'.[49]

Sedition outlasted six o'clock closing by a further 40 years. The last prosecution was that of Timothy Selwyn in 2006, who had been protesting the government's foreshore and seabed legislation.[50] Mr Selwyn was charged with two counts of sedition, one of which was for publishing the following statement in pamphlets found in Sandringham Road in Auckland, near the electorate office of the then Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Helen Clark, which allegedly expressed 'a seditious intention, namely an intention to encourage lawlessness or disorder': 'Tonight concerned Pakeha vented their anger and disgust at the Government's attempts to steal by confiscation and without consultation, Maori land in the form of the Foreshore and Seabed Bill by attacking the electorate office of the Prime Minister. The broken glass symbolises the broken justice of this issue and we call upon other like-minded New Zealanders to commit their own acts of civil disobedience to send a clear message that such injustice can never be accepted!'[51] The second charge related to a longer, but similar, statement, which was published in pamphlets left in Ponsonby Road, Auckland.

To draw attention to these statements, Mr Selwyn sent emails calling for militant action against the Government's foreshore and seabed legislation, broke the glass of the Prime Minister's electorate office window with an axe (and left the axe embedded in the broken glass), and included in the pamphlets calls to like-minded New Zealanders to carry out similar acts to the attack on the Prime Minister's office, and their own acts of civil disobedience. He was convicted by a jury in the District Court at Auckland, and subsequently sentenced to 17 months' imprisonment (for both the sedition and 13 dishonesty sentences). Mr Selwyn appealed his conviction, but was unsuccessful, with the Court of Appeal dismissing his appeals both against the conviction and his sentence in April 2007.[52]

A month before the Court of Appeal released its judgment, in March 2007, the Law Commission published a report calling for the reform of the law of sedition.[53] In his Foreword to that report, then-President of the Law Commission, Sir Geoffrey Palmer, stated that the Law Commission had concluded that the width of the sedition offences meant that they were 'an unjustifiable breach of the right of freedom of expression'.[54] Sir Geoffrey noted that they had been used inappropriately in times of political unrest and perceived threats to authority to fetter vehement and unpopular political speech.

In words that echoed both Hubert Armstrong's and Patrick Webb's claims that they had a right to criticise the government, Sir Geoffrey stated: 'In a free and democratic society, defaming the government is the right of every citizen. In times beset with threats of terrorism we should not close the open society. To do so would only encourage enemies. In New Zealand, free speech and public debate must be "uninhibited, robust and wide open", and it may include "vehement, caustic and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials"'.[55]

The Law Commission found that the law of sedition was in breach of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, and was no longer necessary, as those elements of it that should remain were more appropriately covered by other offences. It recommended that the law on sedition be repealed. The Government agreed, and on 1 January 2008, the offence of sedition was no longer part of New Zealand law.[56]

The case law arising out of the challenges to the War Regulations on treating and sedition demonstrate the coming of age of New Zealand as a nation that could make laws independent of England. Both the War Regulations and the Military Service Act were challenged on the grounds that they were *ultra vires*—that New Zealand's Government had passed laws that it had no authority to pass. In both cases, the Supreme Court found that the Government did have the power to make laws to protect New Zealand during a time of crisis, and that those laws could extend beyond New Zealand's three-mile limit.

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49 Richard Boock, 'Legacy of the six o'clock swill', www.stuff.co.nz, 28 August 2012.

50 Law Commission, *Reforming the Law of Sedition*, Report 96, March 2007, at para 57.

51 *R v Selwyn* [2007] NZCA 123 at [6].

52 *R v Selwyn* [2007] NZCA 123.

53 Law Commission, *Reforming the Law of Sedition*, Report 96, March 2007.

54 *Ibid* at 6.

55 *Ibid*.

56 The sedition offences were contained in sections 81 to 85 of the Crimes Act 1961; they were repealed by the Crimes (Repeal of Seditious Offences) Amendment Act 2007, which came into force on 1 January 2008.