

**'Children ardent for some desperate glory'**  
**Public Schools and First World War volunteering**

**Paul Methven**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy**

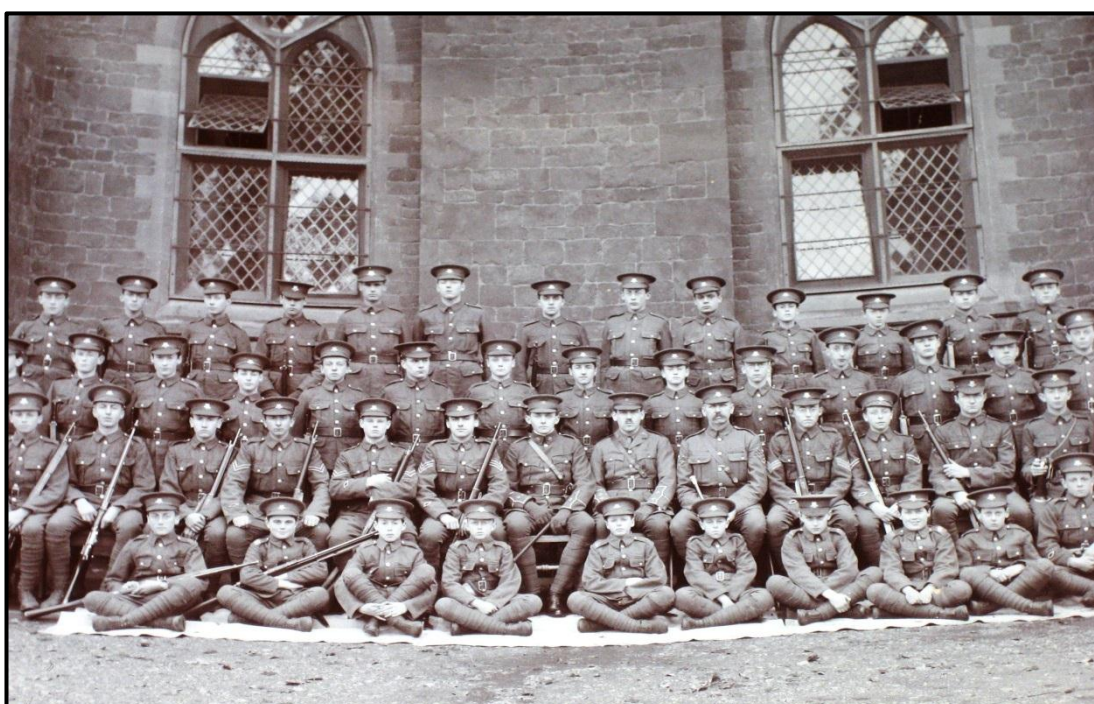
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**September 2013**

**Frontispiece: 'Children ardent for some desperate glory'.**



On parade: Dean Close Memorial School OTC cadets marching past, c.1910.



'All Saints' School, Bloxham: OTC cadet force c.1909

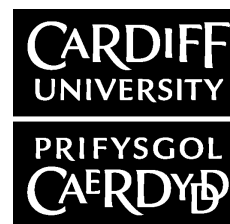
## Summary of thesis

This thesis examines the range of formative influences, within their educational experience, that helped to propel public schoolboys towards volunteering for military service upon the outbreak of the First World War. Based largely upon research conducted at seven second-tier English public schools, the work examines the scholastic factors and teaching methods that moulded boys' characters and attitudes to the extent that responses to a strident call to arms in 1914 were almost universally positive. The areas explored in depth include: the influence of the schools as austere total institutions in the furtherance of manliness and muscular Christianity values; the classroom curriculum – specifically, the indoctrination of national supremacist values and the socialization of positive feelings as to war and 'glorious death in battle'; the ubiquitous focus upon character development through competitive sports; the effects of religious teaching upon boys' attitudes to subsequent volunteering; the militaristic impact of the 1908 Officers' Training Corps scheme.

Throughout, the thesis forms connections between deliberately embedded public school character and attitude traits with the requirement, by military recruiters, for similar attributes within their intake of junior officers during the early months of the First World War. Several broad questions are dealt with: for example, how appropriate were sports-embedded qualities to practical subaltern officering? What made the recruitment campaign so successful in securing ex-public school volunteers? How did key elements within the public school environment (e.g. authoritative hierarchy, rules and discipline, monasticism, indoctrinated beliefs) result in volunteering enthusiasm? To help address these (and other) relevant questions, the thesis draws upon the works of specialists within related fields - notably sociologists, linguists and educational experts.

In conclusion, the thesis confirms the fact that, and determines how, thousands of ex-public schoolboys were unwittingly manipulated, from an early age, into serving their country in wartime.

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POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH**



**DECLARATION**

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

Signed .....Paul Methven..... (candidate) Date ...18 December 2013

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This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of ...MPhil History..... (insert MCh, MD, MPhil, PhD etc, as appropriate)

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**STATEMENT 2**

This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. The views expressed are my own.

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## Acknowledgements

Throughout this research project, I have received assistance from a number of sources. Librarians at Cardiff University, the University of Bristol, the Leeds University Brotherton Library, the University of the West of England, the University of Birmingham and Bristol Central Library have all been extremely helpful. The team at the Institute of Education Library were also especially supportive as they located for me a range of highly-relevant Edwardian-era textbooks. And staff at both the Imperial War Museum Department of Documents and the Lambeth Palace Library and Archive uncovered, respectively, valuable First World War correspondence 'from the front' and appropriate 1914 sermon materials.

No investigation into historical school practices can make progress without the willing cooperation of archivists and I was truly fortunate in this respect – not least because of the way that, beyond school magazines, most of them volunteered material which, hitherto, I'd not considered. For example, William Wood at Whitgift produced some valuable 'form list' curricular documents. David Pickard at Sutton Valence came up with some poignant OTC photographs together with highly informative unpublished memoir material. Mike Sampson of Blundell's found copies of 1904 school rule booklets and brought the 1909 Rundle OTC camp diary to my attention. Simon Batten at Bloxham produced some debating society manuscripts and highlighted the Kingsley Fradd papers for me. Ian Quickfall at Malvern School gave me summative extracts from the school punishment book and led me through the war memorial displays in the school chapel. Claire Davies at King Edward's, Bath, let me peruse the school's abundant Edwardian-era OTC formation records. The Reverend Charles Whitney of Dean Close, in a lengthy email exchange, answered many of my questions with much consideration, enthusiasm and thoroughness. He also, over a three-day period, supplied me with prospectus material and highlighted particularly appropriate debating reports within the magazine archive.

Much is owed to my supervisor, Professor Keir Waddington, who throughout the project, has provided me with wholehearted encouragement and guidance. His sound advice and constructive comments have proved very valuable.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **'Melt the boys down and run them all out of the same mould like bullets'**

During the First World War, 229,316 men were commissioned as combat officers. Official statistics record that 37,452 British officers were reported killed or missing and 79,445 were seriously wounded.<sup>1</sup> Early on, a shortage of officers became clear. As War Office policy, officers were recruited from public schools on the basis that their education and Officers' Training Corps (OTC) experience would provide the leadership necessary to command a civilian army.<sup>2</sup> Most of these men emanated from the privileged classes and had volunteered as subalterns, many joining up during the first weeks.<sup>3</sup> These novice officers proved extremely vulnerable: Jay Winter concludes that 'that the more privileged paid a disproportionately higher price for the war than did the less privileged'.<sup>4</sup>

The inspiration for wartime English public school volunteers can be linked to their education and the attitudes implanted and nurtured during formative years.<sup>5</sup> Most of these youngsters' volunteering motives differed from the diverse, more pressing persuasions that provoked working-class enlistment.<sup>6</sup> From their earliest schooldays, elite young men were pushed towards patriotic service as a product of educational character-building. In contrast, many working-class men were pulled into enlistment by the persuasive processes employed during the war's early

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<sup>1</sup> The War Office, *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire During the Great War* (London, 1922), pp. 235-237.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Parker, *The Old Lie: The Great War and the Public School Ethos* (London, 1987), pp.17-8.

<sup>3</sup> However, some public school alumni first enlisted as private soldiers - many of these were commissioned later in the war. Gerard de Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the era of the Great War* (Harlow, 1998), p.19. De Groot also notes that, in peacetime, the social make-up of the officer class had been highly exclusive. In 1912, 59 per cent of regular officers were middle-class, 32 per cent landed gentry and 9 per cent aristocracy. His first three chapters provide a general summary of public school and working-class volunteering together with some of the socio-economic motivations for enlistment.

<sup>4</sup> Jay Winter - letter in *London Book Review*, 9:5, (1987), per <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v09/n05/letters> [accessed 12 November 2012]. Winter reports that during 1914-15, officer casualty rates were 2½ times other ranks. This proportion reduced to around 1¾ later in the war following other rank Battle of the Somme losses. Winter was responding to a review of J. M. Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London, 1986). See his Chapter 2, pp. 65-92 'The Lost Generation' for detailed analyses of the (extremely complex) casualty statistics as related to class, rank, 'front line', age, period etc.

<sup>5</sup> The Edwardian-era public school system was principally English in terms of location, and the great majority of staff and pupils. The words 'British' and 'English' were interchangeable in the early twentieth century, 'English' being used in textbooks and all forms of printed media when nowadays 'British' would be more appropriate. Since 'English' has been used in so many of the primary source documents that inform this thesis, that word has been used throughout. The 'British Empire' and 'British Army' however, retain their wider designations.

<sup>6</sup> These include: focused propaganda campaigns; personal economic, familial and employment circumstances; social and peer pressures; a desire for escape, travel and adventure. For an excellent analysis of working-class volunteering motives, see David Silbey, *The British Working-class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (London, 2005).

stages. While a sense of duty and patriotism *per se* was common to young men of all classes, the nature of patriotic devotion differed greatly - as did the instructive methods for instilling nationalistic affiliation. However, why were ex-public school pupils so eager to volunteer during the early stages of the First World War? What were the factors within their educational experience that provoked this enthusiasm? Why were these elements effective and how were they applied?

Many historians assume that undergoing a public school education made these young men eager to enlist. However, in studies of pre-war British social traits, few address the developmental influences that encouraged ex-public schoolboys to volunteer.<sup>7</sup> For example, Keith Simpson in a chapter dedicated to 'The Officers' indeed addresses formative volunteering issues, but these are centred upon First World War snobbery, OTC training, and consequential military leadership effectiveness (or its absence) rather than foundational motivations.<sup>8</sup> Peter Parker is more explicit in the links he sees between the shaping culture of the public school system to pupils' volunteering eagerness.<sup>9</sup> He concludes that, through the school philosophy, predisposed privileged youngsters were cajoled towards serving King and Country in whatever capacity became necessary - including combat service. More recent studies challenge this view: for example, John Lewis-Stempel suggests that, in their role as outstanding character-development establishments for elite boys, public schools were perfect for the commendable development of young

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<sup>7</sup> See I. F. W. Beckett and K. Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms: A social study of the British army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985); Rupert Wilkinson writes with authority as to the indoctrination of public school beliefs but does little to link this to 1914 volunteering: Rupert Wilkinson, *The Prefects: British Leadership and the Public School Tradition* (Oxford, 1964); Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon, 597-1977* (London, 1977) has investigated the connection between athleticism and war in general, but fails to establish the effects of a privileged education upon 1914 volunteering. Anne Summers has conducted an excellent study in respect of militarism and the OTC scheme in Anne Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War', *History Workshop*, 2:1 (1976) pp. 104-123. A helpful contemporary work is a collection of essays on various aspects of public schools authored by a range of schoolmasters during the mid-Edwardian period. This has proved valuable as to understanding the motivation behind many of the approaches taken within the public school system and, as a whole, provides significant insight as to a number of academic and practical topics. See T. E. Page (ed.), *The Public Schools From Within: A Collection Of Essays On Public School Education, Written Chiefly By Schoolmasters* (London, 1906).

<sup>8</sup> Harry G. Judge, 'The English Public School: History and Society', *History of Education Quarterly*, 22:4 (1982), pp. 513-524; Edward Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion since 1860* (New York, 1941); Brian Simon and Ian Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin, 1975); Ian Weinberg, *The English Public Schools: The sociology of elite education* (New York, 1967); Alisdare Hickson, *The Poisoned Bowl: Sex, Repression and the Public School System* (London, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> Summarised in Parker, *The Old Lie* pp.17-9.

officers who, through acquired leadership qualities, effectively won the war. Public schools, he suggests, deserve more historiographic credit.<sup>10</sup>

Parker and Lewis-Stempel represent dissimilar opinions as to the determining motives of the public school system. Were naïve, elite youngsters being steadily manoeuvred into volunteering for a major war? Or did such boys represent the cream whose bravery and selflessness was mercifully available once war was declared? Illustrations of each position are clear within Parker's and Lewis-Stempel's works. As Parker observes:

There is some justice in the accusation that the intention - or at any rate the achievement - of the public school system was to 'melt the boys down and run them all out of the same mould like bullets'. Like bullets, they were in great demand in August 1914. ... The class of 1914 had been prepared both implicitly, by the codes to which the schools subscribed, and explicitly, by the junior branch of the Officers' Training Corps, for the eventuality of war.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, Lewis-Stempel notes:

When August 1914 came, the values of the public school were exactly what the country at war needed. After all, who could withstand the highly-drilled militarism of the Kaiser's army - except for a corps of young British men who believed in the qualities of courage, patriotism, selfless service, leadership and character? ... Indisputably the First World War was part won in the classrooms, fields and Officers' Training Corps parade grounds of the public schools.<sup>12</sup>

Parker's reproach of public school integrity was not original: his assault upon militaristic character-building and patriotism represents a view of coercive education first expounded in 1902 by the economist, J. A. Hobson, who railed against capturing:

the childhood of the country, to mechanise its free play into the routine of military drill, to cultivate the savage survivals of combativeness, to poison its early understanding of history by false ideals and pseudo-heroes and by a consequent disparagement and neglect of the really vital and elevating lessons of the past, to establish a 'geocentric' view of the moral universe in which the interests of humanity are subordinated to that of the 'country' ... and to call it patriotism is as foul an abuse of education as it is possible to conceive.<sup>13</sup>

Lewis-Stempel's work challenges the myth (as he considers) of the gullible public schoolboy driven by a manipulative education system towards the meaningless

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<sup>10</sup> John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks: the Short and Gallant Life of the British Officer in the First World War* (London, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.17.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, p.17.

<sup>13</sup> J. A. Hobson, 'Moral and Sentimental factors' in *Imperialism: A Study* (London, 1902), p.115. Such thinking was further endorsed by Bertrand Russell during the war's early months: See Russell's letter to *The Nation* quoted in Bertrand Russell, *Bertrand Russell: Autobiography* (London, 2000), p. 265, and see Chapter 2 herein for his views as to the 'pollution of history' in school textbooks.

sacrifice of his life in the cause of patriotism. W. J. Reader also inclines towards the view that a public school education steered the volunteer towards service to his country through educated righteousness. He observes that:

No other influence ... has produced so great a growth of the sterner and more robust virtues - fortitude, self-reliance, intrepidity: devotion to the common weal: readiness for united action and self-sacrifice. ... When war broke out, therefore, the idea of joining the army came quite naturally to men of this class: more naturally, probably, than to men lower in the social scale. Such men naturally thought of themselves as potential officers, since their education and upbringing had been designed to fit them for positions of authority.<sup>14</sup>

Several social and military histories address First World War subaltern volunteering, albeit parenthetically.<sup>15</sup> A number tackle practical subaltern effectiveness, others review issues of trench discipline, several explore matters of class within a military context. Although a few acknowledge the persuasive effects of a public school education upon officer enlistment, some also provide useful information as to social background; early war subaltern training and performance; the depiction of war and newspaper influences; enlistment propaganda; and youthful elective reading. However, few historians have examined the various components of a public school education in order to establish how, during the pre-war years, boys' beliefs, attitudes and values were shaped so that, in 1914, many unquestioningly joined up.<sup>16</sup>

This project endeavours to rectify two drawbacks within the historiography. The first reflects the limited attention given to those institutional and educational practices that propelled young men to rush to volunteer. The second relates to typical selections of schools for study: an almost exclusive historiographic focus upon the elite Clarendon and great schools is not representative of the population as a whole.

### **Public schools as educational institutions**

Historians have hitherto given limited attention to public schools as institutions. This is a significant hiatus: a subaltern in 1914 would probably have spent over half his

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<sup>14</sup> W. J. Reader, *At Duty's Call: a Study in Obsolete Patriotism* (Manchester, 1988), pp. 94-130.

<sup>15</sup> These include the de Groot, *Blighty* work mentioned previously together with I. F. W. Beckett and K. Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985); John Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin, 1960); Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: a History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999); Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (London, 1968); I. F. Clarke, *The Great War with Germany, 1890-1914* (Liverpool, 1997); Francis M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society* (London, 1988).

<sup>16</sup> For example: Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London, 2000); David Hey, *How Our Ancestors Lived* (London, 2003); Glenn R. Wilkinson, 'The Blessings of War': The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspapers' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 33:1 (1998), pp. 97-115; J. A. Mangan and J. Walvin (eds), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987); Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (New York, 1972).

life under the direct influence of that schooling system. The beliefs, attitudes and values implanted throughout childhood (for some since the age of nine) could hardly have failed to influence such a life-changing decision as combat-volunteering years later.<sup>17</sup> Within much of the historiography, while limited attention has been given to the curriculum, the Spartan surroundings, the bullying, the OTC, chapel attendance and school sports, historians have tended to underplay the implications of public schools as total institutions and the effects of an educational approach equating to proselytization. These are vital considerations: most ex-public schoolboys' opinions and standpoints were introduced and reinforced through a mix of indoctrination, coercion, fear and discipline - most masquerading as vehicles promoting belief, character and manliness. To cement such qualities and beliefs, schools did not prioritize restrained persuasive techniques *per se* since persuasion might have implied a degree of sceptical resistance to the attitudes being imbued - an unacceptable (and unlikely) dimension to a pupil's temperament and prior upbringing. Systematic alterations to attitude were also inappropriate since, upon entry into the school environment, a nine-year old would have harboured few conflicting attitudes in respect of (say) nationhood, honour, or Empire that merited change. Original attitude formation, coupled with fortification and thought reform (where necessary), was the overriding goal: and to bring it about, an institutional environment was deemed essential.

Within a mission to explore school-inspired military volunteering, it is logical to begin by evaluating the holistic situation of the typical Edwardian boarding public school itself prior to its specific activities and objectives. What kind of institutions were they? What were their similarities (and differences) when contrasted with other forms of separation or retreat? How did the public school *milieu* facilitate attitude establishment and thought reform? Through using a fresh application of the categories offered by Erving Goffman, coupled with Foucaultian notions of incarceration, the powerful effect of schools as total institutions becomes clarified. A closed, often adverse, environment was vital to cultivating core attitudes and beliefs.<sup>18</sup>

Hard socialization, implemented through institutionalised austerity and intentional adversity, is also reviewed together with methods such as the elimination of identity,

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<sup>17</sup> The Dean Close *Prospectus* (1899), p.6 notes that boys attended the school from the age of nine to 'over seventeen'.

<sup>18</sup> See Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and other Inmates* (London, 1991) and Michel Foucault] *Discipline and Punishment*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York, 1995.) Both of these works, although focused upon forced incarceration, are revealing as to a number of common factors within prisons, asylums and English public schools.

enforced monasticism and aggressive initiation rites in order to foment manliness - a quality cherished by the military.<sup>19</sup> Manliness *per se* was considered essential to the formation of character, but how did public schools instil this quality? John Tosh classifies manliness as embracing: masculine vigour, decisiveness, courage and endurance, social responsibility, independence of mind, straightforwardness in action and speech (when appropriate) and taciturnity (when necessary). Manliness was inculcated, in the main, through the playing of compulsory games and through surviving the Spartan nature of the school as an institution.<sup>20</sup> Tosh's definitions also highlight the contrast between manliness and gentlemanliness. Both attributes were thought essential to personal success in the service of Government and Empire, in the military and were considered vital to realising social and commercial achievement.<sup>21</sup>

Other attitudes were cemented through using softer techniques of socialization. By drawing upon the structural definitions suggested by educational social scientists, Graham White and John Wakeford, the soft socialization necessary to engender the gentlemanliness qualities deemed essential for social survival (vital for novice officers), is explored. And, significantly, how was war conceptually promoted? The inculcation of values that judged war as being not only acceptable, but desirable, and for some, glorious, were key factors within a context of 1914 volunteering. The acceptance of war, introduced by the classroom curriculum, was strengthened by memorials, debates, and other acculturative methods.

While games and the masculine culture that public schools instilled go some way towards explaining why so many public schoolboys volunteered, their attitudes were

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<sup>19</sup> Graham White, in that much of his work concentrates upon the moulding of childhood attitudes and behaviour, is most pertinent see Graham White, *Socialization* (London, 1977); and John Wakeford, in his study of the socialization that takes place in public schools is also very relevant in that he explores topics of: gentlemanliness, initiation rituals, sanctions and social control, identity suppression and much more: John Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite: A Sociological Analysis of the English Public Boarding School* (London, 1969). The essay by Norman Vance, 'The Ideal of Manliness', in Simon and Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School*, pp.125-140 addresses the socialization of manliness from a Victorian state of moral earnestness to the more robust form of Edwardian-era muscular Christianity.

<sup>20</sup> J. A. Mangan's various works on the character-forming benefits of school sports, and their equation with war, remain unsurpassed - in particular J. A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge, 1981).

<sup>21</sup> John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow, 2005). Another important work that juxtaposes issues of manliness, social Darwinism and muscular Christianity in late Victorian and Edwardian public schools is J. A. Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and upper-class education in late Victorian and Edwardian England' in J. A. Mangan, and J Walvin,(eds), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987), pp. 135-153. Also see Joy Schaverein, 'Boarding School: The trauma of the 'privileged' child', *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 49, (2004), pp.683-705 as she examines the emotional effects of systematised abuse and a sense of parental abandonment (among other emotional trauma) as dimensions to the English public boarding school system.

equally shaped by the curriculum. An examination of the curriculum, in the sense of formal teaching sessions, together with associated didactic approaches, reveals how many of the beliefs and values imparted through lessons and textbooks were key to later enlistment decisions. Some classroom subjects had impact upon boys' patriotism, ideas of English supremacy and concepts of nationhood. The employment of indoctrination techniques as a basis for classroom instruction is ascertained using classifications set by Roger Scruton, Ivan Snook, Margaret T. Singer and other educational specialists who have addressed issues of miseducation.<sup>22</sup> Boys were inflexibly inculcated as to what to believe - particularly in history, geography and, in part, classics lessons.<sup>23</sup>

The teaching of history and geography involved the inculcation of beliefs which extolled British, Empire and military principles so as to reinforce patriotism and justify war. Leading nationalist certainties centred around: British political, racial, religious and military supremacy; justification of campaigns to expand and retain the British Empire; disdain for other races and non-Christian religions; the acceptance of war as a necessary and occasionally glorious endeavour. Such beliefs helped to secure willing subaltern volunteers in 1914. However, evidence as to the detailed actuality of classroom teaching is sparse. Infrequently chronicled pupil memories of lessons predictably relate to incident-related anecdotes rather than evaluations of instructive content.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, lesson structure, delivery and substance would have largely depended on teacher preferences.<sup>25</sup> In the absence of written classroom lesson plans therefore, history and geography textbooks are most revealing.<sup>26</sup> They were used constantly and provide a rich source of material as evidence for the patriotic messages imparted.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Definitions of teaching and other didactic techniques that can legitimately be defined as indoctrination are provided within both I.A. Snook, (ed.), *Concepts of Indoctrination* (London 1972) and Roger Scruton, Angela Ellis-Jones and Dennis O'Keefe, *Education and Indoctrination* (London, 1985). Margaret Singer's work on cults is also useful since her six conditions that constitute 'thought reform' coincide with many of the institutional and educational practices in Edwardian public schools: Margaret T. Singer, *Cults in our Midst* (San Francisco, 2003).

<sup>23</sup> Historians have explored the teaching of classics from viewpoints of 'mind training', 'necessity for higher education' and 'stoicism in the trenches' (e.g. Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon* and Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*). For classics teaching practices, see Weinberg, *English Public Schools*, pp.40-4.

<sup>24</sup> More enlightened approaches to general classroom teaching, perhaps in reaction to perceived inadequacy, are outlined in James Welton, *Principles and Methods of Teaching* (London, 1914) esp. Chapter 3, 'Form of Instruction'.

<sup>25</sup> See for example the essay by A. Hassall, 'History' in T. E. Page (ed.), *The Public Schools From Within*, pp. 22-7 within which he bewails the current (1906) approach to history teaching in public schools as being 'half-hearted', and its delivery 'incompetent'.

<sup>26</sup> Douglas Newton and Leonard W. Doob have both written about how textbooks formed part of the armoury to propagate 'ultra-patriotic, imperialistic and militaristic values': D.

It is apparent, through observations of subject schoolmasters, that classical instruction incorporated several moral lessons considered valuable to the elitist schoolboy.<sup>28</sup> The indoctrination of ethical and war glorification ideals arising from classics teaching can be verified through studying contemporary documentation whereby ex-pupils identify with ancient (often Homeric) heroes and enthuse over their personal First World War involvement.<sup>29</sup> Evidence that classics stories had not infrequently been taught as factual history rather than moralising fiction, is confirmed by letters from the front. Clearly, lessons glorifying war would influence elective military combat such that a review of attitudinal outcomes provides fresh insight as to the motivational powers of classical instruction.

Chapel activities also formed an important aspect of subliminally urging boys towards the military. Following the outbreak, images of a Holy War - propagated in churches and by the press - were used (seemingly with effect) in an effort to distinguish English Protestantism from the German *Kultur* condemned as pagan. The superiority of the Anglican church, for many boys, had been inculcated at school. However, whether alumni (as early volunteers) had positively responded to sincerely-held Christian beliefs or had reacted because persuasion to enlist emanated from semi-familiar, authoritative Ecclesiastical sources is debatable. The dubious impact of chapel events and virtuous sermonising, structured to provoke the devout dimension to muscular Christianity, is examined to determine whether boys were successfully imbued with fervently-held Christian beliefs - or had simply chosen to concoct ennui-prompted *faux* piousness to avoid punishment. The practical influence of school-centred religious teaching is therefore called into question: while many boys accepted the *moral* principles expounded from school pulpits, there is little evidence of belief in (for example) the Holy Trinity or the Resurrection. Most chapel pulpit discourse embraced fervent indoctrination techniques that were comparable to those encountered in history and geography

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Newton, *British Labour, European Socialism and the struggle for peace, 1889-1914* (Oxford, 1989) and Leonard W. Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations* (Westport CT, 1976).

<sup>27</sup> For thoughts on the Edwardian approach to history teaching, see Bridget Goom, 'An Analysis of a Children's History Text', in Joseph Foley, (ed.) *Language, Education and Discourse: Functional Approaches* (London, 2005), pp. 120-142 and Stephen Heathorn, 'Let us remember that we, too, are English': Constructions of Citizenship and National Identity in English Elementary School Reading Books, 1880-1914', *Victorian Studies* 38 (1995), pp. 395-428. P. H. J. H. Gosden, *How They Were taught: an Anthology of Contemporary Accounts of Learning and Teaching in England, 1800-1950* (Oxford, 1969) gives a good overview of a range of practices, especially Chapter 8, 'Teachers and their Training' and Chapter 9, 'Primary and Secondary Schools, 1902-1950'.

<sup>28</sup> See for example, T. E. Page, 'Classics' in Page (ed.), *Public Schools from Within*, pp.3-11.

<sup>29</sup> For example, the poet Rupert Brooke; see Rupert Brooke and Edward Marsh, *Rupert Brooke: Collected Poems - with a Memoir by Edward Marsh* (London, 1992).



lessons. Boys were consistently imbued with biblical truths expounded by staff who were, themselves, ordained ministers: any juvenile challenges to the veracity of Christian teaching would have been anathema and punishable.<sup>30</sup>

The causation, planning and advent of the OTC scheme has been examined by a number of historians, notably those focused upon Edwardian national efficiency issues and youthful militarism. Few, however, have studied the arrangement from a practical and relevance viewpoint within a context of preparing young men for military leadership roles within a major European war.<sup>31</sup> After 1908, the Officers' Training Corps (OTC) modified school life for many pupils. Introduced following 'national efficiency' pressures and perceived Boer War failures, the scheme was designed to ensure a generation of elite schoolboys would be physically and attitudinally prepared for wartime service as young officers. The OTC, having become a regular feature of the typical curriculum, shaped pupil attitudes towards the military. Infused with classically-inspired beliefs that glorified war, together with indoctrinated views as to England's achievements in securing, retaining and policing Empire possessions, the opportunity for participation as a cadet in a national army was welcomed by boys and parents. The scheme had been implemented due to a shortage of junior officers. Attainment of OTC certificates entitled cadets to circumvent some aspects of training should they volunteer during wartime. Undoubtedly, the OTC was central to a mission to fast-track ex-public schoolboys to become subalterns in 1914.

Aside from exploring the promotion of militaristic tenets through corps activities, the melding of religious and military values through the OTC also represents a hitherto

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<sup>30</sup> A number of works are helpful in understanding the sometimes jingoistic role of the Anglican Church once war had been declared, however David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning* (London, 1961) is probably alone in juxtaposing public school Victorian morality with Edwardian character to good effect. Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1996); Stuart Mews, 'Spiritual Mobilization in the First World War', *Theology*, 74 (1971), pp. 258-264; Albert Marrin, *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War* (Durham, NC, 1974); A. J. Hoover, *God Germany and Britain in the Great War* (New York, 1989) are all valuable. But within a public school context, much information can be gleaned through the reading of headmasterly addresses in the school chapel - most of which were reproduced in school magazines.

<sup>31</sup> For a comprehensive evaluation of militarism vis-à-vis the advent of the OTC in public schools, see C. B. Otley, 'Militarism and Militarisation in the Public Schools, 1900-72', *British Journal of Sociology*, 29:3, (1978), pp.321-339; Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in Simon and Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School*, pp. 140-5 and Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War'. Also see G. R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency* (London, 1990) and Ian Worthington, 'Antecedent Education and Officer Recruitment: the Origins and Early Development of the Public School - Army Relationship', *Military Affairs*, 41:4 (1977), pp. 183-189 for insight as to setting up the OTC scheme.

overlooked dimension.<sup>32</sup> The end product of such a combination, the concept of soldiers as Crusaders fighting a Holy War, would positively affect responses to 'recruitment from pulpits'. Within the OTC context, public school militarism also lends itself to qualification and analysis since, during the early war, 'Prussianism' was held to epitomise the most despised enemy trait. The OTC historiography lacks analysis as to how supposedly respectable English militarism differed from its Germanic equivalent. One way of understanding comparisons between the OTC scheme and Germanic-styled militarism is through using delineations suggested by socio-military specialists, Ian Worthington and Stanislaw Andreski. They have successfully argued that 'militarism' serves merely as an umbrella expression covering a number of subordinate factors relevant to determining the degree to which a society or organisation can realistically be said to have embraced militaristic attributes. Through practical usage of these demarcations, comparisons between Prussianism and public school OTC militarism are made and points of difference and congruence established.<sup>33</sup>

The principal character-building dimension to public school education, athleticism, is a keynote area since the values purportedly imbued often corresponded to those required by the military in 1914, for example: leadership, teamwork, endurance, selflessness as well as physical strength. Organised sports became the principal means for developing boys' characters and thus governed many aspects of school life. Although J. A. Mangan's extensive body of work stands as an authority on public school sports, he acknowledges a serious gap within the historiography: for Mangan: 'the process of jingoistic indoctrination of the public schoolboy into naïve, heroic and self-denying patriotism has still to be adequately explained. And it requires a ...thorough examination of school magazines from 1870 onwards'.<sup>34</sup> Mangan's school magazine reference is pertinent in that games reports governed every issue's content and the reportage was key to promoting ethical values that

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<sup>32</sup> Although Albert Marrin has written of the crusader dimension to the First World War, he hasn't connected this with the religious dimensions to the OTC training programmes that many public schoolboys attended. Although by no means a dominant part of that training, the 'God is on our side' message was certainly implanted - to be recalled when 'Holy War' ideas were being suggested in 1914. See Marrin, *The Last Crusade*, pp.124-5.

<sup>33</sup> Ian Worthington, 'Socialization, Militarisation and Officer Recruiting: The Development of the Officers' Training Corps', *Military Affairs*, 43:2 (1979), pp.90-6 and Stanislaw Andreski, *Military Organisation and Society* (London, 1968) are particularly strong in the area of determining degrees of militarist impact upon society. L. R. Pekin also provides some insight into the OTC scheme albeit from a pacifist viewpoint; L.R. Pekin, *The Military Training of Youth: an Enquiry into the Aims and Effects of the O.T.C* (London, 1937).

<sup>34</sup> J. A. Mangan, 'Review of *The Old Lie*', *English Historical Review*, 105:405 (1990), pp. 526-7.

would prove militarily valuable in 1914: character development, as identified through school magazines, therefore forms the basis for the athletics aspect of the research. Individual sporting performances consumed numerous column inches, yet the bulk of editorial comment concentrated on the character qualities displayed rather than players' skills. By examining the character ethos of games, through magazine reports, some of the study that Mangan felt was overlooked becomes realised. Research shows that attributes of heroism and self-denial were consistently emphasized as qualitative mainstays. Furthermore, the magazine's role in making character-based judgments upon individual accomplishment was notorious. A magazine match performance report could temporarily make or break the reputation of a schoolboy through extolling or deprecating, not his sporting skill, but the elements of character that he displayed or lacked.<sup>35</sup>

Games influence on many public schoolboys proved to be substantial. At school, sports were frequently analogised to war so that examples of athletic vocabulary choices frequently crop up in military letters home, personal journals and memoirs. Moreover, the fact that games had so overshadowed public school life, caused the ethic to affect some young officers' wartime conduct - to the extent that their (and their subordinates') lives were needlessly risked or sacrificed. Examples of rash behaviour included the macho flaunting of a novice officer's uniform - with echoes of the proud wearing of recently-awarded school sporting colours.

#### **Selection of public schools for research**

The second historiographical drawback concerns the schools that have traditionally been studied - the nine Clarendon and five 'great' schools.<sup>36</sup> This imbalance has skewed some works towards the education of high-born boys. For example, in *The Old Lie*, Parker's textual attention, given to six Clarendon schools (Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Marlborough, Westminster, Winchester), exceeds, by a factor exceeding

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<sup>35</sup> The principal analysis of public school sports during the period was described in Mangan, *Athleticism*; other helpful, but less comprehensive, works include Tony Collins, 'English Rugby Union and the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 45:4 (2002), pp. 797-817 and Colin Veitch, 'Play up! Play up! And Win the War!': Football, the Nation and the First World War 1914-15', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 20:3 (1985), pp. 363-78.

<sup>36</sup> Clarendon schools comprised: Charterhouse, Eton College, Harrow, Merchant Taylors', Rugby, Shrewsbury, St Paul's, Westminster, Winchester College. Haileybury, Sherborne, Uppingham, Charterhouse and Marlborough are among those also considered as 'great' public schools. See Colin Shrosbree, *Public Schools and Private Education: the Clarendon Commission, 1861-64 and the Public School Acts* (Manchester, 1988) and Vivian Ogilvie, *The English Public School* (New York, 1957).

three, the total for all other schools, most of which are relegated to being cited only as suppliers of anecdotes or as occasional sporting opponents.<sup>37</sup>

However a greater number of boys had attended a second tier school thus rendering them more numerically relevant to volunteering. Second level schools catered, in the main, for those boys having an aspirational middle-class background - the sons of (for example) professional or otherwise commercially successful fathers and socially ambitious mothers. As the 1899 Dean Close prospectus advised, 'boys are constantly and successfully prepared in the School for every department of professional and business life'.<sup>38</sup> The fourteen Clarendon and great schools, as educators (in the main) of the aristocracy and highest classes, were less often frequented by conventional middle-class boys.<sup>39</sup> This has meant that these establishments have been allocated disproportionate attention when their quantity (six per cent) is set against the total number of public schools.<sup>40</sup> And from a personal memoir perspective, since 1918, much has been written about recalled experiences at one of the Clarendon or great public schools.<sup>41</sup>

By shifting the focus from aristocratic education centres towards less conspicuous schools, it becomes possible to examine the formative experiences of and effects upon middle-class sons. These academies were more characteristic of the wider public school fraternity and were nonetheless essential to officer volunteering during 1914-1915. These second tier schools are exemplified by Blundell's, Devonshire; Malvern, Worcestershire; Dean Close, Cheltenham; Bloxham, Oxfordshire; Whitgift, South London; Sutton Valence, Kent and King Edward's, Bath: these seven schools form the heart of this study. All reported many lost or wounded volunteers during the First World War: for example, of the 398 ex-Bloxham pupils that served, 96 were reported killed or missing, 106 wounded or gassed. Dean Close serving ex-pupils numbered 700 with 124 killed in action and 110 wounded: Malvern College reported 457 ex-pupils killed in action (the numbers of wounded and the total number of those who served is not known).<sup>42</sup>

Given the themes selected for examination, (institutionalisation, socialization, manliness, curriculum, chapel, the OTC, militarism, athleticism) it was important to

<sup>37</sup> See the index to Parker, *The Old Lie*, pp.307-319.

<sup>38</sup> *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus* (1899), pp. 6-7 and 12.

<sup>39</sup> Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society*, p.67.

<sup>40</sup> There are c230 second-tier (i.e. non-Clarendon, non-great) public schools accounting therefore for 94% of the whole.

<sup>41</sup> For example, Eton: Cyril Connolly, *A Georgian Boyhood* (London, 1938); Uppingham: Richard Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice* (London, 1937); Sherborne: Alec Waugh, *The Loom of Youth* (London, 1917); Harrow: Horace Vachell, *The Hill* (London, 1905); Charterhouse: Robert Graves, *Goodbye to all that* (London, 1929).

<sup>42</sup> Data retrieved from school Chapel records and memorials.

pick schools that appeared well placed to illuminate one or more of the principal topics for study. Of these schools, Bloxham, Dean Close and Malvern were used extensively since, in addition to highly accessible magazine materials, they meticulously maintained archives that included games information and alumni communications for the twenty year period leading up to and spanning the First World War. These proved valuable for assessing the extent of sporting character and self-sacrifice significance to school life, and much of the alumni correspondence revealed the persistence, beyond the classroom and sports-field, of school-induced attitudes to athleticism, nationhood, warfare and the military. School magazines of the period reflected headmaster, staff and pupil views on a range of contemporary subjects, many of which would influence later wartime volunteering decisions. Throughout, magazines showed how sports and games were crucial to all establishments. They also revealed the significance of the chapel as a centre for community activities and as the hub for propagating the Anglican values deemed necessary for aspiring young gentlemen. Dean Close school, in particular, took pride in promoting its religious credentials: its educational approach was purportedly based upon 'the Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant Principles of the Church of England' so that the school's contribution to the Chapel dimension of the research was considerable.<sup>43</sup>

Through diaries and magazine news items, Blundell's and King Edward's school were very strong in recording corps activities. OTC activity reportage also showed how military versions of muscular Christianity principles were introduced and cemented. Sutton Valence school retained highly-revealing unpublished copies of Edwardian-era pupil memoirs which proved enlightening as to the institutionalised forcing of manliness values upon new pupils. Whitgift's school archives were informative as to curriculum details - in particular, approaches to classics teaching, a subject vital to the shaping of attitudes towards war and concepts of glorious death. Throughout, the voices of the soon-to-be soldiers were of special value: whether through poems, debating society reports, diaries and journals, letters 'from the front' or even post-war memoirs - all, in different ways, were indicative of personal pupil reactions to a public school education.

#### **'Now all roads lead to France and heavy is the tread'<sup>44</sup> - 1914 volunteering**

Although the premise of the research project centres upon those formative educational elements that would eventually drive ex-public schoolboys to volunteer

<sup>43</sup> *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus* (1899), p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Lines from Edward Thomas, 'Roads', *The Collected Poems and War Diary, 1917* (London, 2004), p.98.

in 1914-15, reactions to the events of the first weeks and months of war merit examination in their own right, since the approaches of organised recruitment programmes varied according to the class of target audience. The immediacy of working-class volunteering motives and constraints differed widely from the reliance upon ingrained character features embedded by public schools so that the total recruitment campaign became, to some degree, divided and fashioned so as to elicit the greatest class-based responses. Few ex-public schoolboys had economic worries or pressing family responsibilities to worry them while many working-class men would find volunteering decisions greatly influenced by domestic and socio-economic concerns.<sup>45</sup>

An examination of public schools' immediate reactions to war when it arose reveals that, since it occurred during the holiday period, school responses, as communities, were generally unavailable. However, a review of magazines published immediately following the declaration of war shows that a supportive, confident (albeit surprised) public school reaction to August 1914 events was consistent: some schools were already publishing the names of their volunteers and reporting upon alumni and staff casualties within their autumn editions. A number held early debates examining war both as a general topic as well as deliberating the new conflict with Germany. Boys' reactions were almost exclusively bellicose: war was welcomed and it was evident that, following an extensive period of supremacist indoctrination and OTC exposure, many recent and current pupils were keen to participate as rapidly as possible.<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, in order to accelerate junior officer volunteering, the military authorities decided to capitalise upon such enthusiasm through the use of persuasion techniques. The newly-formed War Propaganda Bureau instigated a programme aimed at swiftly securing subaltern volunteers - an operation exclusively focused upon ex-public schoolboys and undergraduates. Having hired an assembly of eminent men of letters, the bureau commissioned and placed texts justifying war within those newspapers and journals typically enjoyed by the privileged (and thus considered more literate) classes.<sup>47</sup> The campaign's abstract persuasive arguments were based, in the main, upon moral issues, Germany being portrayed as being guilty of fundamental transgressions during their recent incursion into Belgium. Rumoured German atrocity violations also received across-the-board publicity and

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<sup>45</sup> De Groot, *Blighty*, pp. 31-2 and 44-7; Silbey, *British Working-class*, pp.49-68.

<sup>46</sup> For examples of early war reportage, see in particular *The Whitgiftian*, November 1914; *The Malvernian*, November 1914; the *Sutton Valence School Magazine*, Christmas Term, 1914.

<sup>47</sup> The work of Catriona Pennell is particularly informative as to the work of the bureau in relation to 'elitist' recruitment: Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012).

formed the basis for numerous posters, cartoons, and music-hall diatribes as well as giving emphasis to the War Propaganda Bureau's junior officer recruitment poems, leading articles, speech reproductions and other press placements.<sup>48</sup>

But in what ways did the recruitment propaganda differ according to the targeted classes? The principal medium for securing volunteers was the poster: however, studies have shown that the poster campaign, in particular the Kitchener exhortations, was directed at potential working-class volunteers - as were events at sports stadiums and music-halls.<sup>49</sup> Although, in the daily round, all classes would have seen (and thus been moved by) over twelve million recruitment posters (with 164 different designs), many visual messages and captions tended to address issues affecting working men: local and rural patriotism, family protection, feminine endorsement, shirker ignominy as well as appealing to duty and nationhood conscience.<sup>50</sup> Consequently, the bulk of the high-impact propaganda campaign added little to increment ex-public schoolboys' already-manipulated senses of service, nationhood, war, supremacy and self-sacrifice.

Yet it was vital that such indoctrinated attitudes be converted into real volunteering as rapidly as possible since, in 1914, junior officers were in extremely short supply. In contrast to the largely visual impact of the poster campaign, recruitment propaganda aimed at privileged ex-schoolboys was mostly textual - so that incitements to volunteer were received through quality newspaper and magazine editorials, cartoons, booklets and published poems. Research into some of this elitist material reveals how much of its motivational moral language precisely coincided with that used when muscular Christianity values had been urged upon credulous public schoolboys during the few years leading up to the war. Drawing upon methods from studies of propaganda psychology, it becomes evident that the most powerful persuasive mechanisms exploit previously ingrained ideas using (most significantly) lexica of words and phrases that target groups are already conversant and comfortable with.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Nicoletta F. Gullace, 'Sexual Violence and Family Honor: British Propaganda and International Law during the First World War', *American Historical Review*, 102:3 (1997), pp. 714-747 is instructive.

<sup>49</sup> Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London, 1977) provides a good overview of recruitment campaigns. For a comprehensive evaluation of the poster campaign, see also Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction? First World War posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester, 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Aulich and Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?*, p. 36.

<sup>51</sup> In particular the pioneering works, Paul Kecskemeti, *Meaning, Communication and Value* (Chicago, 1952) together with Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (London, 1992) and Robert B. V. Cialdini, *Influence: Science and Practice* (Needham MA, 2001).

Concordance analysis is a technique that can be used for analysing keyword and idiom frequencies in order to identify and evaluate the promotion of similar ideas and emotions within apparently unrelated texts - in this case, early-war articles and editorials in the quality press vis-à-vis the overall reportage within public school magazines of the preceding twenty years. Sample early-war persuasive articles from *The Times*, together with an inspirational Lloyd George speech were checked to assess the frequency of such expressions as (for example) 'sacrifice', 'honour', 'courage', 'patriotism' etc. and their derivatives (see Appendices I and J). As a basis for comparison, each word's occurrence volume was juxtaposed against frequencies in editions of the Bloxham school magazine, *The Bloxhamist*, between 1895 and 1915. Correspondence was high, indicating that educative textual indoctrination endured to be utilised in the service of the state. For many recent ex-public schoolboys, the subliminal pressure to enlist in 1914 would have been hard to resist as a consequence of formative exposure to techniques of persuasion: much of the language used was identical. A readership brought up on character-based values of sacrifice and courage on school sports fields would readily connect with the same values when expressed in a wartime volunteering context.

**'To fight for my King and Country. I only hope I may be fearless and shall fight in such a way that you will feel proud of your son' - research sources.**<sup>52</sup>

The sources needed to explore the overall public school experience are not difficult to identify: the majority of material is drawn from school archives. Boys themselves provided much material: for example, contemporaneous journals of OTC gatherings reveal how they practised warfare - at least as undertaken within the English countryside. Magazine editorials display headmasterly attitudes towards many topical issues, and reported Speech Day addresses, from visiting dignitaries, are revealing - if often reactionary. Their frequent focus upon character values render such speeches as important to maintaining an atmosphere whereby moral and national values could be propagated.

Verbatim magazine reports of debating society meetings offer insight into schoolboys' grasp of controversial topics: class, Germany, Empire, conscription, warfare etc. New insight can be produced not only from the views expressed *per se* but from the chosen vocabulary. Other magazine items also reflect pupil and alumni views: poems, letters, OTC adventures, reports from Empire - all are valuable in that contrasting juvenile attitudes towards relevant topics can be assessed. In this way,

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<sup>52</sup> Quoted from a letter 12/7/1916 to his father from 2nd Lieutenant W J Palk MC. serving with the 12th East Surrey Regiment and the 10th Surrey Regiment on the Western Front; per GS 1219, Liddle Collection.



while textbook analyses and headmasterly addresses can reveal the bases for many indoctrinated beliefs, pupil-authored material can similarly expose the effects. Curriculum contents, school rule booklets, punishment book extracts, timetables help to explain how pupils' time allocation, progress, academic activity, attention and behaviour were directed. Contemporary school prospectuses, as selling documents, reveal the priorities that headmasters and governors felt would attract parents. Personal non-contemporaneous alumni memoirs record, from an adult viewpoint, adverse experiences that, as children, boys feared to report.

Some sources have inherent drawbacks: Edwardian-era history, geography and classics textbooks, works that tended to glorify war and promote English supremacy, embody the content and the range of the messages being imbued and thus reflect the attitudes and beliefs being inculcated in the classroom. However, a textbook only served as a teaching aid, so that their written content alone only suffices as a partial indicator of the fuller doctrinal messages being imparted. And, post August 1914, 'letters from the front' and magazine memoirs from ex-public school serving officers are informative. From such sources, by way of language, description and sentiment, the impact of various aspects of public school tutelage, together with the wartime experience itself, can be seen in the way that newly-arrived volunteer officers eagerly welcomed the opportunity to serve. Yet, such wartime communications tend to be written with a particular readership in mind so that some self-censorship will be applied to family communications or potentially distressing stories directed at a juvenile audience. Sermon texts urging volunteering as soon as possible are also of interest: for example as Geoffrey Fisher (later appointed Archbishop of Canterbury) preached to a gathering of public school pupils, 'we fight believing we are fighting for God's cause against the devils'.<sup>53</sup> Yet, of course, nobody can be sure of how such messages were really received: did the typical schoolboy listener really anticipate fighting 'for God's cause'? Were the enemy really perceived as 'devils'? But nevertheless, the abundance and variety of school-based textual material provides insights into school priorities as well as delivering vehicles for exploring the routines, challenges and direction that every pupil, and potential soldier, faced.

#### **'A trinity of Imperialism, Militarism and Athleticism' - background to public schools**

Prior to exploring the influence public schools had upon volunteering, it is appropriate to review the evolution of the system. During late Victorian and Edwardian years, public schools were set to provide the young men who would

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<sup>53</sup> Geoffrey Fisher, *A Sermon Preached in Repton School Chapel, Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>, 1914* (Repton, 1914).

occupy leadership positions within governmental, Empire, professional, commercial and military fields. This had evolved from previous thinking: following the 1830s reforms pioneered by the Rugby headmaster, Thomas Arnold, most schools were institutions fixed upon evangelical enthusiasm, propagation of moral principles, and classical scholarship.<sup>54</sup> Organizationally, Arnold's ideas pioneered boarding and house arrangements supervised by recently-introduced prefectorial systems.<sup>55</sup>

Beginning in the 1880s, what J. A. Mangan refers to as 'the trinity of Imperialism, Militarism and Athleticism', flourished in reaction to the social, economic and political changes emerging during late Victorian and Edwardian England. These included heightened middle-class aspiration, the increasing costs of launching sons into professional careers, post-Boer war concerns as to national military capability, the propagation of gentlemanly and public-service ideals among the leading classes. As a result, education became increasingly formal, prolonged and expensive so that many middle-class parents restricted their family size to that which they could afford to educate.<sup>56</sup> Many of the newer public schools also enhanced their curricula to include Governmental and business-related subjects, all within an atmosphere of unalloyed Imperial enthusiasm.<sup>57</sup> For example, in preparation for domestic or Empire careers within either commercial or technical fields, Dean Close School, founded in 1884, incorporated classes in book-keeping, physics, natural sciences, shorthand, engineering and German.<sup>58</sup> These new approaches arose from a quest to cultivate character and assemble a generation of competent, honourable youngsters who might later be regarded as gentlemen.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the socialization of gentlemanly attitudes and character dominated schools' educational purposes ahead of scriptural and cerebral objectives.<sup>60</sup> These transformations became universal throughout the public school system during the thirty years before 1914.<sup>61</sup>

Pupils being prepared as gentlemen represented two distinct social groupings. The first included upper-class sons of the aristocracy and major landowners. The second

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<sup>54</sup> For an overview of Arnold's influence see T. W. Bamford, 'Public Schools and Social Class, 1801-50', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 12:3 (1961), pp. 224-235 and Terence Copley, *Black Tom: Arnold of Rugby, the Myth and the Man* (London, 2002).

<sup>55</sup> Judge, 'The English Public School', pp. 513-524.

<sup>56</sup> Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society*, p.66.

<sup>57</sup> Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p.87-90.

<sup>58</sup> Rev. Charles Whitney, *At Close Quarters: Dean Close School, 1884-2009* (Hereford, 2009), p.31.

<sup>59</sup> Mangan, 'Review of *The Old Lie*', pp. 526-7.

<sup>60</sup> Significantly, the most frequent term of approbation used in testimonials and recommendations for the Colonial Service by school headmasters was that X or Y was 'a perfect gentleman' - Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p.64.

<sup>61</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.52.

embraced the professional, military, agricultural, ecclesiastical and commercial middle-classes - gentlefolk who had achieved, or at least aspired towards, high (or higher) social standing.<sup>62</sup> Class-based predilections cannot be definitive, but typically, upper-class sons attended one of the nine Clarendon Commission, or five 'great' public schools: for many, this would lead to studies at Oxford or Cambridge or to a military academy - typically, Sandhurst or Dartmouth. Ensuing occupations would include leadership positions in the judiciary, the military, Empire, government - or eventual stewardship of family estates.<sup>63</sup> However, ambitious middle-class families with aspirations towards the clergy, the law, the civil service, Empire administration, teaching, engineering and other management and professional occupations leaned towards sending their sons to one of the other c230 second-tier establishments that made up the Headmasters' Conference (HMC).<sup>64</sup>

For many Edwardian schoolboys, home experience implied degrees of paternal dominance that insisted upon obedience and presumed generational inequality. Admission to the parental world was permitted at controlled intervals.<sup>65</sup> Schooling would often reflect the ambitions of fathers, and sons would frequently attend the same school as their parent.<sup>66</sup> Although a quintessential paterfamilias might have felt that good breeding was equivalent in importance to good education, access, as embryonic gentlemen, to universities and prestigious careers was essential.<sup>67</sup> As ever, public schools' deliverable product was opportunity - the chance of securing

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<sup>62</sup> At Bloxham School, for example, a late nineteenth century census of paternal occupation showed that, of the 164 pupils at the school, their fathers were farmers (50), in business (42), clergymen (21), lawyers (10), doctors (7) military men (4) or miscellaneous professional, (e.g. teachers, engineers, architects etc.) (30); Simon Batten, *A Shining Light: 150 years of Bloxham School* (London, 2010), p. 28.

<sup>63</sup> For an additional synopsis of the concept of aristocracy and gentry, see Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society*, pp. 106-108.

<sup>64</sup> For more thoughts on the composition of the middle and the professional classes see Donald Read, *Edwardian England, 1901-1915* (London, 1972), pp. 43-6. HMC information retrieved from [www.hmc.org.uk](http://www.hmc.org.uk) [accessed 29 July 2011].

<sup>65</sup> Most boys would have boarded at preparatory school prior to public school; nursemaids and nannies were domestically prolific; Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society*, p.125.

<sup>66</sup> David Hey, *How Our Ancestors Lived* (London, 2003), p.115. The assumption of Victorian overriding paternal authority has, however, been challenged by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-class, 1780-1850* (London, 2002). The authors argue that womenfolk exerted much more influence upon family matters than had previously been credited. Nevertheless, because of their own public school education, it is likely that, in general, fathers tended to be the decisive force in matters of filial schooling, manners and discipline.

<sup>67</sup> Yet access to commissions was still thought to be founded upon birth; writing in 1897 in respect of the flurry of officers that had been promoted from the ranks during the Crimean War, a contemporary social commentator notes that 'these promotions, suitable as they are to the day of democracy, cannot of course affect sensibly the tone or the personnel of the officers of the Queen's army, who will continue to be, as they have been, men born to the social advantages of gentle station' T. H. Escott, *The Social Transformation of the Victorian Age* (London, 1897), p.310.

an appropriate professional place that accompanied a fitting position in superior society. Beyond opportunity, the distinguishing outcomes of independent education, thought by parental clients to distinguish it from lower-class alternatives, could be considered as layers of manly, but supremely worthy: morals, beliefs, cultural certainties and traditions - synthesized to form a mannered individual with high standards of proper behaviour - an embryonic gentleman.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> See Tosh, 'Gentlemanly politeness and manly simplicity in Victorian England', *Manliness and Masculinities*, pp. 83-102.

## CHAPTER 1 – INSTITUTIONS

### ‘School life becomes the reality, and home life the illusion’

This chapter deals with four questions. The first determines whether Edwardian public schools can be legitimately classed as ‘total institutions’, especially in relation to their implanting of manly principles. The sociologist Erving Goffman argues that public schools should be so categorised and it is difficult to see how manliness could have been instilled without the attributes he specifies.<sup>1</sup> Understanding the total institution dimension is important since it formed the climate necessary for the hard socialization of attitudes key to positive 1914 volunteering decisions.<sup>2</sup>

The second question explores the softer socialization of pupils: moulding positions by acculturative methods that were distinct from athleticism, the curriculum and religion. The cultivation of favourable attitudes towards war, together with fostering gentlemanliness as an essential quality, are two factors that helped stimulate subaltern volunteering. As well as examining efforts at encouraging boyish war approval, this question also explores class differentiation and distinguishing language. Pre-1914, it was assumed that professional positions, including junior military ones, would, irrespective of technical training, be held by boys schooled to become gentlemen. And a young gentleman would be immediately distinguished from lower classes by the nuances of his speech: its tone, vocabulary, accent and emphasis. How he spoke and acted, as a gentleman, was considered essential for a young officer commanding other ranks drawn from the working-classes.<sup>3</sup>

Thirdly, the institutionalised manliness concept: while some manliness qualities (for example: physical strength, stamina, individualism, responsibility) were infused through sports, many presumed virtues were derived from school life severity. Manliness, as a concept, embraced a range of abstract qualities that were valued by military recruiters: courage, obedience, fortitude, decisiveness being among the most prominent. Monasticism, rules and punishment were key to establishing manliness, as was insistence upon behavioural and cerebral orthodoxy. Austere living and other elements of institutional adversity (notably the expunging of

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<sup>1</sup> Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and other Inmates* (London, 1991), p.16.

<sup>2</sup> Goffman alludes to the ‘soaking up’ of cultural, behavioural and moral ethics from austere institutional surroundings as ‘cultural osmosis’ an approach similar to ‘hard’ socialization. Goffman, *Asylums*, p.23.

<sup>3</sup> Ian Worthington, ‘Antecedent Education and Officer Recruitment: the Origins and Early Development of the Public School - Army Relationship’ *Military Affairs*, 41: 4 (1977), pp. 183-189.

personal identity) were thought to contribute to a boy's manly resilience and to steer him towards the acceptance of regimented environments.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the effects of chapel are examined: to what extent were moral and spiritual beliefs embedded by exposure to Christian messages from the school pulpit? Pre-war headmasters perpetually promoted schools' Christian credentials to the outside world. Such sponsorship is unsurprising since it reflected the community aspirations of parents: as Bryan Wilson observes, 'church allegiance [was] a matter of social respectability'.<sup>5</sup> However, the extent to which prospectus gloss reflected pupil spirituality is unclear: did chapels stand merely as symbolic foundations for plenary school gatherings, or were they centres for the expression of genuine belief and devotion? And did divinity teaching make serious theological inroads into youthful irreverence? Were lessons aimed at furthering doctrinal acceptance or were they geared towards imparting biblical history as elements of unassailable truth? Exploring school-based divinity is germane since the 'muscular Christianity' ethos implied linkages between physical strength and crusading morality. These two strands merged when OTC field activities became yoked to Christian militarism - particularly at cadet camps with the singing of campaigning, supremacist hymns. Morality-based Christian ethics, rather than faith, emerged from chapel sermons and steered alumni into volunteering when urged by 1914-15 Anglican preachers.<sup>6</sup>

It was the physical portion of the muscular Christianity equation that dominated. Most boys welcomed the character-forming challenges of team sports, while the spiritual dimension remained little more than a supportive framework. The extent to which boys adopted the secular aspects of divinity teaching, while discounting devotional doctrinal content, merits examination. The impact of scholastic Anglicanism upon volunteering was considerable despite the indifference of most boys. Pulpit recruitment incited First World War enlistment through evocative language and the recalled authority of reverend schoolmasters.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of manliness vis-à-vis gentlemanliness, see John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Harlow, 2005), pp. 86-99; also, Hartmut Berghoff, 'Public Schools And The Decline Of The British Economy, 1870-1914', *Past and Present*, 129, (1990), p. 152.

<sup>5</sup> Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society: a Sociological Comment* (London, 1966), pp.110 and 114. Chapter 7, 'Religion and Status', pp. 103-124 provides an insightful contrast between class-based attitudes to religion in Britain and the US.

<sup>6</sup> See C. A. G. Rundle, *My Diary of Officers' Training Corps Camp at Tidworth Pennings, Salisbury Plain*, (unpublished manuscript per Blundell's School archive, 1909). For a recruiting sermon example see Frederick Brodie MacNutt, *The Reproach of War: Addresses Given in Southwark Cathedral, November 1914* (London, 1914).

<sup>7</sup> Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000* (London, 2001), p.88. Within this work, Brown illustrates how religion, irrespective of church or chapel attendance erosion, remained important within many people's lives. The

### **'Enclosed, formally administered rounds of life' - public schools as total institutions**

To understand how his 'total institution' concept relates to public schools, Erving Goffman's definition merits reprise:

A Total Institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.<sup>8</sup>

This alone justifies public school designation albeit alongside compulsory care homes, disease infirmaries, asylums and prisons: voluntary retreats (abbeys, monasteries, convents), can also be included. For all these, the separation of subjects from regular society is a principal goal, whether mandatory for reasons of public safety, self-selected as refuges, or protective for people taken into care. Such institutions differ from enterprises founded upon work. A dominant work purpose relegates social exclusion to a lesser objective, yet social disconnection might still be vital to the achievement of work-based aims: so ships at sea, military barracks, labour camps can also be categorised as total institutions - and English public boarding schools.<sup>9</sup>

Beyond the determinants Goffman selects to characterize total institutions, are features that show how they differ from convention. In the wider world: 'the individual tends to sleep, play, and work in different places, with different co-participants, under different authorities, and without an overall rational plan'.<sup>10</sup> However, work, sleep and play, in total institutions, become coalesced into tightly-controlled singleness. Boundaries are arranged to ensure all pursuits are conducted in defined locations under strict authority. Regular activities are prearranged, conducted in groups and tightly scheduled. Performance and behaviour are superintended, actions are subject to rules and monitored by officialdom, personal privacy is curtailed, access to the outside is restricted. These approaches represent degrees of supervision that tally closely with Edwardian-era public school life. Several other facets within Goffman's analysis resonate: the physical enclosure of pupils, stern discipline and punishment systems, the removal of familial support, the expunging of identity, physical discomfort, official acquiescence to peer coercion, minimal privacy, close observation, the dissemination of internalized propaganda.<sup>11</sup>

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acceptance of Christian values by many otherwise agnostic public schoolboys and their response to authoritative preaching in 1914 is an example of such influence.

<sup>8</sup> Goffman, *Asylums*, p.11.

<sup>9</sup>For further information, see Samuel E. Wallace (ed.), 'On the Totality of Institutions', *Total Institutions* (Chicago, 1971), pp.1-9.

<sup>10</sup> Goffman, *Asylums*, p.16.

<sup>11</sup> Goffman, *Asylums*, p.17. It is important to recognize Goffman's credentials alongside some of the academic reservations surrounding his total institution theories. A recent evaluation by Gary Fine and Philip Manning states Goffman to be 'arguably the most

However, Goffman's school-based theories are challenged by the sociologist, George Hillery, who suggests that for immature pupils, normal sociological generalizations do not apply. He argues that juvenile scholars are rarely physically or mentally incapable, nor dangerously violent. He cites, as differing from penal structures, school prefectorial systems whereby senior pupils gain disciplinary responsibility for juniors. Nevertheless, Hillery accepts that otherwise, Goffman's classic definition fits public schools: through their deprivation of personal freedoms, their exclusion of familial influences, their commitment to character change and their orientation towards work.<sup>12</sup> But Hillery's concerns fail to seriously weaken classifying public schools as total institutions. Firstly, as identified by Oliver Thomson, immaturity enhanced pupil susceptibility to controlling techniques.<sup>13</sup> And Hillery's disquiet concerning prefects ignores their validity within institutions bent upon imbuing leadership and discipline qualities - indeed, trusty systems are recognised institutional control techniques.

Another critic, John Wakeford, supports Goffman's definition but highlights that, unlike prisons, boarding schools conduct term-based discharge and readmission and that such locational discontinuity dilutes institutional impact.<sup>14</sup> However, the total elapsed time (over several years) at school, typically exceeds that served by penal inmates. Nevertheless, discharge and readmission policies undeniably reflect inconsistency between schools and prisons. However, the significance is dubious. As Robert Graves recalls, Charterhouse school life dominated his childhood:

School life becomes the reality, and home life the illusion. In England, parents of the governing classes virtually lose all intimate touch with their children from about the age of eight.<sup>15</sup>

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significant American social theorist of the twentieth century; his work is widely read and remains capable of redirecting disciplinary thought'. Gary Alan Fine and Philip Manning, 'Erving Goffman' in George Ritzer (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Major Social Theorists* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 34-41.

<sup>12</sup> George A. Hillery, Jr., 'Freedom and Social Organization: A Comparative Analysis', *American Sociological Review*, 36:1 (1971), pp. 51-65.

<sup>13</sup> See Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: A History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999), wherein he writes of: 'the value of early training as part of long-term propaganda. Educational subjects like history, literature, religion, geography, have nearly always been taught in a biased manner, bringing up new generations to have attitudes compatible with the dominant group in society', p.4.

<sup>14</sup> John Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite: A Sociological Analysis of the English Public Boarding School* (London, 1969), p.42.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Graves, *Goodbye to all that* (London, 1929), p.24 Other ex-pupils supported 'prison' analogies; Evelyn Waugh, after suffering rigorous regimentation at Lancing College (1917-22), wrote: 'Anyone who has been to an English public school will always feel comparatively at home in prison'. Evelyn Waugh, *Decline and Fall* (Harmondsworth, 1976), p.188 quoted in Alisdare Hickson, *The Poisoned Bowl: Sex, Repression and the Public School System* (London, 1995), p.21.



Aside from those doubts, there was one major difference between public schools and the exemplary prison models used by Goffman. This related to prioritising and balancing physical restrictions, intrusive observation, and character development. As Michel Foucault asserts, beyond deprivation of liberty, prisons represent remedial places of vigilant individual surveillance. Foucault's idealised prison, founded upon Jeremy Bentham's panopticon design, had scrutiny facilities embedded within the building fabric. In any prison, the essential purpose centres around maintaining a status quo of incarceration and enforcing order - inmate observation was therefore essential. Any rehabilitation and work objectives were secondary to preserving captivity.<sup>16</sup> These priorities (or their equivalents) were reversed in public schools. Developmental goals, which established character values, took precedence over regulations that excluded pupils from society. And staff surveillance of individual school boarders was limited to moral supervision that supposedly prevented un-Christian debauchery.<sup>17</sup> In prisons and schools, these priority differences determined relations between staff and occupants. Despite policy moves towards prisoner correction, jailers presumed prisoner delinquency so that inbuilt mutual suspicion was omnipresent.<sup>18</sup> Yet, pupils and staff relations were generally agreeable although schoolmasters remained authority figures.

Unlike many other categories of institution (but especially prisons), the totality of youthful school experiences meant that lifelong allegiance to the school, after encouragement, often transpired. Such positivity is evidenced by the affection

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<sup>16</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York, 1995) p.170. Not that efforts at prisoner character reformation in Edwardian England were so very great. Writing about conditions in Wormwood Scrubs in 1902, Arthur Griffiths notes that: 'Now all British prisoners are segregated: they are located, each one, in a separate cell or small room; that is to say, when they are not under discipline and observation. They are alone when at leisure, when feeding, sleeping, resting from labour; alone, as a general rule when at work, although some forms of labour are now carried out in common' per Arthur Griffiths, 'In Wormwood Scrubs Prison' in George R. Sims (ed.), *Living London: Its work and its play; its humour and its pathos* (London, 1902), p.126.

<sup>17</sup> Clement Dukes, M.D. (physician to Rugby School) writes of headmasterly dilemmas when faced with a decision as whether to move to a 'cubicle' dormitory system: 'while these cells are in vogue how can I exercise moral control over the boys, even with the aid of the best sixth-fellows, and if such control is impracticable, as it is, what dire consequences must infallibly ensue'. Clement Dukes M.D., 'Health' in T. E. Page (ed.), *The Public Schools From Within*, p.184.

<sup>18</sup> Although an increased emphasis on reformatory rather than punitive aspects of prisons followed the 1895 Gladstone Report. See John Stevenson, *British Society, 1914-1945* (Harmondsworth, 1990), pp. 375-7. Also see Norval Morris and David Rothman, *Oxford History of the Prison* (Oxford, 1995) pp. 157-61, wherein the authors note how, post the 1895 reforms, Borstals were administered in the fashion of the English public school. And Michael Ignatieff, *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850*, (London, 1979), p.75 notes that early-mid nineteenth century judicial punishment was 'a mutual benefit to the offender and that society against which the offence was committed'.

expressed by alumni to their *alma mater*.<sup>19</sup> In 1914, these loyalties were frequently conflated with patriotism as feelings of school and national allegiance became verbally coalesced. The educationalist, Sir Henry Craik, addressing Malvern pupils in 1916, advised them:

they would carry with them the inspiration of belonging not only to a great country, not only of fighting for the greatest of all causes, but of belonging to a good School where they had learned to be men and where ... they had learnt to play the hero.<sup>20</sup>

Although late Victorian reforms meant prisons became less fixated upon punitive retribution, the consistent school aim was to produce boys with outstanding character values going beyond moral compliance. These included factors destined to propel boys into wartime volunteering: patriotism, duty, honour and leadership qualities. Conversely, prison-based correction would aim merely to discharge ex-prisoners with sufficient reformed morality to return, harmlessly, to citizenship.

If Edwardian elitist schools are designated total institutions, then a meaningful question arises: for undertakings set upon fostering gentlemanliness and leadership, why was it necessary for direction to occur in harsh establishments? The reason reflects the mission's conversion aspect. Beyond curricular coaching, physical training and the infusion of moral qualities, the school programme centred around attitudinal change - pupil personalities were modification targets. This is evidenced by the enduring language used to explain activities, values and methods - the expressions 'character-building' and 'moral development' are self-evident examples. Character intentions were repeatedly bolstered in speeches: for example, in an address to Malvern boys, the Colonial administrator, Sir Hugh Barnes, explained:

They could not all possess the highest ability, but all could acquire character if they tried; it was one of the glories of the public schools of England that they were not content with merely imparting instruction, but went in for the cultivation of character as well.<sup>21</sup>

Character improvements mostly stemmed from 'muscular Christianity', an ideology which, together with athleticism, the historian Ian Beckett describes as a cult.<sup>22</sup>

One definition of cult determinants includes:

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<sup>19</sup> See David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning* (London, 1961) and John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks: the Short and Gallant Life of the British Officer in the First World War* (London, 2010) on issues of school loyalty. See also Edward Brittain's letter to his sister Vera, 5 March 1916 per Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge (eds), *Letters from a Lost Generation* (London, 2008), p.241.

<sup>20</sup> 'Report from Prize Day, *The Malvernian*, June 1916.

<sup>21</sup> 'Speech Day' in *The Malvernian*, July 1907.

<sup>22</sup> Ian Beckett, 'The Nation in Arms' in I. F. W. Beckett and K. Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms: a social study of the British army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985), p.5.

authoritarian leadership patterns, loyalty and commitment mechanisms, lifestyle characteristics, conformity patterns including the use of various sanctions in connection with those members who deviate.<sup>23</sup>

In her work on cults, the psychologist Margaret Singer identifies six conditions required to achieve thought reform, a technique parallel to school efforts at fomenting character change. These are: control the subject's physical environment and his time, create a sense of powerlessness, inhibit behaviour reflecting former identity, progress the learning of ideological beliefs and approved behaviours, introduce authoritarian structures that permit no challenge, keep the subject unaware of programme processes. Each of Singer's prerequisites coincides with school approaches: physical restraint (out of bounds restrictions, strict timetabling); fostered powerlessness (fagging, insistence upon obedience); the curtailment of the self (forced familial separation, initiation rites, required uniformity); ideological belief (for example, muscular Christianity, English supremacy, imperial infallibility); rule-driven disciplinary structure (staff, prefects, punishments); dissuasion of questioning 'why' in relation to processes, traditions and ethics.<sup>24</sup> Such a range of manipulative restrictions, viewed holistically, represents a structured mission to sculpt the personalities, attitudes and beliefs of public school pupils so as to correspond with manly (and gentlemanly) ideals. Through a combination of institutional controls and indoctrination, as denoted by Singer's cult conditions, a boy would become imbued with the qualities, tenets and traditions that the Edwardian educational arrangement had determined would render him a perfect English gentleman, eager and prepared for leadership or service. Most of these changes would enhance his qualification as a young officer: equipped with a range of embedded patriotic beliefs, mindlessly obedient and orthodox, loyal and disciplined, organized and institutionalized, he would become perfect 1914 recruitment material. And, concerning the application of Singer's sixth category, he responded positively, rapidly and unquestioningly to enlistment appeals: the process of thought reform thus climaxed.

The evolution of public schools as total institutions was necessary for three reasons, all drawing upon Goffman's and Singer's criteria. Firstly, the absence of distractions within a secluded community, coupled with traditions and formalized processes, was ideal for implanting belief systems and socializing young minds. The morally instructive syllabus and the ritualism of classroom-based work practices and materials (lectures, tests, rote learning, jingoistic textbooks, prep, competitive orders

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<sup>23</sup> Ronald Enroth (ed.), 'What Is a Cult?', *A Guide to Cults and New Religions* (Illinois, 1983), p.14.

<sup>24</sup> Margaret T. Singer, *Cults in our midst* (San Francisco, 2003), pp.63-9.

etc.) facilitated the promotion of inflexible values through manipulation, socialization and indoctrination.<sup>25</sup> The indoctrination of class elitism, laudable warfare and supremacist patriotism - ideas central to later volunteering - became enabled. Secondly, the institutional environment meant that any boy's non-participation or cynicism would be noticed and subdued, often through peer pressure.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, school disciplinary approaches were designed to uphold obedience in juniors and, through the prefectorial system, to establish leadership skills in their elders, essential qualities for boys earmarked for service commissions. The third reason for considering public schools as total institutions concerned the advancement of manliness through hard socialization - a severe, authoritative dimension to pedagogy that the US educationalist, Henry Giroux, summarises as having 'conformity, powerlessness and impersonalisation' as the governing characteristics. Such mechanisms, used to implant character, morality and manliness, were indeed rooted within the public school approach. Introduced and entrenched by institutionalism, school methods epitomized the Spartan hard socialization that Giroux identifies.<sup>27</sup>

Manliness and gentlemanliness were separate, sometimes contradictory, qualities. Institutionally-induced manliness was effected by a robust regimen aimed at reinforcing real and imagined facets of masculine decision-making and hardihood. In contrast, the uptake of gentlemanly values (thought vital for subalterns), was achieved through mellower soft socialization. For de Groot, 'gentlemanliness' embraced qualities of linguistic and mannerly courtesy necessary for a young man to function confidently in the society he was destined to enter - whether military, professional or social.<sup>28</sup> This incongruity perhaps confused schoolboys in their use of speech: manliness suggested frank, sometimes brusque, straightforwardness that often defaulted to taciturnity or silence. Gentlemanliness, however, implied mannered articulacy irrespective of occasion or company.<sup>29</sup>

It was important for a gentleman to understand 'good form' and to have been anguished if ever exposed as infringing social rules - whether, for example, related to accent and language, dress codes, the correct way to eat peas or address a

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<sup>25</sup> Alec Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, p.14. Weekly class 'orders' which detailed pupil scholastic performance by subject were commonplace and highly competitive. Described in Waugh's novel based upon his experiences at Sherborne shortly before the First World War.

<sup>26</sup> Several of these aspects of public school inculcation are described throughout Ernest Raymond, *Tell England: a Study in a Generation* (London, 1922, 40<sup>th</sup> ed. 1965).

<sup>27</sup> Henry Giroux, *Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling* (London, 1981), pp. 74-5.

<sup>28</sup> Gerard de Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the era of the Great War* (Harlow, 1998), p.166.

<sup>29</sup> See Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in Beckett and Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms*, pp.77-92.

bishop. Such refinements seem irrelevant to the practicality of performance as a military officer, but public school experience was designed to socialize boys with the genteel values of their class by equipping them with the aplomb that eased acceptance into influential circles. For each ex-public school officer, his alertness to gentlemanly mannered politeness distinguished him from lower orders and those less patrician soldiers commissioned from the ranks as 'temporary gentlemen' - a withering term used by ex-public school officers who presumed gentlemanliness as an inheritance.<sup>30</sup> From a career outlook, soft socialization helped implant the bearing which would support the acquisition of a prestigious university or military academy placement - followed by entry into a professional position, or embarkation upon service as a career military officer.<sup>31</sup>

Educational sociologists largely agree that the deliberate socialization of elite young Edwardians towards gentlemanliness occurred exclusively at public schools. Ely Chinoy, for example, suggests that this prepared:

the individual for the roles [he was] to play, providing him with the necessary repertoire of habits, beliefs, and values, the appropriate patterns of emotional response and the modes of perception, the requisite skills and knowledge.<sup>32</sup>

Graham White, perhaps with universities, officers' messes, colonial outposts or boardrooms in mind, stresses the harmonious behavioural outcomes:

[public school] socialization concentrates on the learning skills of attitude and behaviour, enabling the individual to exist harmoniously within social groups and to balance harmoniously the experiences between social groups to enable him to live his life with as little aggravation as possible.<sup>33</sup>

John Wakeford asserts that public schools were people-changing establishments:

[public] schools belong to that category of complex organisation which, in addition to working through and with people, work *on* them. They are in a fundamental sense 'socializing', 'treating' or 'people-changing' organisations. ... the change constitutes the primary end: people constitute the *raison d'être* of these organisations and the desired product is a new or altered person.<sup>34</sup>

While many change-based efforts concentrated upon fortifying schoolboy attitudes and improving character through harsh conditions, doctrinal classroom methods and

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<sup>30</sup> De Groot, *Blighty*, p.166.

<sup>31</sup> With regard to the choice of the military as a career, de Groot notes that in 1912, *all* officers were sourced by classes considered as privileged: 59% middle-class; 32% landed gentry; 9% aristocracy – all of these would have been most likely to have attended public school and, in addition, a university or academy. De Groot, *Blighty*, p.18. Between August 1914 and March 1915 some 20577 junior officers were newly commissioned from public school and university OTCs - per Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in Beckett and Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms*, pp.64-70.

<sup>32</sup> Ely Chinoy, *Society: an Introduction to Sociology* (New York, 1961), p.75.

<sup>33</sup> Graham White, *Socialization* (London, 1977), p.8.

<sup>34</sup> Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite*, p.42.

sports-field competition, genteel socialization was engineered by softer means.<sup>35</sup> An understanding as to how essential military attitudes were remodelled is important: firstly, the cultivation of gentlemanly language and behaviour and secondly, the fixing of ideas that warfare was natural and desirable.

**'The public schoolboy's speech set him apart'**

A key public school aim was to shape pupils' behaviours to fit the values, conventions and practices of the English upper-middle-classes. As Thompson observes, in respect of schools being viewed by influential fathers as 'instruments for conditioning their boys':

that was largely successful, and the public-school type was pretty easily recognizable by speech, manner, dress and behaviour ... [conditioning was] a matter of an older generation imposing upon and moulding the younger in the cause of the self-perpetuation of class identity, a process of socialization by equals.<sup>36</sup>

The approach that produced the public-school type infused boys with standards of manners, appearance, personal bearing, confidence, speech and language, and consideration for others. Influential sources and activities included debates, chapel episodes, dining rituals, prefectorial example and non-curricular tutorial sessions. Achievement of socialization goals would ease a pupil's acceptability within his social echelon by honing behavioural and emotional faculties so as to match his class-peers. In short, to cultivate him towards becoming a functional gentleman appropriate to his circumstances.<sup>37</sup>

Using communication as an model for gentlemanly socialization, Rupert Wilkinson summarises how implanted speech values would secure the future careers of Edwardian public schoolboys:

not only did public school life breed self-assurance and a relaxed air of command, but the public schoolboy's speech set him apart from others. Compared with the regional accents of most non-public schoolboys, the English spoken by the cross-regional clientèle of boarding schools carried a cosmopolitan flavour. It was different; and by the aesthetic standards of the English gentleman, it was superior.<sup>38</sup>

Language, specifically vocabulary, accent, tone, volume and gesture was deemed crucial to signifying an aspiring gentleman and disconnecting him from lower orders - distinctions considered vital in the military when fixing authority levels between

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<sup>35</sup> The complex entirety of child socialization, its practices and effects are usefully analysed by F..Elkin and G. Handel, *The Child and Society* (New York, 1989).

<sup>36</sup> Francis M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society* (London, 1988), p.145.

<sup>37</sup> See White, *Socialization*, pp.42-4. Although not a recent work, Graham White is particularly strong on analysing the aims of socialization within the education system and the methods used to implant childhood conformity through socialization.

<sup>38</sup> Rupert Wilkinson, *The Prefects: British Leadership and the Public School Tradition* (London, 1964), p.56.

young officers and (often older) other ranks.<sup>39</sup> Linguistics specialist, John Honey, asserts that 'public school attendance - or, failing that, an accent that reflected Received Pronunciation - was one of the foremost criteria for an officer in the First World War'.<sup>40</sup> Yet there were snobbish downsides to emphasis upon speech quality as language-inspired separation was often indistinguishable from a pervasive aura of class snootiness. Wartime officers promoted from 'within the ranks' as 'temporary gentlemen' were prone to withering peer-based sarcasm.<sup>41</sup> And subsequent hostile conduct towards non-public school officers by some privileged OTC cadets was indefensible.<sup>42</sup> The dropping of aitches, regional accents or use of dialects revealed men as being of a different class and thus objectionable. As George Bernard Shaw has written: 'it is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making another Englishman hate or despise him'.<sup>43</sup>

The idea that superior elocution was a prerequisite to gentlemanliness lay at the heart of the educative class structure. Drawing upon the works of Basil Bernstein, Graham White observes that for aspirational youngsters:

Language acquisition becomes the means of transmission of subtlety of feeling and meaning, and the finesse involved in juxtaposing certain words and phrasing, echoes this sensitivity of conceptualisation and perception.<sup>44</sup>

The nuances of elitist language were almost entirely due to the perceived superiority of a privileged education. Class antipathy by accent (as J. B. Priestley has described it: 'part of English snobbish imbecility') was satirised by Shaw in his 1912 play *Pygmalion*, whereby the disdain for accents other than school-induced

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<sup>39</sup> See de Groot, *Blighty*, pp. 14-30. In this second chapter, 'Virtuous Inferiority', de Groot is occasionally (but justifiably) withering when contrasting the outmoded irrelevance of the Public School elitist focus with the realities of war, for example, describing the cavalry as 'a socially pure elite group untainted by the technological advance of warfare', p.20.

<sup>40</sup> John Honey, *Does Accent Matter* (London, 1989), p.30. This work usefully explores the background to and significance of Received Pronunciation (RP) in public schools during the pre- First World War years.

<sup>41</sup> Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in Beckett and Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms*, p.76.

<sup>42</sup> For example, Evelyn Waugh describes an outrageous 1919 incident during his time in the OTC at Lancing College, when boys played up an inspecting officer promoted from the ranks during wartime by showing their contempt for his lack of a public school vocabulary and accent. He was described by Waugh as 'not even a Temporary Gentleman but a Permanent Oik'. See Evelyn Waugh and Michael Davie (ed.), *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh* (London, 1976), p.31, and Honey, *Does Accent Matter*, p.30.

<sup>43</sup> Bernard Shaw, 'Preface - A Professor of Phonetics' in *Pygmalion* (London, 1912), p.1.

<sup>44</sup> White, *Socialization*, p.68; Bernstein writes of speech being 'the process by which a child comes to acquire a specific *social* identity' [Bernstein's emphasis] Basil Bernstein, *Class Codes and Control* (London, 1971), p.119. And the communication specialist, Dr. Stephen Littlejohn, suggests that: 'people learn their place in the world by virtue of the language codes they employ': Stephen Littlejohn, *Theories of Human Communication* (Belmont, CA, 2002), p.178 cited in Birger Hjørland and Jeppe Nicolaisen, 'The social psychology of information use: seeking 'friends', avoiding 'enemies'', *Information Research*, 15:3 (2010) per <http://InformationR.net/ir/15-3/colis7/colis706.html> [accessed 12 February, 2012].

Received Pronunciation (RP) was caricatured.<sup>45</sup> Accent-related prejudice was ubiquitous in public schools. Honey notes that a typical remedial approach was to extinguish regional speech characteristics by encouraging exaggerated southern English accents: any inadvertent exposure, through familial linguistic traces, of lower origins became minimized. He suggests there is scant evidence that public school phonetics were taught systematically, but that new boys possessing regional accents were shamed out of them through pressures exerted by the community: essentially, socialization by peers.<sup>46</sup> As Orwell comments, 'it is astonishing how intimately, intelligently snobbish we all were ... how swift to detect small differences in accents and manners and the cut of clothes'. Applicant teachers were also screened for non-standard speech prior to appointment - a measure which ensured pupils could escape negative linguistic classroom influences.<sup>47</sup> Replacing local accents with more acceptable RP was straightforward to achieve. Many boarding institutions were located in rural parts of southern England, pupils remaining unexposed to external stimuli. Refined language would be embedded through unremitting processes of imitative assimilation: thus representing Goffman's cultural osmosis in practice.<sup>48</sup>

From a military viewpoint, RP and a mannerly deportment was important: as Wilkinson notes:

The public schoolboy's accent and social poise probably carried most weight with the Foreign Office; but if so, the military ran it a close second. Many units engaged in heavy rounds of social entertaining and, besides, the military profession wanted men who could inspire emotionally as well as make rational decisions.<sup>49</sup>

Irrespective of accent-based officer qualities, the military's need to cement class disparity was a significant reason for insisting upon cultivated speech within the pre-1914 officer intake. Public school RP was considered crucial towards emphasizing distinctions between officers and men, to engendering cohesion within the officer group and, consequently, to enhancing discipline.<sup>50</sup> Accent-based symmetry between serving regular officers and 1914, hostilities-only, ex-public school subalterns would help ensure social acceptance and empathy.

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<sup>45</sup> J. B. Priestley, *The Edwardians* (London, 1970), p.97; *Pygmalion* opened in London in April 1914; it had just reached its hundredth (sell-out) performance when war was declared.

<sup>46</sup> Honey, *Does Accent Matter*, p.27.

<sup>47</sup> Orwell and Crick (ed.), 'Such, such were the joys', in *George Orwell: Essays*, p.440.

<sup>48</sup> Hartmut Berghoff, 'Public Schools and the Decline of the British Economy 1870-1914', *Past and Present*, 129 (1990), p.152 and Goffman, *Asylums*, p.23.

<sup>49</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, p.56.

<sup>50</sup> See de Groot, 'To Die Young' (ch.3) in *Blighty*, pp.31-53, wherein the author explores several school-induced volunteering incentives.



### **'His speech was well and eloquently delivered' – school debates**

How were the linguistic qualities of gentlemanliness practised? One method for grooming language skills and confidence was through formal debates. Moderated by masters and structured in emulation of House of Commons protocols, the debates encouraged robust expression of opinions on controversial subjects. Debates were reported in school magazines: some of the most striking were recounted verbatim in issues of *The Decanian*, the Dean Close magazine. Although a reader can judge speakers' persuasive fluency only from the vocabulary and linguistic structure (tone, accent, volume and gesture being lost), some of the eloquence and erudite self-belief is detectable. Indeed, magazine critiques of individual delivery effectiveness were frequently offered.<sup>51</sup>

Two Dean Close debates, on the benefits of the aristocracy (1912) and the merits of war with Germany (1909), illustrate the fluency possessed by senior boys together with some surprising views as to class and war. In March 1912, the motion was: 'in the opinion of this house, the aristocracy is a desirable social institution'. This controversial issue was topical since, following the recent budget crisis, the 1911 Parliament Act had restricted House of Lords' powers to reject Commons legislation. David Cannadine suggests the 1911 Act represented 'the most successful assault ... on the hereditary, titled, landowning classes of the British Isles'.<sup>52</sup> Since many privileged sons attended public schools, feelings ran high. In addition to class attitude revelations, this subject is interesting for its interpretation of the 'aristocracy' concept. The motion's proposer (J.N.H.), citing the word's Greek derivation, claimed it meant 'the rule of the best' and asked 'who were to rule at Westminster and in County and Municipal Councils?':

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<sup>51</sup> A single 1903 Dean Close debate on 'England's decline and fall' attracted as much comment for eloquence as for content: 'His speech was well and eloquently delivered, and showed much careful preparation.'; 'He then rose and opposed the motion with much fervour and eloquence.'; 'His excellent oration was chiefly remarkable for its length of word and brilliancy of delivery.'; 'He addressed the House in a vigorous and profound speech on behalf of the motion.'; 'Some were fast, some were slow, some showed much painful trepidation, and some were in a state of hysterical laughter.'; 'We must add that it would have been much improved had he spoken less quickly and with more expression.' 'Debating Society Minutes', *The Decanian*, November 1903.

<sup>52</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London, 1992), p.3; and see the address given by John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons, to the Mile End Group on 'The Parliament Act of 1911' on 20 October 2010 within which he asserted: 'It is worth stressing that a reassertion of Parliament cannot be achieved, and should not be attempted, by a nostalgic reversion to the practice of packing Parliament with aristocrats or plutocrats'; per <http://www.mileendgroup.com/event/the-parliament-act-1911/> [accessed 15 July 2013]. Also see Kenneth O. Morgan, 'Rare and refreshing fruit: Lloyd George's People's Budget', *Public Policy Research*, 16:1 (2009), p. 32: 'Faced with financial difficulties and political challenge, a progressive government, led by its leading radical, chose the most radical available option'.

**J.N.H.** Who is the most fitted to rule, the son of a peer, who inherits ability, who has been to the best public school, and who is, in a word, naturally trained to govern, or the guttersnipe, whose father is a drunkard?<sup>53</sup>

Whereas nowadays 'best' might imply abundant intellect and talent, this young man represented the views of many class-contemporaries by assuming that concepts of best were inherited paternally. That such an evolutionary belief prevailed is significant since similar attitudes underpinned the officer class concept when Kitchener's army was formed two years later.<sup>54</sup> Attitudes of innate class pre-eminence became conjoined with ideals of self-sacrifice, duty and patriotism.<sup>55</sup> However, irrespective of the superiority that suffuses his address, the delivery of the speaker's views was expressed with noteworthy articulacy and a (presumed) degree of persuasiveness in ways that would have challenged an equally intelligent working-class youngster who had not benefitted from language coaching, the debating chamber or indeed, privileged schooling.

J.N.H.'s contribution reflected feelings towards the recent Liberal assaults upon the House of Lords together with his evident 'trained to govern' sense of class-based entitlement. Even as written words, his eloquence, confidence and forthright expressions are impressive. While his communication skills had been moulded over an extended period, it seems unlikely that his opinions were formed endogenously. More probably, feelings of class supremacy, originating in the home, were encouraged by extra-curricular tutorial sessions aimed at exploring contemporary issues. From a news perspective, pupils led sheltered lives at school: newspapers were carefully selected and two-way 'letters home' would invariably be oriented towards concerns of health, food, pocket money, school and gossip rather than contentious topical issues. It is more likely that news and opinions would be disseminated through informal exchanges with housemasters and tutors. At Dean Close, for example, masters would regularly invite a few senior boys for relaxed conversation in a convivial environment.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> 'Debating Society Minutes', *The Decanian*, May 1912; Chancellor Lloyd George's budget-themed address had attacked the House of Lords in 1909.

<sup>54</sup> See Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in Beckett and Simpson (eds), *A Nation in Arms*, pp.64-5 and see ch. 4 herein.

<sup>55</sup> The linking of class and qualities of self-sacrifice, honour, duty etc. is explored in subsequent chapters.

<sup>56</sup> Several examples can be seen within Arthur Weston's (1892-1969) letters home from Dean Close school. In one letter (12 July 1909), he writes 'I have been twice to have strawberries and ices with Mr. Ellam [assistant headmaster] lately. The hot weather has been affecting him a bit and he has been making rather a fool of himself. At dinner one day he said to himself "I think I am getting madder every day". So do we but we don't say so.' Sir Arthur R. Astley Weston, 'A life compiled from his letters and diaries' part 1 (1892-1921), unpublished typescript, p.52

Most teaching staff were cultured, well-travelled men adept at conducting challenging dialogues with senior boys.<sup>57</sup> Conversational ability was perceived as a desirable attribute for aspiring gentlemen, so that, on these non-ceremonious occasions, boys were urged to listen and articulate their views in a persuasive, and thoughtful way - the debating forum would be used as a more demanding communication opportunity. Unavoidably, as part of the socialization ethic, conversational sessions would result in schoolmasterly idioms and opinions being embedded alongside appropriate colloquial techniques, structures and vocabulary.<sup>58</sup>

Another Dean Close debate shows boys as confident speakers. Coupled with their specific support for war with Germany, the 1909 discussion shows how war as a solution to international disputes and rivalries was acceptable - indeed to be welcomed. The motion was: 'in the opinion of this house an immediate war with Germany would be advantageous to England'.<sup>59</sup> Yet, prior to August 1914, few Britons had ever seriously envisaged participation in a major European land conflict in spite of the proliferation of 'invasion' literature.<sup>60</sup> Some historians highlight the surprise felt by many in the British population on learning that the nation had, in reality, decided to go to war: so that a discussion by schoolboys as to the merits of conducting, even initiating, war against Germany five years before the actuality

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<sup>57</sup> 'The [Dean Close] academic staff were cultured men. For example, T.M.A. Cooper who taught at the School from 1896 – 1926 was essentially a Mathematician and Scientist. Ruskin was something of a hero to him, he lectured to a School society on Joseph Conrad and H.G. Wells, yet he was also a serious musician, an able philosopher who suggested to a colleague that each should read a fixed amount of Plato every week and then exchange letters on points that had come up, an economist who also was something of a Geographer who knew Switzerland and France well and became increasingly interested in Russia, a Geologist who was most interested in the local make-up of rock formation, an Astronomer who knew a great deal about the moon and the solar system.' Per the Whitney email to the author (see below).

<sup>58</sup> Information regarding tutorial sessions and boys' exposure to cultural and political issues of the day were developed from an email exchange between the author and the Rev. Charles Whitney, the Dean Close school archivist. For example: 'recently, evidence has come to light of Masters inviting two or three boys at a time to their rooms for a feed and conversation. I was aware that it happened but I had thought only comparatively occasionally. It would seem that this occurred more often than I imagined. I do not know what the senior boys were discussing with the Masters but it could well have been another forum for debate ... Most of the views expressed concerned international affairs, culture and outlook. We know that boys went with their parents to the continent to learn more about the culture, history, art and geography of other countries that were seen as being significant. Germany was very definitely one of the countries visited.' Charles Whitney, email to author, 2 December 2010.

<sup>59</sup> 'Debating Society Minutes', *The Decanian*, May 1909, pp. 282-5.

<sup>60</sup> Albeit that, as Peter Simkins notes, military preparedness had been enhanced through the 1905-8 Haldane reforms and the covert strategic planning activities, in 1906 and 1911, of the Committee of Imperial Defence following crises in Morocco. Yet, as he observes, 'very few soldiers and civilians were aware of the exact nature of the likely commitment'. Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army: the Raising of the New Armies, 1914-1916* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 4-7. Invasion literature is discussed in chapter two.

transpired, deserves attention.<sup>61</sup> In justification, the 1909 news context should be noted: the debate occurred against the background of the Naval arms race when *Dreadnought* class battleships were being matched, in the press and public view, against German *Nassau* and *Helgoland*-class warships.<sup>62</sup> German militarisation and ambition brought about reactive British moves to heighten defensive preparedness, the 1908 OTC reforms serving as an example.

Schoolboy attitudes towards Germany before 1914 are ambiguous.<sup>63</sup> Firstly, there was interest in Germany as a centre of European artistic history and a progressive industrial competitor. Germany regularly featured in schoolboys' summer itineraries as they accompanied parents in quests to discover European culture.<sup>64</sup> But post-1900, this affinity became qualified by feelings that Germany might pose a threat to Britain and the Empire. As I. F. Clarke suggests:

the possibility - for many the probability - of a war between Great Britain and Imperial Germany as a potentially hostile enemy provided ... abundant material for an unprecedented outpouring of ... tales of the Great European conflict.<sup>65</sup>

Edwardian boys would have been influenced by the 'German invasion' fiction that appeared repeatedly, either as freestanding novels or as serialized narratives in magazines and the popular press.<sup>66</sup> This influence embraced some circularity: fears

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<sup>61</sup> For examples that note August 1914 'surprise', see Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.17; G. S. Spinks et al, *Religion in Britain since 1900* (London, 1952), p.97; A. J. Hoover, *God Germany and Britain in the Great War* (New York, 1989), p.2. Adrian Gregory cites many regional newspapers' reaction to the looming crisis in late July 1914. One example is typical as the *Yorkshire Post* of 27 July 1914 stated 'happily, we see no reason for why Great Britain should be drawn in', Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008), p.17.

<sup>62</sup> See Robert J. Blyth, Andrew Lambert and Jan Rüger (eds), *The Dreadnought and the Edwardian Age* (Farnham, 2011) and A. Griebner, *Linienschiffe der Kaiserlichen Marine 1906-1918: Konstruktionen zwischen Rüstungskonkurrenz und Flottengesetz* (Bonn, 1999).

<sup>63</sup> This youthful ambiguity has been highlighted in Jan Rüger's review of the historiography covering pre-First World War Anglo-German antagonism. For example, he compares the differing analyses and conclusions within works by Sonja Levsen and Thomas Weber as (e.g.) 'the students in both countries were similarly 'ready for war.' Their militarist tendencies grew significantly in the decade before the war.' (Levsen) vis-a-vis 'there is no connection between the state of the Anglo-German [student] relationship before 1914 and the outbreak of the war. He downplays the impact of militarism and emphasizes Anglo-German friendship.' (Weber). An important point of agreement that Rüger notes is that, for the student youth of both countries, 'nationalism and militarism were as much British traits as they were German ones.'. Jan Rüger, 'Revisiting the Anglo-German Antagonism', *The Journal of Modern History*, 83:3 (2011), pp. 579-617; Sonja Levsen, *Elite, Männlichkeit und Krieg: Tübinger und Cambridger Studenten, 1900-1929* (Göttingen, 2006); Thomas Weber, *Our Friend 'The Enemy': Elite Education in Britain and Germany before World War I* (Stanford, CA: 2008).

<sup>64</sup> Per the Rev. C. E. Whitney, email to the author 12<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

<sup>65</sup> I. F. Clarke (ed.), *The Great War with Germany, 1890-1914: Fictions and Fantasies of the War-to-come* (Liverpool, 1997), p.2.

<sup>66</sup> Clarke (ed.), *The Great War with Germany 1890-1914*, p.178. Perhaps the most notable 'war with Germany' work was William le Queux's, *The Invasion of 1910*. First published in 1906, this was probably most influential on Dean Close boys in 1909, when the year in

would be inflamed by invasion literature to the extent that consequential anxiety caused increased demands for yet more sensationalist material. But not all war literature was posited as fictional: as Glenn Wilkinson suggests, the genre included written works and speech transcripts by prominent militarists, together with 'articles written by serving and retired officers, clergymen and academics, showing that a European war was not unconsidered'.<sup>67</sup>

The more belligerent views exhibited within the 1909 Dean Close debate may have been inflated by surfeit of juvenile testosterone and a desire to impress the audience. Nevertheless, some of the opinions voiced in support of the motion, are startling.<sup>68</sup> They include:

C.J.F. 'England was in a superior position ... surely it was best to attack at once'.

'war with Germany would cripple her powers and thus enable us to keep our own trade'.

'Germany was bound to fight us sooner or later, and it was by far the best to have it [war] soon'.<sup>69</sup>

A.G.C. 'there was England and Germany, and Germany would have to "go"<sup>70</sup>

G.W.F. 'the present time was a good opportunity for England to attack, as Germany was divided'.<sup>71</sup>

E.P.M.P. 'a war with Germany would sensibly decrease the over-population of England'.<sup>72</sup>

Some voices raised against the motion objected to 'attack now' exhortations for practical reasons: 'England's inadequate military readiness'; 'our fleet was

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question was rapidly approaching. Adam Riches also cites 'The Scourge of the Skies' in *The Boys' Herald* (2 January 1909) to be followed by 'The Invasion that Failed' on 1 May 1909 in the same journal: Adam Riches, *When the Comics Went to War* (London, 2009) pp.66-9. Boys' elective 'war' reading is also noted in chapters 3 and 4 herein.

<sup>67</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War in Edwardian Newspapers, 1899-1914* (Basingstoke, 2003), p.3. Wilkinson cites the *Graphic* and the *Illustrated London News* as being widely available in Edwardian public schools and being strong on visual representation.

<sup>68</sup> Per the Rev. Charles Whitney, Dean Close school archivist who supplied the following biographical notes and offered his thoughts on levels of boyish interest in Germany.

<sup>69</sup> CJF was a school prefect who would have been just 18 at the time of the debate. He went to Caius College, Cambridge. During the First World War he joined the Royal Engineers and eventually became a Major with experience of Gallipoli, Egypt and France. He won an MC and was also twice Mentioned-in-Dispatches.

<sup>70</sup> AGC was a rising 18 at the time of the debate. Became a School Prefect. His career after School is unknown. In the First World War, he was a Captain in the Royal Garrison Artillery. He served in France and Belgium and died in hospital on active service early in 1919.

<sup>71</sup> GWF was aged just 17 at the time of the debate. He went on to achieve first class medical honours at Edinburgh University. In the First World War he was in the RAMC and won CBE (Mil). Between the wars, Assistant Pathologist with Imperial Cancer research and later joined Wellcome Research. In 1935 he was given a Civil CBE. In the Second World War he finished as Brigadier-General RAMC.

<sup>72</sup> EPMP later went up to Brasenose College Oxford to read Mathematics. He was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He was killed in action in 1915 aged 22.

unprepared and too scattered for the purpose'. Another contributor, perhaps mindful of the Free Trade versus Tariff Reform issues that dominated political debate during the earlier part of the decade, based his argument upon economics: 'a war would increase the National Debt ... and bring us dearer food'.<sup>73</sup> However a solitary voice objected to such aggression: 'I can see no reason for war, and against it was the fact that England was the peace-maker'. Finally, the motion was narrowly won, helped by a casting vote from the presiding master. In 1909, Dean Close boys voted for immediate war with Germany.<sup>74</sup>

In December 1908, a similarly-themed debate occurred at Malvern College. On that occasion the motion was 'that in the opinion of this house, Germany is a menace to England'. The proposer (Henry) stated that: 'there was no doubt that Germany was preparing to strike a blow' - a view perhaps directly arising from Naval arms race disquiet. Another Malvern speaker (Roberts) agreed that Germany was planning an invasion and that anti-British feelings abounded. He referred to Britain's defensive vulnerability and lack of officers:

He announced on high authority that it was customary in officers' messes in Germany to toast the successful invasion of Britain. ... Our home defence was deficient and our volunteer officers were not up to full strength.<sup>75</sup>

Roberts did not reveal the high authority that had spoken of the toasts, but it could have been that (illicitly-read) articles such as 'The Gentle German' in *John Bull*, had influenced such views to young people. Extracts from early editions (1906-7) of Horatio Bottomley's magazine indicate the extent to which antipathy towards Germany was fostered - albeit the magazine had not openly denounced Germany as a military threat. Bottomley had suggested, however: 'they are not deterred from aspiring to dominate the destinies of Europe'.<sup>76</sup>

Further voices were raised in support of the Malvern motion. Two of these focused upon disruption to trade and obligations to Empire:

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<sup>73</sup> Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London, 2000), pp. 321-2.

<sup>74</sup> 'War with Germany' debate report from *The Decanian*, May 1909, pp. 282-5.

<sup>75</sup> Reported in *The Malvernian*, December 1908.

<sup>76</sup> Alan Hyman, *The Rise and Fall of Horatio Bottomley* (London, 1972), p.87; Bottomley wrote in *John Bull* of the Germans as being: 'cheap clerks, nasty waiters and other philosophers ... All character has long been battered out of them. They are all machine-made, with lives and habits fashioned in the same ugly mould ... They are enslaved, body and soul, by hordes of offensive officials who in their turn are the vassals of other bureaucrats ... their language is the harshest and clumsiest in the world.' He also exhibited xenophobic hatred for other major nations as well as Germany; his 'companion' article to 'The Gentle Germans' was entitled 'The Foul French' which contained the opinion: 'it will be well to remember that the French are corrupt, tyrannical, bloodthirsty, sycophantic, unmannerly, treacherous and lecherous' (p.86).

(Bambridge) Their increasing Navy and Army ... tended to show that their attitude was one of hostility. In case of war, the German Navy could stop a large part of our trade.

(Hall) Germany was in every possible respect a menace to the British Empire.

Anti-motion opinions denied belligerent German attitudes towards Britain, for example: 'no-one in Germany was eager for an Anglo-German war', 'Germany did not contemplate a further augmentation of their fleet', 'the Kaiser had even assisted us in the Boer War', 'the German Navy and Army did not menace us, but were kept up to their level merely to protect Germany'. Others believed reactions to German military expansion were panicky, for instance: 'those who thought Germany a menace to England were mere alarmists', 'Earl Roberts is an alarmist'.<sup>77</sup>

This Malvern debate, focused upon perceived German menace, attracted greater interest than usual.<sup>78</sup> The motion was lost by eleven votes. Although sharing a theme of Germany as a potential war adversary, the Malvern and Dean Close debates differ in one key area. At Dean Close the discussion centred upon the merits of first-strike action against Germany, but in Malvern focus was upon a perceived German military threat. After Earl Roberts' widely-reported warnings of national vulnerability, preparedness against a potential invader would have occupied Malvern minds following the creation of the school OTC months previously.<sup>79</sup> Any ensuing concerns might also have been fuelled by an earlier chapel speech from the headmaster. On the subject of the new rifle range, without mentioning German threats, he had observed:

last term 40,000 rounds were fired there, and practically every boy in the school was tested ... may I say to you once and for all that to train boys to use a rifle is not to encourage a spirit of militarism.<sup>80</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain what other type of activity might have constituted 'a spirit of militarism'. Yet, the head's implied support for across-the-board defensive readiness echoed the views that Lord Roberts had been promoting.

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<sup>77</sup> Reported in *The Malvernian*, December 1908. A hero to many boys, Lord Roberts ('Bobs') of Kandahar, was vocal in his warnings. In an attempt to stimulate youthful preparedness, his widely-reported 1907 speech to the Royal Institution had succeeded in raising the national consciousness towards threats of a major conflict – albeit that Roberts had not mentioned a German menace. Speaking of a need for investment into the Army, he warned that: 'It is because I fear that nothing short of a national disaster will make the people of this country realise this – for long years of immunity from home trouble have engendered a feeling of security which has no justification at the present day'. Lord Roberts, *A Nation in Arms: Speeches on the Requirements of the British Army* (London, 1907) quoted in Donald Read, *Documents from Edwardian England* (London, 1973), p.324.

<sup>78</sup> 125 boys attended this debate. Magazine reports show that, typically, debates would attract c.40-50.

<sup>79</sup> As, for example reported in serious newspapers. See 'Lord Roberts and his Critics', in *The Times*, 2 December 1908, p.6, col. A - wherein Lord Roberts' contribution to a House of Lords debate on the topic of German invasion was extensively analysed.

<sup>80</sup> 'Speech Day' in *The Malvernian*, July 1907.

Of interest is the complex militarism underlying both of these debates: as the homily from the Malvern headmaster exemplifies, it is significant how school militarism was persistently refuted. On the speech day following the 'War with Germany' debate, the Rev. Dr. W. H. Flecker, conscious of the school's evangelical credentials, spoke to parents in respect of the school OTC. As Dean Close headmaster, he asked the assembly to welcome the newly-formed corps, and 'to agree with him that in so doing they were not in any way untrue to their bounden duty and allegiance to the Prince of Peace' - an assurance inconsistent with the debate outcome, which had advocated an attack upon Germany.<sup>81</sup>

Of additional interest are pupil attitudes to warfare - in particular how war was accepted as an instrument for resolving, not only international problems (trade rivalry, the *Dreadnought* arms race etc.), but also domestic issues (over-population, national degeneration etc.).<sup>82</sup> For most pupils, their views upon Victorian-era wars would have been fixed in the classroom. Jingoistic history and geography textbooks were focused upon skirmishes associated with the policing of Empire - bloody, but victorious, encounters with Sepoys, Dervishes, Zulus, Mahdists etc.<sup>83</sup> The process of socializing schoolboys to welcome war as a strategy for conflict resolution thus drew upon nineteenth-century Empire enthusiasm, albeit mitigated by later Boer War chagrin. Socialization techniques inspired schoolboy war enthusiasm as a proxy for diplomacy, this gusto helping to fuel the patriotism necessary for 1914 volunteering. As Glenn Wilkinson suggests, within public schools:

warfare was not seen as a destructive or anti-social activity, but as the desirable inculcation of proper behaviour and reason, acting as a positive means of social control ... the activities of schools in general can be seen, in essence, as a means of socialization.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>'Speech Day', *The Decanian*, July 1909. Militarism, Prussianism and the OTC are explored in chapter two.

<sup>82</sup>Youthful public school views as to the necessity for war seemed to abound during the years leading up to 1914. For example, Parker reports a 1910 debate at Shrewsbury school which discussed whether 'warfare is essential to the welfare of the human race'. Among the arguments in favour of this motion were ones that suggested: war advanced the cause of medicine; war killed off unnecessary numbers; war brought about the engineering of roads; war was no more cruel than the surgeon's knife; war made men of us and certainly brought virtue; war encouraged hospitals; war was a call to the highest qualities. Parker, *The Old Lie*, pp.61-2.

<sup>83</sup>The treatment of 'war' in the classroom is explored in greater depth within chapter two.

<sup>84</sup>Glenn R. Wilkinson, 'The Blessings of War': The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspapers', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 33:1 (1998), pp. 97-115, also see Matthew McIntire, 'National Status, the 1908 Olympic games and the English Press', *Media History*, 15:3 (2009) pp.271-286 in which he asserts: 'During the Edwardian period the propaganda of Empire in its many forms socialized the British public into this perception of cultural and biological superiority. Although readers were not helpless before the 'scaremongers' of the press, who worried about German ambitions in print, the lengthy pre-



Wilkinson also highlights the depiction of war as a natural masculine activity, at least as natural as female childbirth - painful, occasionally deadly, yet imbued with gender-specific glory. He suggests such representations paralleled concerns that effeminacy was 'infecting the male population' and that the 'masculine martial spirit' risked being eroded. Fears of tarnished manliness had first flourished after the late-Victorian trials of Oscar Wilde and were directly and indirectly reflected by the forcefulness of expression in school magazines and debates.<sup>85</sup>

Newspaper reports of foreign wars emphasised soldiers' virility and fortitude.<sup>86</sup> In most public schools, selected quality newspapers (notably *The Times*) were urged upon senior boys.<sup>87</sup> In addition to stirring images of stoic masculinity in adverse conditions, weather metaphors abounded and, as Wilkinson suggests, conveyed 'the impression that, like the weather, a battle was a violent display of power that was natural, fleeting and, though possibly inconvenient, ultimately beneficial'.<sup>88</sup> Artillery was often stated to thunder: for example, this extract, from a *Times* report, of the complex revolutionary disorder besetting Macedonia in the autumn of 1903.<sup>89</sup>

If the Sultan would not listen to the articulate conscience of Europe, he should be brought to reason by the thunder of British artillery.<sup>90</sup>

This brief extract offered ideas that would have directly chimed with the positive views upon war being urged upon public schoolboys. Beyond the thunder metaphor, the example shows how war was portrayed as being a conveyance of instruction ('he should be brought to reason') and, by implication, British moral supremacy ('the articulate conscience of Europe') and British right to military involvement in a distant dispute. M. D. Blanch suggests that such didactic analogies stemmed from Empire

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war campaign combined with the broader literature concerned with war to socialize many to the need to defend Britain's status and interests around the world.' (p.272).

<sup>85</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, p.51.

<sup>86</sup> For example, this extract from *The Times* correspondent reporting the Battle of Liau-Yang during the 1904 Russo-Japanese War: 'The men, in extended order, dashed into the water and were soon immersed to the waist. Some were swept off their feet by the rapid current. ... During their half hour of exposure I could not see any casualties, although the water and sand around them were churned by the rain of bullets'. Per *The Times*, 'The Battle Of Liau-Yang. General Kuroki's Operations.' 19 September 1904, p.3.

<sup>87</sup> Per the Rev. Charles Whitney, Dean Close archivist.

<sup>88</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, p.49. Other weather-based war depictions from 1900 to 1914 discovered within editions of *The Times* include multiple instances of: 'the fog of war'; 'hail of shrapnel'; 'war clouds'; 'rain of bullets'; 'storm of bullets'; 'a tempest' – and a satisfyingly composite image of Mafeking in 1900: 'the hail of bullets was like the opening shower of a tropical deluge'. This last image from *The Times*, 'The Siege Of Mafeking. The Attack Upon Game Tree. (From our special correspondent)', 6 March 1900, p. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Known now as the Ilinden uprising of August 1903 when the Macedonians revolted against the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman 'Sultan' was Abdul Hamid II per the *Macedonian Times* at [www.unet.com.mk/mian/ilinden.htm](http://www.unet.com.mk/mian/ilinden.htm) [accessed March 16th 2012].

<sup>90</sup> *The Times*, 'Macedonia', 25 September 1903, p. 9.

reportage whereby the idea that 'natives were seen as children requiring the attention of the imperial power' sparked the prominence of war images as lessons.<sup>91</sup>

Therefore, schoolboys became familiar with the idea of 'teaching a lesson' to whatever international foe opposed British authority. These pupils, with daily routines centred upon learning and moral edification, were taught that their character qualities would be formed through a composite regime of direction, discipline, punishment, self-sacrifice - all occurring within a Spartan environment and (post-1908) reinforced by OTC instruction. To the patriotic boy, the analogous lesson ideas, underpinning regular teacher-pupil relationships, allegorised many armed confrontations - to the extent that notions of instructive warfare seemed totally legitimate. Accordingly, when, as would-be volunteers, schoolboys were confronted with war reality, the widespread idea of 'teaching the Kaiser a lesson' appeared sensible.<sup>92</sup>

School socialization aimed at justifying and glorifying war was also effected by subtler methods. C. B. Otley has analysed war-centred public school socialization elements into categories. Most notable of these include textual and verbal tracts (school magazine articles, poems, speeches, chronicles, particularised histories) and objects and structures (plaques, statues, memorials, artefacts and gardens).<sup>93</sup> The significance of words was crucial: constant exposure of young minds to language that eulogized individual combatants, aggrandized character-based aggressive qualities and lauded British conflict motives, served to implant positive attitudes towards war as a concept. Consider the 1909 poem, 'The Territorials' Appeal' (see footnote) published in *The Malvernian* as the poet, 'C', exhorts pupils to enlist for plucky reasons. Such patriotic warlike verses abounded within school magazines during the years before 1914.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> M. D. Blanch, 'British Society and the War', in Peter Warwick (ed.), *The South African War, 1899-1902* (Harlow, 1980), p.211.

<sup>92</sup> See Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, p.51-61 for some incisive analysis as to how concepts of 'good' war were skilfully separated from images of killing and death.

<sup>93</sup> C. B. Otley, 'Militarism and Militarisation in the Public Schools, 1900-72', *British Journal of Sociology*, 29:3 (1978), pp.321-339.

<sup>94</sup> This poem begins: 'The Territorials' Appeal', She calls you, Britannia calls you / And must she call you again? / Answer before the storm breaks/ When answers will come in vain / Where is the old, old spirit / The British bulldog pluck / It is there – behold it sleeping / Leaving the rest to luck ... etc. *The Malvernian*, April 1909. Not all poems were so bellicose: following the first school losses, a number mourned their departed in poignant ways: It is autumn, it is evening, / Falls the darkness, silent, fast; / The school looks quiet and peaceful, / For the daily toil is past. / But a ghostly whisper rises, / One can hear the school complain – / 'Give me back once more my children, / Give them back to me again' from 'The Spirit of the School Laments', *The Blundellian*, November 1914.

From general appeals to individual tragedies: before 1914, the loss in action of an ex-pupil was recorded in moving terms: such fatalities were consistently portrayed as being foreseeable, albeit painless, consequences of youthful derring-do. For example, R. G. Brooke, a popular senior Dean Close pupil, was killed in South Africa in June 1900 after enlisting as an undergraduate volunteer. Brooke was mourned by staff, pupils and alumni yet the magazine obituary concentrated upon his battle heroism rather than celebrating shared reminiscences of a familiar figure:

Brooke was advancing upon hands and knees to obtain a better position in the firing line, when he suddenly dropped. The men near him went to him and tried to carry him, but it was evident in about ten or fifteen seconds that he was quite dead. The doctor who visited the ground afterwards confirmed this and said it was clear he had died without any pain. He was shot through the heart. ... We gave him as English a grave as we could. ... At the beginning of the fight the Lieutenant's horse was shot and Brooke offered him his own - a characteristic touch ... his pocket Vergil was saved. ... [in his letters] there is often a note of boyish glee in them as he feels himself getting into 'the real thing at last'.<sup>95</sup>

Several key implications are evident, almost all of which reflect buoyant depictions of war, irrespective of the individuality of the boy whose premature death was the article's *raison d'être*. At the school, a reader would absorb the magazine's upbeat portrayals of: selflessness, bravery, brotherhood, boyishness, painless rapid demise, patriotism - rather than the unexpressed attributes of real war - screams, chaos, terror, agony, disease, wounds, death.

**Fig.1 Haileybury Boer War Memorial Obelisk**<sup>96</sup>



Otley's second category: the objects and structures that helped to socialize Edwardian boys into accommodating war, is best represented by grandiose memorials set up to commemorate ex-pupils who were lost during the 1899-1902

<sup>95</sup> 'R. G. Brooke – In Memoriam', *The Decanian*, August 1900, pp. 338-9.

<sup>96</sup> Sculpted by Reginald Blomfield, the English Heritage description reads: 'Portland stone with applied bronze decorations. Raised on six circular stone steps surrounded by twelve moulded stone bollards with bronze collars and chains between. A tall stone obelisk with ball finial raised on a high carved stone base. ... In memory of Haileyburians who died in the South African War 1899-1902.' Description and photograph per the English Heritage – National Monuments Record (A. Gude).

Boer conflict. An excellent example is the Memorial Obelisk erected in 1903 at Haileybury School (see Fig.1).<sup>97</sup> This substantial monument is positioned just inside the main entrance, thus ensuring its visibility from the school itself and each time the institution is entered from outside. As they passed, Haileybury boys would be constantly reminded of the sacrifices made by their forbears in the recent conflict. Its ornate construction suggests restorative splendour affixed to an ill-reputed war.

**'Manliness - achieved and maintained through adversity' - hard socialization**

In contrast to the soft socialization techniques used for infusing communication skills, gentlemanliness and war as necessary and noble, manliness was inspired by harder approaches. Conceived as the virile dimension to muscular Christianity ideals, manliness notions dominated the motives for consigning privileged sons to public school. Fathers, many of whom recollected their own mid-Victorian education, felt that austere discomfort, hard discipline, strict rules, fagging, monasticism and the deprivation of feminine support were key to establishing manliness - a quality 'achieved and maintained through adversity'.<sup>98</sup> John Tosh outlines the attributes of manliness: most are uplifting abstractions that recall the pious language of the Victorian Evangelicals who first promoted it as a dimension of applied theology. Their concept of manly vigour included: energy, virility, strength. Moral qualities (most of which had a battlefield timbre) involved: decisiveness, courage, endurance. Social responsibility implied loyalty to peers, class, institutions as well as chivalry towards women. Straightforwardness in speech was another factor, whereby the manly youth would ideally be: direct, honest, succinct - conveying meaning without equivocation. As public schoolboys strived to gain surfeits of manliness incorporating such qualities, their allegedly remoulded personalities precisely matched army requirements for junior officers.<sup>99</sup>

The level of adversity necessary for promoting manliness ideals merits examination. Commencing with their admission, new boys' removal from home life and their exposure to Spartan surroundings was designed to toughen them bodily and emotionally.<sup>100</sup> In a savage denunciation of pre-war private education, George Orwell recalled the food and the foulness of his pre-Eton preparatory school:

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<sup>97</sup> 55 ex-Haileybury pupils perished in the 1899-1902 Boer War. The memorial obelisk was unveiled by Lieutenant Sir John French in July 1903. Per <http://www.haileybury.com/honour/> [accessed June 30 2013].

<sup>98</sup> John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow, 2005), p.94.

<sup>99</sup> Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, pp. 87-8.

<sup>100</sup> Michael Roper, 'Between Manliness and Masculinity: The 'War Generation' and the Psychology of Fear in Britain, 1914-1950', *Journal of British Studies* 44 (2005), pp. 343-362. For many boys, however, their public school admission at aged 10-13 may have followed several years at a boarding preparatory school.

It is not easy for me to think of my schooldays without seeming to breathe in a whiff of something cold and evil-smelling - a sort of compound of sweaty stockings, dirty towels, faecal smells blowing along corridors, forks with old food between the prongs, neck-of-mutton stew, and the banging doors of the lavatories and the echoing chamber-pots in the dormitories.<sup>101</sup>

Beyond the squalor evoked by Orwell, forced communal living, unheated dormitories, cold baths, poorly-cooked inadequate food, recurrent physical training, cross-country runs in the wet and cold were all considered character-building and sound preparation for the hardships of garrison living and the deprivations and discomforts of the colonial service.<sup>102</sup> The wretchedness encountered, and borne with peer-monitored stoicism, supposedly paralleled the self-sacrifice necessary for dedicated service to the nation.<sup>103</sup>

The removal of personal identity for newly-admitted pupils was an important step towards institutionalising boys and propagating manliness. Goffman refers to this eradication as the 'curtailment of the self', while Singer highlights the need to 'inhibit behaviour that reflects the person's former social identity'.<sup>104</sup> School admission practices ensured that the self as an autonomous individual became submerged within an entirety of community living. Most of the curtailment centred upon reductive normalisation. Boys became near-identical versions of each other: in issues of presentation, hygiene, diet, uniform, personal equipment, sports gear, grooming, timekeeping, lack of privacy, adherence to rules and the removal of familial support. The new or returning pupil could arrive with (only) prescribed clothing and a restricted range of personal possessions. Unapproved pastimes were compulsorily abandoned. In most schools, the displaying of family and domestic imagery was prohibited. His name was truncated to an abrupt surname. He was assigned lockers, pegs, beds, rooms, dining positions by numbers; his movements were governed by bells. He became a component within the school structure, stripped of prior independence or domestic comfort. Even though his fundamental life force meant that he would have asserted his individuality, perhaps subconsciously, in many small ways, any exhibited personal distinctiveness, as a member of the school community, was systematically subdued. Yet he became

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<sup>101</sup> Orwell, 'Such, such were the joys', pp. 431-2. Orwell attended St. Cyprian's from 1911-15.

<sup>102</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, pp. 16-17, and Humphrey Reader, 'The Most Popular War in History' per [http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/mostpopularwar\\_03.htm](http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/mostpopularwar_03.htm) [accessed 23 August 2011].

<sup>103</sup> Clearly many of the boys, in spite of the inherent hardships, became cheerfully resigned to the Spartan nature of PT. Here's an extract from a 1903 poem, 'The Perils of the Gym' addressed by a Bloxham pupil to his father: 'Every boy in the place has a discoloured face, / And at least, one black eye is the rule; / We are battered and bruised and our backs are contused / And there's scarce a whole limb in the school'. *The Bloxhamist*, March 1903.

<sup>104</sup> Goffman, *Asylum*, p.16 and Singer, *Cults*, p. 64.

institutionally conditioned to find such suppression acceptable.<sup>105</sup> In this last respect, his character was effectively sculpted towards an imagined military or colonial life - his self was curtailed.

'New boy' expressions of disaffection or drifts towards non-compliance were detected, broadcast and ridiculed by peers and seniors - often violently. An unpublished memoir shows that, in 1908, new boys at Sutton Valence were vulnerable to systematic bullying:

Once a week we had 'bootroom'. .... new boys were sent one at a time to the end and bidden to sing a song. If they refused or were unable, they were beaten until they did, and as soon as they started a salvo of boots and shoes were hurled at them. A pair of large cleated football boots with a husky arm at the other end was no slight missile when it found a target in a small boy's face. We used to crawl from the bootroom a mass of cuts and bruises.<sup>106</sup>

Bemoaning home separation was judged weak and effeminate; eccentricity was taboo. 'From that moment', wrote Alec Waugh, recalling his introduction to Sherborne, 'he felt that he was no longer an individual, but a member of a great community'.<sup>107</sup>

These dehumanising routines were judged necessary for the insinuation of manliness virtues. But the peer-scrutiny, bullying, struggles for conformity and expunging of personal identity, dispirited some boys to the extent that they suffered lasting emotional damage. Experiencing debasing behaviour at the hands of psychologically-scarred gentlemen officers, was not uncommon for newly-recruited other ranks, whence, as J. G. Fuller observes:

a small gentlemanly officer class still had to make soldiers out of under-gardeners' runaway sons and slum lads known to the police. ... in an army where all the ranks were criminals or seducers, and the officers all bloody bullies.<sup>108</sup>

School bullying could certainly modify later effectiveness: C. E. Joad's introduction to Captain Arthur West's war diary, notes his suffering after defying Blundell's school conventionality - chiefly his loathing of team sports - and much-scorned

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<sup>105</sup> Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite*, pp.44-5.

<sup>106</sup> This extract, donated to the school archive in 1965, is taken from an unpublished memoir by R. B. Westmacott who attended Sutton Valence school between 1908 and 1911. Although the practice was eventually stopped by the headmaster, it was evident that such acts of bullying violence were tacitly approved.

<sup>107</sup> Alec Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, p.11. Alec was the elder brother of the novelist Evelyn Waugh - after Sherborne and Sandhurst, he joined up as a machine-gunner shortly after this controversial semi-autobiographical work was published. He saw First World War action, aged just 19, at Passchendaele and was captured and taken prisoner. Per <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31813?docPos=3> [accessed 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012].

<sup>108</sup> J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.47.

interest in entomology.<sup>109</sup> Throughout, his diary shows West had been schooled to assume irregular thinking and nonconformist assertion were anathema; a belief not emanating from military service, but prevalent throughout his education. West's refusal to accept manliness orthodoxies, viewed as bizarre by his peers (and authority figures), led to much maltreatment and a blind eye from school officialdom. His barely-concealed resentment continued throughout his army career:

To such a man the Army came to seem a thing of evil. It could not reduce him in thought to the dead level of orthodox opinion which alone was recognised and encouraged, and his power of mental detachment and independent thinking, driven underground, turned to gall and bitterness.<sup>110</sup>

The self-curtailed process was designed to instil obedience, encourage assimilation, restrain rebellion and foster senses of obligation and duty - all manly attributes thought vital to the armed services. Moreover, school-learned pressures to conform and act in concert with peers to the extent that non-compliance was considered perfidy, acted as powerful herd stimuli towards 1914 volunteering.<sup>111</sup>

Another manliness influence was the masculine entirety of the school environment. Inescapable monasticism, so that female consolation became obliterated, was deemed key to achieving manly goals. This deprivation aroused anguish for countless boys. As the sociologist, Jane Barclay observes:

Crucially, at boarding school, just as in any 'care home' or institution, children are not loved by their caretakers. They are taught, fed, housed but not parented. ... No amount of encouragement from staff or even momentary comfort from an undermatron provides reassurance.<sup>112</sup>

Aroused by Edwardian suffrage agitation, a generation of elite fathers became alert to 'dangers' of assertive femininity.<sup>113</sup> It was thought vital to remove boys from maternal influences and to remodel them by a 'crash course in manliness'.<sup>114</sup> A

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<sup>109</sup> George Orwell notes that any interest in Natural History within the Public School system was generally deemed to be 'a babyish pursuit which a boy should be laughed out of as early as possible. Moreover it was thought to be somehow faintly plebeian, it was traditionally associated with boys who wore spectacles and were no good at games, it did not help you to pass exams, and above all it smelt of science and therefore seemed to menace classical education.'. Orwell, 'Such, such were the joys', pp.430.

<sup>110</sup> Introduction by C. E. Joad to A. G. West, *The Diary of a Dead Officer being the Posthumous Papers of Arthur Graeme West* (London, 1918), pp.ix-x - West was killed by a sniper's bullet in Bapaume in April 1917.

<sup>111</sup> Daniel Druckman, 'Nationalism, Patriotism, and Group Loyalty: A Social Psychological Perspective', *Mershon International Studies Review*, 38:1 (1994), pp. 43-68 is helpful as to the pressures of conformity to group norms and aspects of juvenile 'in-group amity and out-group hostility'.

<sup>112</sup> Jane Barclay, 'The Trauma of Boarding at School', *Self and Society* (2011) and [www.boardingconcern.org.uk](http://www.boardingconcern.org.uk) [accessed 17 July 2011].

<sup>113</sup> The militant WSPU, led by Emily Pankhurst was particularly active and visible between 1908 and the eve of the First World War. 'A whole notion of female personality, a whole psychic and moral atmosphere was being questioned' per J. M. Roberts, *Europe 1880-1945* (Harlow, 2001), p.198.

<sup>114</sup> Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, pp.137-8.

recent study by the psychologist, Joy Schavieren, suggests that boarding pupils could suffer psychological damage on the 'same scale as those who have been taken into care' and that maternal separation, regimented lifestyles and loneliness leaves emotional scars. She attributes the attachment to school houses and the institution itself as acting in substitute for withdrawn maternal affection. It seems reasonable to speculate whether the extreme elitist patriotism exhibited in 1914 stemmed from similar roots and was, in its own way, an institutionalised bi-product of earlier motherly absence.<sup>115</sup> John Springhall notes the degree that public schooling consumed the lives of boys until the age of around eighteen - ten years or so in an entirely masculine institution. He contrasts this duration with the lives of working-class boys who would, typically, have left day-school at thirteen or younger, and who would have spent ample time among an extended family embracing both sexes. In contrast to working-class contemporaries, privileged adolescence became chronologically prolonged and beset by removal from family influence. Virtually the entire community content of this period would have been exclusively male.<sup>116</sup>

A schoolboy's efforts to secure character values of loyalty, obedience, authority, teamwork, leadership (etc.) were exclusively undertaken within homosocial surroundings. His mother, sisters, aunts - shadowy figures for most of each year - had minimal influence upon his behaviour or ethics. It was predictable therefore, when urged (by men) to fight for King and Country (within the most masculine of organisations, the army), that his all-male rearing would encourage a positive decision. But, maternal deprivation was not wholly motivated by negativity: virile school communities supposedly prepared boys for the manly nature of the institutions they would later serve with, work for, study with or join socially. Most managerial occupations and professions were wholly man-oriented and, from Edwardian social perspectives, gentlemen's clubs, were growing increasingly popular and professionally advantageous.<sup>117</sup>

The initial impact of maternal separation could be brutal: but the experience conditioned many ex-public school recruits to tolerate the strains of similar dislocation when volunteering in 1914. For many, an indoctrinated sense of duty supplanted pressures of filial attachment. Such feelings were often expressed in letters home: a 1915 letter from George Worthington, an ex-public school subaltern

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<sup>115</sup> Joy Schavieren, 'Boarding School Syndrome: Broken Attachments and Hidden Trauma', *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 27:2, 2011, pp. 138-155.

<sup>116</sup> John Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin, 1960), pp. 46-63. The prolonging of childhood in public schools is examined further in chapter 3.

<sup>117</sup> As an example, see Barry Phelps, *Power and the Party: a History of the Carlton Club, 1832-1982* (London, 1983); also Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, p.303.



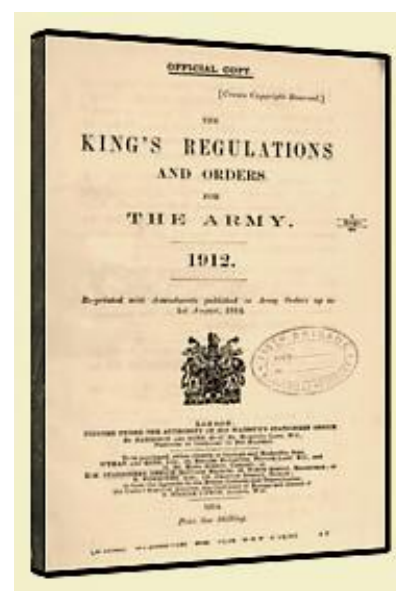
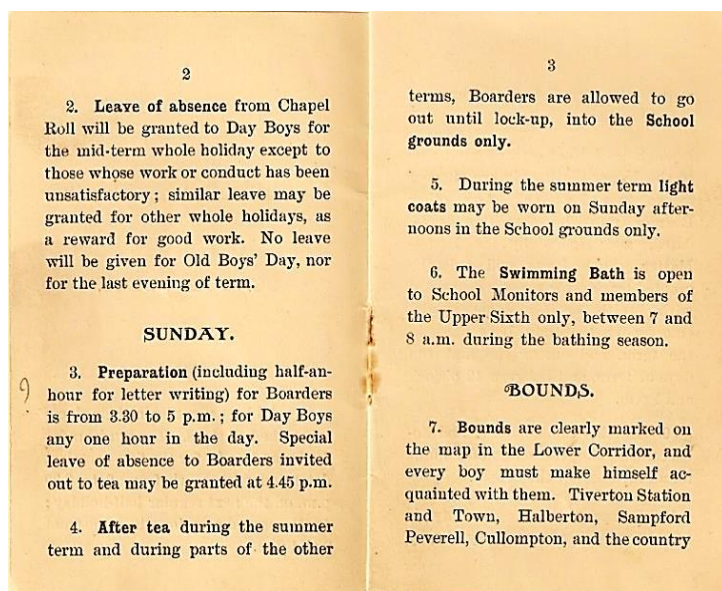
and one of four serving brothers, counters his mother's evident anguish by expressing his deep sense of obligation:

May you receive consolation from the fact that your sons are held by duty to the only place tenable by young men of military age and physique. We are here impelled by the sense of duty which is instinct (or at least ought to be in every man).<sup>118</sup>

The suggestion that his sense of duty, and the potential sacrifice of his life, should be 'instinctive' is remarkable - yet revealing. It denies that prior educative manipulation ever occurred and in so doing, confirms one of Singer's key cult criteria: 'keep the individual unaware of thought reform processes'.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, Worthington's letter illustrates the hold that indoctrinated duty had upon public schoolboys - a hold outweighing family feelings and extending into adulthood.

**Fig. 2 Blundell's school rule booklet c.1904**<sup>120</sup>

**Fig. 3 King's Regulations, 1912**<sup>121</sup>



A characteristic of total institutions is the enforcement of rules and the use of sanctions against occupants who violate them. Taking Blundell's 1904 rulebook as an example (see Fig.2), many were physically restrictive, forbidding access to specific locations - 'hotels, public houses and tobacconists shops are out of bounds', and requiring strict adherence to boundaries - 'clearly marked on the map in the Lower Corridor and every boy must make himself acquainted with them', and times - 'all boys must be in their places when the bell stops'. Other rules defined dress - 'house shoes may not be worn out of doors' - and there were many more.

<sup>118</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 1789-91, Lt. George Worthington, letter dated 8 August 1915.

<sup>119</sup> Singer, *Cults in our Midst*, pp.63-9.

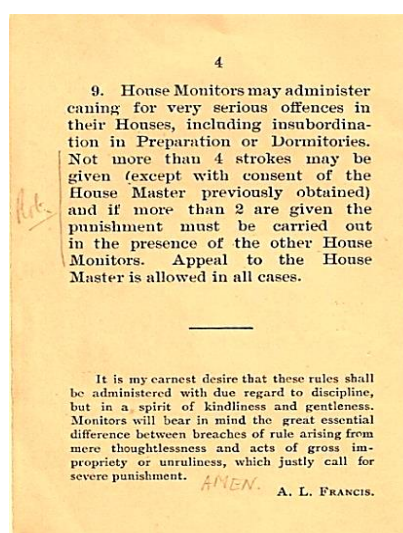
<sup>120</sup> Blundell's School Archives, 'School Rules' booklet, (Tiverton, 1904). The selected pages (pp.2-3) show rules applying to leave of absence, special rules for Sundays and school bounds.

<sup>121</sup> '1912 King's Regulations' per <http://youoldbooksandmaps.co.uk/kings-regulations-and-orders-for-the-army-1914.html>. [accessed 12 October, 2012]

Strict school rules prepared boys for military service - rules of duty, obedience, fairness, tradition, privileged authority, dress codes and uniformity paralleled army versions - as laid down in the King's Regulations booklet (see Fig. 3). For new subalterns, the size, layout and feel, of the military counterpart were familiar.

Approaches to punishment were also key to fomenting character and manliness. Schools operated penal systems in order to maintain discipline, conformity and classroom harmony.<sup>122</sup> Although, in addition to beating, there were several penalties (loss of privileges, cold shower discomfort, detentions, impositions, demotions and, in severe cases, expulsions) there was appreciation by parental customers, that inflicting serious pain was the accepted method for ensuring character-building objectives.<sup>123</sup> Beating was used to correct academic incompetence as well as for rule violations and sundry offences.<sup>124</sup> Inspection of the Malvern punishment book reveals that most floggings and canings were administered for everyday wrongdoing - disobedience, insubordination, cheating, idleness etc. - offences very relevant to military disciplinary requirements and in violation of muscular Christianity ethics. Other beatings were administered for contravening rules (for example: smoking, out-of-bounds excursions, alcohol offences), and, as the 'Black Book' summary shows, some surprising individual waywardness - instances showing that not all boys were cowed by institutionalised self-curtailment. Four of the more astonishing were: 'firing a rifle at the hills on a Sunday', 'reading a novel at school', 'catapulting a pig' and 'riding a motorcycle in disguise'.<sup>125</sup>

**Fig. 4 Monitors' rules, c.1904**<sup>126</sup>



<sup>122</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, 'The Blessings of war', p.108.

<sup>123</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, p.61.

<sup>124</sup> H. McCauley, 'Education and Indoctrination', *The Irish Journal of Education / Iris Eireannach an Oideachais*, 4:2 (1970), pp. 127-138.

<sup>125</sup> Malvern School, 'Black Book' punishment summary document, 1880-1937.

<sup>126</sup> 'Monitors' Rules', *Blundell's School* (1904).

What set the approach to beating apart from other institutions was the authority delegated to prefects. Regulations relating to prefectorial beating showed that the dispensation of such powers was for the formative development of the prefect as well as the junior miscreant - the experience was thought character-building for both participants. Blundell's had a booklet of rules (see Fig. 4) as guidance for monitors. These 1904 rules conclude with a headmasterly appeal to monitors' better instincts. Prefects were urged towards fairness, humanity and decisiveness - manly values which would prove beneficial in an army context. While leadership and justice qualities would be required of a prefect charged with administering institutional punishment, most juniors maintained ambitions to become prefects eventually. Their witnessing of applied prefectorial authority was a motivation to strive for later advancement by demonstrating character attributes themselves. This overall approach to promotion and the exercising of authority was analogous to the expectations from junior officers when mandated to control and discipline men within their command.<sup>127</sup>

Many of the individual benefits of manliness, irrespective of their emergence as part of a manipulated psyche, were themselves creditable. Few would argue with a panoply of taught characteristics that included praiseworthy gains such as courage, loyalty, fortitude and a spectrum of confident abstractions. But one disadvantage of such a culture was the pressure to show no deviation from traditions and orthodoxies, to exhibit no eccentricity.<sup>128</sup> Nonconformity was seen as heresy and dissidents were vulnerable to (at best) humiliation and (at worst) abuse and violence. Boys can be extravagantly cruel, as Arthur West's diary and the Westmacott memoir reveal. The strains of close living in a total institution atmosphere intensified the resolve of those tormentors inclined towards tyranny.<sup>129</sup> Also, the desire by most boys to avoid unconventional behaviour or opinions that risked exposure to bullying or ridicule, would have been institutionally reinforced. Many developed a lifetime desire to conform, to acquiesce, to be thought of favourably, to do one's duty - like everybody else. So that, in 1914-15, many

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<sup>127</sup> Ian Worthington, 'Antecedent Education and Officer Recruitment: the Origins and Early Development of the Public School - Army Relationship', *Military Affairs*, 41:4 (1977), pp. 183-189.

<sup>128</sup> The historian Jacob Middleton writes that 'education in the Edwardian era was a coercive and regimented practice, driven by a desire for conformity' Jacob Middleton, 'When Teachers and Taught were Sworn Enemies', *TES Newspaper*, 10 September 2010. Per <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6057640> [accessed 14 November 2011]

<sup>129</sup> Wakeford notes that ritualised bullying was often used 'to enhance the standing of older boys. A continuum of such practices therefore seems inevitable. Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite*, p.59.

recalled volunteering because 'it was the thing to do'. For example, H. E. James, who enlisted in 1915 along with several public school friends, wrote:

I felt more and more that it was up to me to join my friends ... owing to the patriotic atmosphere about at the time, and the fact that everybody expected one to be doing something connected with the war.<sup>130</sup>

And E. D. Shearn, who joined the Royal Fusiliers in 1914, later becoming a captain also felt an atavistic restlessness to conform; he wrote later:

during the month of August more and more of my contemporaries drifted off to join the armed services. By the end of the month I found myself more than anxious to join up.<sup>131</sup>

After the First World War, Bertrand Russell would sum up such pivotal orthodoxy as a disturbing side-effect to manly character formation:

Those who have been taught from an early age to fear the displeasure of their group as the worst of misfortunes will die on the battlefield, in a war of which they understand nothing, rather than suffer the contempt of fools. The English public schools have carried this system to perfection, and have largely sterilized intelligence by making it cringe before the herd. This is what is called making a man manly.<sup>132</sup>

#### **'Not a spiritual commitment but a social habit' - religion at public schools**

In Edwardian England, the fomenting of manliness became the foremost approach for building the characters of public schoolboys in anticipation of their service to the nation or Empire. Manliness represented the physical, virile dimension to the ideal of muscular Christianity, or as J. G. C. Minchin suggested in 1901: going through the world with rifle in one hand and Bible in the other.<sup>133</sup> Yet, if muscularity, in the form of strapping corporeality and selfless fortitude, was brought about through adversity, discipline and athleticism, what of Christianity? Did boys emerge from school devout, righteous, and equipped to conduct their lives in a Christian manner? Faith issues become significant when the extent of early-war pulpit recruitment (some of it most un-Christian) is considered. 'We fight believing we are fighting for God's cause against the devils', preached the Rev. Geoffrey Fisher to the Repton School assembly and he continued:

before this war is ended, only too many of the young generation of Englishmen will be dead. As each one dies, your value to England increases; you will have to take

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<sup>130</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 0848 H. E. James, Gunner serving with the RGA (Royal Garrison Artillery), 105 Anti-Aircraft Section, on the Western Front, 1917-1918. Unpublished recollections 'My experiences in England and France during the Great War', (1935).

<sup>131</sup> Imperial War Museum archive, IWM 2033 92/36/1, Captain E. D. Shearn, 'Account of personal experiences, 20<sup>th</sup> battalion of Royal Fusiliers', undated.

<sup>132</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Education and the Social Order* (London, 1932), p.58-9.

<sup>133</sup> J. G. C. Minchin, *Our Public Schools – their influence on English history* (London, 1901), p.113.

their places. It is your task here in the common round to fit yourselves to fill the vacant places worthily.<sup>134</sup>

In most public schools, Anglicanism was practised as a basis for instilling moral values, disavowing sin and enhancing standards of character.<sup>135</sup> Nearly all headmasters and many senior colleagues were ordained ministers who themselves had received a mid-Victorian public school education at a time when Thomas Arnold's influence meant concentration upon Christian evangelism for inspiring moral lifestyles.<sup>136</sup> As Arnold's biographer, T. W. Bamford, observed:

there was nothing that had not a religious and therefore for him, a moral element. Cheating, lying, cruelty, idleness etc. were all sins against God.<sup>137</sup>

Their piety, and the formative devoutness of their own scholastic background, caused Edwardian headmasters to advocate their Ecclesiastical credentials and standards.<sup>138</sup> And for their potential parental customers, they trumpeted the success of quests to implant Christian ideals and faith into pupils.<sup>139</sup> Such promotion was understandable: class-aware customers sought positive responses to reported declines in church attendance during the Edwardian decade.<sup>140</sup> After all, as Francis Thompson notes, 'keen to differentiate their status from uncouth lower orders and frivolous aristocracy', churchgoing underpinned traditional middle-class lifestyles. Abstention from Sunday church attendance was deemed scandalous or bohemian - even though many churchgoers declined to accept most of the church's religious

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<sup>134</sup> The Rev. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, *A Sermon Preached in Repton School Chapel, September 27<sup>th</sup> 1914* (Repton, 1914); per Lambeth Palace archive. Fisher was later appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. One can only speculate as to the degree of real alarm his words caused to his young audience.

<sup>135</sup> David Newsome gives an excellent overview of public school religiosity in David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning* (London, 1961).

<sup>136</sup> For example: J. E. C. Welldon, headmaster of Harrow, ex- Eton College, Bishop of Calcutta: The Rev. Dr. W. H. Flecker, headmaster of Dean Close school, ex-Uppingham College: The Rev A. E. Wynne, headmaster of Blundell's School, ex-Dover College.

<sup>137</sup> T. W. Bamford, 'Thomas Arnold and the Victorian Idea of a Public School' in Brian Simon and Ian Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin, 1975), pp. 67-8.

<sup>138</sup> At Dean Close for example, personally authored by the headmaster, 'more space in the prospectus was given to Religious Instruction than to any other subject' per C. E. Whitney, *At Close Quarters: Dean Close School, 1884-2009* (Hereford, 2009), p.3.

<sup>139</sup> For example, the first sentence of the Dean Close School 1899 prospectus states that 'The School ... was founded to give a thorough Public School Education, adapted to the career for which each boy is intended, and based upon the Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant Principles of the Church of England'.

<sup>140</sup> Robert Roberts notes that during the decade prior to 1914 a general drift towards secularism was well on the way irrespective of class. However people 'would not admit to *not* being Christians'. In contrast, John Stevenson writes that British Church membership and influence peaked in the late-Victorian and Edwardian era. In 1914 the membership of Protestant and Catholic Churches in Britain totalled almost 8 million. Roberts Roberts, *The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century* (Manchester, 1971), p.173, and John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-1945* (London, 1990), p.356.

foundations.<sup>141</sup> As Donald Read observes, a degree of masquerade tainted outwardly bourgeois devotion in Edwardian England:

Middle-class people were not inhibited by any scrupulousness about matching the practice of their daily lives to their religious precepts. They felt it important, moreover, to set an example to the lower classes. Such observance did not necessarily imply any deep religious conviction. Church attendance was a pleasant way for the middle-classes to enjoy social contact and social display.<sup>142</sup>

Mangan notes instances whereby, conscious of a growing awareness of national irreligion, Edwardian headmasters praised the virtues of pupils by attributing their qualities to the effectiveness of Christian teaching and practices.<sup>143</sup> Two examples illustrate this: Dr. Flecker, of Dean Close, publicly urged pupils 'to preserve a high tone of thinking, speaking and living, a reverence for all that is manly and pure, and a shrinking from all that is unworthy of those who being many, are one body in Christ'.<sup>144</sup> The Rev. G. Heywood, headmaster of Twyford School (later of Harrow) went further, praising his ideal pupil as one who:

possesses the virtues and characteristics which we all associate with a Christian gentleman. He is unselfish, modest, frank, and honourable ... and he has a foundation of true religion.<sup>145</sup>

Mangan believes school headmasters 'naively or calculatedly reported fiction for fact'. Critical of their constant pronouncements of pupil piety, he rejects their 'all schoolboys are Christians' assertions noting that enforced manliness reflected stoicism rather than Christianity. Muscular Christianity was 'a hard secular morality' more akin to the Spencerian 'tenets of social Darwinism'.<sup>146</sup> Writing specifically about the pre-1914 years, Mangan is scathing in his condemnation of what he viewed as institutionalised ideological hypocrisy:

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<sup>141</sup> Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society*, p.251.

<sup>142</sup> Donald Read, *Edwardian England 1901-1915* (London, 1972), p.55.

<sup>143</sup> J. A. Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-class Education in late Victorian and Edwardian England' in J. A. Mangan, and J. Walvin, (eds), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987), pp. 135-153. This excellent essay provides powerful arguments as to the extent that schoolboy devotion was a delusion propagated by ordained public school headmasters.

<sup>144</sup> M. A. Girling and Sir Leonard Hooper (eds), *Dean Close School: the First Hundred Years* (Cheltenham, 1986), p24.

<sup>145</sup> G. G. T. Heywood, 'Ideals of schoolboy life' in E. H. Pitcairn, *Unwritten Laws and Ideals of Active Careers* (London, 1899), p242 quoted by Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-class Education', p.136. Such morality-based discourse was also sustained for several years by fictional representations of muscular Christianity, the original model for which had been the eponymous hero of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, an athletic figure notable for his Christian idealism, bravery and conspicuous righteousness. Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (London, 1857); other fictional examples include works by Charles Kingsley, Rudyard Kipling, and Talbot Baines Reed.

<sup>146</sup> The philosopher Herbert Spencer first coined the expression 'the survival of the fittest' to describe Darwinism in 1864, per J. Macionis and K. Plummer, *Sociology: a Global Introduction* (Harlow, 2008), p.30.

What frequently characterised the public schools of this period was an implicit, if not explicit, crude Darwinism encapsulated in simplistic aphorisms: life is conflict, strength comes through struggle and success is the prerogative of the strong. In consequence, conditions in the schools were nasty, brutish and for some not short enough. The public school world was often a godless world of cold, hunger, competition and endurance.

The euphemism 'muscular Christianity' was aimed at parental consumers: the Darwinist actuality reflected the unhappy lives of inhibited pupils - specifically, weaker boys who struggled for peer acceptance and emotional survival.<sup>147</sup> Mangan's suggestion that the stoicism necessary to maintain manly attitudes in the face of (for example) the Sutton Valence initiation process, seems reasonable. Such was the physical, albeit sadistic, dimension to the 'muscular Christianity' appellation. However, his assertion that few boys emerged from public schools as authentic Christian adherents might, upon superficial examination, seem unconvincing. After all, fivefold arguments for the successful indoctrination of faithfulness seem rational: pupils were surrounded by didactic ordained ministers, boys attended frequent lengthy chapel services, they were constantly reminded that moral flawlessness required the adoption of Christian ideals and belief in Godly immanence and transcendence, divinity lessons were key to most curricula, pupils were pressed to conform to orthodoxies which embraced prayer, thanksgiving and holy music. These five factors alone meant each boy was exposed to intense daily evangelization: he was being instructed to believe.

However, evidence shows that Mangan's argument has much validity. Edwardian public schoolboys were far less devout than headmasters claimed. Within the genre of elite autobiographical memoirs, the issue of Christian morality and teaching is hardly mentioned - a surprising omission when the propagation of authentic holiness was supposedly a primary objective of headmasters.<sup>148</sup> Religion, when chronicled, was remembered not as a commitment of faith but more as a social habit, since chapel attendance occurred only as a gesture of institutionalised obedience in keeping with routine orthodoxy.<sup>149</sup> This is not to suggest that boys eschewed the ethics embedded within Edwardian Anglicanism: for example, the scruples surrounding fairness, truth, loyalty and fortitude among others.<sup>150</sup> And many would

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<sup>147</sup> Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-class Education', pp.136-139.

<sup>148</sup> See the Dean Close School 1899 prospectus as an example.

<sup>149</sup> Inger Okkenhaug, 'The Anglican Male Ideal and St. George's School', in I. Flakerud (ed.), *Gender, Religion and Change in the Middle East* (London, 2005), p.57. This Norwegian work emanated from Bergen University and the chapter in question contrasts English Public schools with equivalents in Jerusalem; and see John Chandos, *Boys Together: English Public Schools, 1800-1864* (London, 1984), pp.270-1.

<sup>150</sup> And, of course, many of these values corresponded to the character-building objectives of school games and were valued by the military. See chapter three herein.

consider themselves as moral Christians, when entering the post-education world. However, evidence of impassioned belief in the tenets of the Holy Trinity is elusive: the autobiographical neglect of Christian-based activity, given its attention and prioritisation, is unexpected.

Enforced devotional monotony would also have inhibited Christian conviction. In many public schools, Sundays, especially, would have been truly bleak, particularly when the threat of retribution for signs of non-compliance was omnipresent. At Dean Close for example, chapel services were protracted and invariably followed by supervised personal Bible study and meditation in a spirit of 'chaperoned religiosity'.<sup>151</sup> Such dullness would have failed to stimulate noteworthy Ecclesiastical interest. More probably, it might have led to spiritual indifference - even resentment. Alec Waugh, recalling his education, writes of a typical schoolboy's Christian qualifications:

He was not an atheist; he accepted Christianity in much the same way as he accepted the Conservative Party. All the best people believed in it, so it was bound to be all right; but at the same time it had not the slightest influence over his actions. If he had any religion at this time it was House football.<sup>152</sup>

Such a view echoes the middle-class parental hypocrisy noted earlier by Read. Yet, while some youthful irreverence is unavoidable, non-belief might have been further cemented by the lack of instruction specifically aimed at enhancing faith-based interest. Within the institutional environment of chapels and classrooms, the indoctrination approach of augmenting presumed existing belief, rather than cultivating fresh spiritual comprehension, might have led to disenchantment with religion as a topic - it would almost certainly have failed to initiate personal faith.<sup>153</sup> Headmasterly acquiescence towards youthful unresponsiveness is surprising since ennui-based enthusiasm deficiencies for a Christian belief system had existed since Arnold's time and were noted by mid-Victorian educationalists. George Moberly, the Winchester headmaster, for example, in 1861, warned his fellow heads:

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<sup>151</sup> Girling and Hooper (eds), *Dean Close School*. p.25 The editors report that the head, Dr. Flecker, was suspicious of day boys fearing that they might 'poison such chaperoned religiosity' (presumably through comments during the following week) - indicative perhaps of his somewhat paranoid awareness of the regular weekly ennui that visited the school.

<sup>152</sup> Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, pp.96-7.

<sup>153</sup> The approach to teaching by indoctrination is explored in Chapter 2. However, in Willis Moore's essay 'Indoctrination and democratic method' he suggests 'The authoritarian will attempt so to structure the teaching situation that certain basic truths are absorbed by the students and retained indefinitely against all opposition. ... Alternatives must not be mentioned' in I. A. Snook (ed.), *Concepts of Indoctrination* (London, 1972), p.98.



have a care of excessive churchgoing, of over long services, of very frequent communions or suggested confessions for the young. The recoil is apt to be more serious than you expect.<sup>154</sup>

This advice seems to have been rarely heeded. A 1906 letter to *The Times* on the subject of the recent Education Bill, written by an anonymous ex-headmaster, laments the lack of attention given to contemporary religious education. In so doing, he recalled his own mid-Victorian schooldays:

My own personal recollection as a schoolboy in a [public] school closely associated with the Church of England, is unhappily 50 years out of date. But if I had depended solely on such religious instruction as I received in that school for such religious knowledge, habits, and beliefs as I took away from it I think I should have been very ill-qualified to belong to any religious denomination whatever. From friends and relatives of younger generations who have been at similar schools much more recently I have gathered that their opinion and experience would not differ greatly from mine.<sup>155</sup>

It could be argued that chapel services stood exclusively for worshipful expression and moral guidance while the teaching of Biblical theology and the essentials of Christian belief were addressed by curricular divinity lessons. In a 1906 essay, the writer (also an ex-headmaster) asserted that the balance between instruction and worship was determined by the wishes of parents, and that most were eager for religious education only for its assumed outcomes of moral rectitude and values of character.<sup>156</sup> This writer was critical of parental motives, their increasing secularity, their expectations and the paltriness of their formative contributions:

Fathers and mothers are far less inclined than in former generations to attend personally to the religious teaching of their children. ... [parents have] a languid interest in [the church's] doctrinal teaching. They desire for their boys sound moral training and that stamp of character which is frequently produced by the discipline and social life of a public school; and they are willing to believe that the religious element contributes to such a character.<sup>157</sup>

Ill-considered parental expectations and classroom doctrinal outcomes failed to coincide, mainly because the parents themselves were unresponsive to the precepts of the Christian faith - as the writer complains, maintaining merely a 'languid interest'. Faith-based education was less than adequate: if the ennui of chapel sermonising failed to motivate, classroom sessions provided small compensation. The Whitgift School 1910 form lists show that divinity lessons for the Remove and Lower Sixth forms focused upon pre-David Bible history and the Mark

<sup>154</sup> George Moberly, 'Letter three' in *Five Short Letters on the studies and discipline of Public Schools* (London, 1861), p.82. Moberly was later Bishop of Salisbury.

<sup>155</sup> 'The Enquirer', letter to the editor, *The Times*, 4 June 1906.

<sup>156</sup> And, presumably, for the unacknowledgeable 'social' and 'example' reasons identified by Read and Thompson highlighted earlier.

<sup>157</sup> An ex-headmaster, 'The Religious Element' in T. E. Page (ed.), *The Public Schools From Within: A Collection Of Essays On Public School Education, Written Chiefly By Schoolmasters* (London, 1906), pp.134-5.

gospel together with the second book of Kings - while more motivating classics lessons embraced a wide spectrum of Greek and Roman legend, poetry, literature, adventure and history from a range of philosophers and academics of antiquity.<sup>158</sup> Beyond some Bible study sessions, as Chandos suggests, there was no serious religious training, not even for the boys set upon later ordination. Moreover, even though tasks of translation from original Latin and Greek were onerous, many of the classical legends and battle-stories were of greater interest to adolescent minds. Greek and Roman Gods may have been viewed as pagan by ordained teachers but, to boys, would prove more stimulating than the monotheistic narratives that dominated dreary Sundays and lacklustre Bible classes.<sup>159</sup>

Defenders of the religiosity of pre-1914 chapel services point to the evocative attachment boys had for their school, much of which centred upon chapel events and the building itself.<sup>160</sup> Yet the principal retrospective attraction for the chapel was not especially focused upon faith and prayer: for the duration of their schooldays, attendance was a mainstay of boys' collective routines and in that capacity, chapel memories often awakened nostalgia for youthful community. As one modern head states 'it was not so much Christian truth that the Edwardian public schoolboy took away from all those compulsory services, but a longing for atmosphere, for the faces of young friends, for the familiar hymns, above all for a sense of belonging'.<sup>161</sup> Crucial to this analysis was a fondness for hymn-singing. Nostalgia for chapel hymns represented confirmation of devoutness for those set upon furthering the image of public schoolboys as vigorous Christians.<sup>162</sup> Again, within the 1906 essay,

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<sup>158</sup> Per Whitgift School 'Work of the year and form lists' 1910. Works included Herodotus, Caesar, Ovid, Virgil, Livy, Cicero, Plato, Plutarch and Thucydides. This is not to assume, however, that the teaching of classics to Edwardian boys was free from problems. The classical dimension to typical public school curricula is evaluated in Chapter 2.

<sup>159</sup> Chandos, *Boys Together*, p.271. An iconic example of a young privileged Edwardian eschewal of Christian doctrine in favour of Greco-Roman alternatives was the poet Rupert Brooke. Educated at Rugby School, Brooke was described as 'a pagan if not an atheist in religion' in spite of his occasional appeals to a monotheistic God, viz: 'Now God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour' from 'Peace' in *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke* (Basingstoke, 1992), p.312, and G. Wilson Knight, 'Rupert Brooke' in George A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness* (London, 1968), p.489.

<sup>160</sup> 'The holiest and most enduring associations of the school life belong to the chapel' per J. C. C. Welldon (Harrow headmaster - 1898) quoted in Brian Simon, 'Introduction' in Simon and Bradley, *The Victorian Public School*, pp.13-4.

<sup>161</sup> Cited by Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-class Education', pp.140-141, and John Rae who quotes this contribution from an unnamed participant within the 1972 Headmasters Conference in John Rae, *The Public School Revolution* (London, 1981), p.100.

<sup>162</sup> Although not especially commending their devoutness, Vera Britain recalled the Uppingham school assembly singing the Commemoration Hymn in July 1914: 'There was a thrilling, a poignant quality in those boys' voices, as though they were singing their own requiem - as indeed many of them were' in 'War Service in Perspective', *Promise of Greatness*, pp.371-2.

'The Religious Element', it was contended that 'the chapel has come to be regarded as the heart of the school's life' and in respect of hymn-singing:

frequently men in the army, the civil services, and in colonial life, far removed from opportunities of worship, are found to be treasuring their school hymn book among the most precious memorials of old days.<sup>163</sup>

Certainly, chapel hymn-singing was an experience enjoyed by boys but, it is suggested, for reasons of purposeful community rather than pious observance: the hymn-book would represent a relic of the sentiments conjured by recalled choral brotherhood.<sup>164</sup> The political scientist, Benedict Anderson, having explored the psychology of communal hymn-singing, determined that:

At precisely such moments, people utter the same verses to the same melody. ... [Hymns] provide an occasion for unisonality, for the echoed physical realization of the imagined community. How selfless this unisonance feels!<sup>165</sup>

Anderson's use of 'selfless' to describe the feelings engendered by the communal singing of uplifting anthems is essential to discovering why chapel hymn-singing was popular. Selflessness, in the sense that the quality meant disregarding one's own welfare in favour of others, was a cornerstone value sought as part of most public schools' character-building quests. So that any collective harmless activity that suggested even a subconscious feeling of moral improvement would be welcomed and recalled with fondness. And military hymn-singing would become a regular activity: firstly upon OTC occasions, then at church parades 'somewhere in France'.<sup>166</sup>

The reasons why public school life owed little to spiritual Christian teaching, given the predilection of numerous ordained headmasters and senior staff, are not simple. Despite individual godly exceptions, schoolboy attitudes tended to be profane rather than divine, beliefs were worldly rather than pious, traditions were unfeeling rather than Christian.<sup>167</sup> But in an age when prior certainties were being challenged by competing interpretations of existence and society, it was obligatory for Evangelical headmasters to reassert, at least to parental customers, their schools' reverent

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<sup>163</sup> Anonymous Headmaster, 'The Religious Element' in *The Public Schools*, p.137.

<sup>164</sup> The social anthropologist, John Blacking, suggests that all forms of group singing are motivated by a desire to exhibit and practise cohesiveness. John A. R. Blacking, 'Humanly Organized Sound', in *How Musical is Man* (Seattle, 1973), Ch.1.

<sup>165</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 2006), p.145.

<sup>166</sup> See C. A. G. Rundle, *My Diary of Officers' Training Corps Camp at Tidworth Pennings Salisbury Plain*, (unpublished manuscript per Blundell's School archive, 1909) and Appendix B.

<sup>167</sup> Chandos notes that the occasional overtly religious public schoolboy arriving at university was treated as a figure of fun by his contemporaries: 'a religious undergraduate was very rare, very much laughed at when he appeared and ... hardly to be found among public school men' per Chandos, *Boys Together*, p.268.

credentials. From the viewpoint of the boys, 'going through the motions' of simulated belief and devotion was hardly an onerous undertaking. It was undemanding to mumble the Lord's Prayer in unison with one's fellows, to lustily belt out 'Praise my soul, the King of Heaven' and to intone 'Amen' at the right juncture - in the knowledge that any feebleness of personal holiness commitment stayed unnoticed, unremarked, unchallenged and thus unpunished.

What is less easy to grasp are the reasons why Edwardian schoolboys might develop unyielding beliefs in a set of nationalistic abstract concepts (white supremacy, the perfection of British nationhood, the moral ethics of Empire, English aristocratic right-to-rule etc.) while remaining relatively unmoved as to the fundamental tenets of Christianity - given that all were subjects of substantial educational effort.<sup>168</sup> In short, and perhaps paradoxically, the classroom indoctrination techniques used by history and geography teachers were more successful in embedding national supremacy convictions, while headmasters, even within the splendour of chapel surroundings, failed to implant serious faith (or interest) in the more demanding aspects of Christian theology.

One of the reasons for disparity between ensuing levels of belief could be ascribed to instruction methods. In history lessons, boys were not directed by teachers to accept and have faith in (for example) notions of English white supremacy, yet, the range of historical 'facts' (many of them based upon military situations) selected for classroom study would lead most of them to that conclusion. Thus, as the educationalist, Thomas F. Green suggests, such eventual principal beliefs derive from what he calls primitive beliefs. Primitive beliefs are those that are not themselves questioned; positioned as factual truisms, they are appealed to in determining the formation of more significant, derivative convictions.<sup>169</sup>

Although the indoctrination of white supremacy beliefs will be examined in the next chapter, consider this extract from *A School History of England* (1911) as it describes various races encountered during the expansion of Empire - textbook ideas and descriptions that would be reinforced by chalk-and-talk sessions in the Edwardian classroom:

In Australia we had nothing but a few miserable blacks, who could hardly use even bows and arrows. In New Zealand we had a more warlike race, the Maoris, perhaps originally akin to the Malays, to deal with. But in South Africa we had not only really

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<sup>168</sup> As exemplified by the memoir from Alec Waugh cited earlier.

<sup>169</sup> Thomas F. Green, 'Indoctrination and beliefs' in Snook (ed.), *Concepts of Indoctrination*, p.30.

fierce savages like Zulus and Kaffirs, but also a large population of Dutch farmers and traders.<sup>170</sup>

Such a presentation, as incontrovertible facts (primitive beliefs), of non-English peoples being hostile, incompetent and uncivilised, carried its tacit derivative implication that the English were racially superior - a conclusion which, through its self-conceived origin (as Green has suggested) becomes secured as an article of faith within a young mind. In effect, the pupil's judgment and array of beliefs was manipulated through classic indoctrination processes.

It is not hard to see that attempts at the establishment of formative spiritual beliefs were conducted in different ways - through chapel-based ceremonial services, holy music, bible readings, divinity lessons, sermonising and prayer. Added to these were the character-forming constituents whereby the underpinning Christian moral messages were stressed as vital for ensuring personal decency, social acceptance and ultimate salvation. So that, for an Edwardian public schoolboy, being seen to be devout was essential to gaining and retaining adult approval.<sup>171</sup> The reverse, significantly, was also true. Any hint of agnosticism or atheism invited opprobrium and was thought immoral - and punishable.<sup>172</sup> There was therefore considerable incentive for boys to appear religious and feign belief in the truth of Christian miracles and holy phenomena. Moreover, at home, parental pressures to exhibit unshakeable devoutness may have been reinforced to match any church-going piety brought about by aspirational or social pretentiousness.<sup>173</sup>

Yet concealment reasoning is not entirely satisfactory since it fails to explain why internalised feelings of disbelief were not overwhelmed by the religious atmosphere pervading public schools.<sup>174</sup> A reading of the German sociologist, Thomas Luckmann, points to further solutions. Firstly, he debunks one assumption: that which presumes a parallel between the constancy of church (or chapel) attendance and the degree of congregational religiosity - most particularly when attendance was compulsory. Procedural religion, as found in public schools, embraced much ritual or institutionalised conduct (chapel sermons, services, prayers, psalms, the saying

<sup>170</sup> C. R. L. Fletcher, and R. Kipling, *A School History of England* (Oxford, 1911), p.239.

<sup>171</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, pp. 20-21 Lewis-Stempel refers to this as 'milk and water Anglicanism ... being light on doctrine and ritual, heavy on ethics'.

<sup>172</sup> Stevenson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, p.251.

<sup>173</sup> Read, *Edwardian England*, p.55.

<sup>174</sup> As well as Dean Close School, Harrow is also an excellent example of entrenched religiosity. Its headmaster, J. E. C. Weldon, later Bishop of Calcutta and Dean of Manchester, was a strict evangelical who filled 'newspaper pieces, magazine articles and prize-day speeches with pieties, platitudes and pomposities' per Mangan, *Social Darwinism*, p.136. Weldon suggested that 'the life of English youth is constantly hallowed by religion' in such articles as J. E. C. Weldon, 'The training of an English Gentleman in the Public Schools', *Nineteenth Century and after*, CCCLV, 355, September 1906, pp. 396-413.

of grace, hymn singing, confirmation ceremonies etc.). Luckmann differentiates ritual from doctrine or institutionalised religious ideas - notably those phenomena demanding unqualified faith: the miracles, the resurrection, the Holy Trinity, the Virgin birth - items that he categorises as 'the institutional conglomerate of irrational beliefs'. Luckmann suggests an abundance of ritual has little effect on the degree of doctrine acceptance and that places of worship remain no more than 'islands of religion (or irrationality) in a sea of secularism (or reason)'. Moreover, he proposes that individual doctrinal belief relates to the satisfaction of personal needs - some of which are determined by society, while the majority originate internally.<sup>175</sup>

If Luckmann's 'need' theories are sound, the range of internalised needs that might have provoked a middle-class Edwardian adult towards genuine faith, embraces several potential components - many of which reflect maturity. These include (for example): consolation in times of strife, assurance of eventual salvation, assuaging guilt, fear of war and familial death or injury etc. Yet, beyond issues of sickness or bereavement, it is more difficult to identify a set of similar internalised needs that motivated privileged Edwardian teenagers in the same way. This is not to suggest, nevertheless, that needs, albeit different and more institutionally relevant, did not influence the typical schoolboy's attitude to Christianity and chapel activities. Many of these would coincide with the character values being exalted at school: obedience to authority, conformity to rules and traditions, fear of being considered unconventional, the struggle to appear morally perfect and, of course, the deeply-hidden fear that evident non-belief might possibly consign the sceptic to hellfire and damnation. Duplicitous pretending, therefore, would have seemed a very logical strategy when faced with persistently enthusiastic evangelism, compulsory chapel attendance and ritualised orthodoxy.

But many of the Christian character-based messages (for example, sacrifice, selflessness, honesty, decency etc.) reinforced by institutionalisation, socialization, athleticism and quests for manliness, struck home in spite of reasoned non-belief. As Orwell observed many 'retained a deep tinge of Christian feeling, while almost forgetting the name of Christ'.<sup>176</sup> Yet religious formalities certainly had impact in later life. The significance and seriousness of regular chapel conventions and customs stayed with public schoolboys, so that ingrained institutionalised submissiveness to

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<sup>175</sup> Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion – the Problem of Religion in Modern Society* (New York, 1967), p.22-3.

<sup>176</sup> George Orwell, 'The Lion and the Unicorn' in *George Orwell: Essays* (London, 2000), p.141.

behests emanating from religious sources remained - even if personal doctrinal faith was absent.<sup>177</sup>

What was the impact that school chapel experiences had upon volunteering in 1914-15? Faith-based motivations can be largely discounted. As described by Mangan and Alec Waugh, most ex-public schoolboys had left school with no meaningful degree of divine spirit.<sup>178</sup> Nevertheless, the early-war 'volunteer now' entreaties advanced by clergymen throughout the country struck home.<sup>179</sup> The authoritative forcefulness of the language echoed recollected headmasterly edicts, announcements, rulings and diktats that were regularly issued from the chapel podium.<sup>180</sup> A militant bishop looked and sounded very like a dogmatic public school headmaster - a linkage that was unsurprising when, as the American historian, Albert Marrin notes, 'a headmastership was practically an assured stepping-stone to a deanery or a bishopric'.<sup>181</sup> Moreover, pulpit recruitment was given prominence throughout the national press. And as A. J. Hoover has written, 'the war brought with it a religious revival of sorts, and people flocked to churches by the millions and purchased books of patriotic sermons by the thousands'.<sup>182</sup>

Of the numerous examples of volunteering pressure by senior Anglican personages, those emanating from the Bishop of London, Arthur Winnington-Ingram, were the most prominent. As Alan Wilkinson notes 'his skill as a public speaker made him a successful recruiter of volunteers early in the war'.<sup>183</sup> On several occasions he likened the conflict to a holy war. An example of this oratory occurred in June 1915:

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<sup>177</sup> For example, Sir Henry Newbolt's poem 'Clifton Chapel' (c.1899) encapsulates the recollected moral impact (if not youthful doctrinal belief) of chapel events upon pupils; the poem opens: 'This the Chapel: here, my son, / Your father thought the thoughts of youth, / And heard the words that one by one / The touch of Life has turn'd to truth'; quoted in Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.203.

<sup>178</sup> Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, pp.96-7 and Mangan, 'Social Darwinism', pp.136-139.

<sup>179</sup> Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London, 1965), p.297.

<sup>180</sup> For an example of authoritarian oratory, see the chapel address given by the headmaster (Frank Preston) of Malvern College in April 1915. 'We are told to show them [the Germans] consideration. But consideration, it has been well said, is only due to the considerate. And we cannot forget the fate which is in store for our Empire in case of defeat.' Per *The Malvernian*, June 1915.

<sup>181</sup> Albert Marrin, *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War* (Durham, NC, 1974), pp.15-6. Marrin also notes that 'in the period 1871-1902 the vast majority of candidates for Holy Orders were university men - 60 per cent coming from Oxford or Cambridge. Also the great majority had attended public school.'

<sup>182</sup> Hoover, *God Germany and Britain*, p. xi.

<sup>183</sup> Winnington-Ingram attended Marlborough College, later Keble College, Oxford per Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1996), p.70.

I think the Church can best help the nation first of all by making it realise that it is engaged in a Holy war, and not be afraid of saying so. Christ died on Good Friday for Freedom, Honour and Chivalry, and our boys are dying for the same things.<sup>184</sup>

In one early wartime sermon, he related volunteering to 'a willing and even joyful endurance of personal sacrifice and much magnificent heroism in the face of danger and loss'.<sup>185</sup> Perhaps, his most startling incitement occurred during his 1914 Advent sermon when, with surprising extravagance of language, he justified (and later published) a call to arms by advocating genocide against the German people. Those who volunteered, he suggested, are:

banded in a great crusade - we cannot deny it - to kill Germans: to kill them not for the sake of killing, but to save the world, to kill the good as well as the bad, to kill the young men as well as the old, to kill those who have shown kindness to our wounded ... and to kill them lest the civilization of the world should itself be killed.<sup>186</sup>

Less extreme perhaps and more typical among senior clerics was the Very Reverend Frederick MacNutt, the Archdeacon of Leicester who gave (and again published) three sermons in Southwark Cathedral in November 1914. Less xenophobic than Ingram, these sermons nevertheless appealed to values prevalent within public schools. Highlights included:

to die thus ... in response to the appeal of fidelity to a plighted trust, is to live gloriously and to live otherwise is everlastingly to die.

She [England] has countless sons and daughters capable of the sacrifices which of old days made her what she is.

we did not know that there burned in English hearts so fiery a passion for liberty and justice and that the nation would leap to ... defend the weak against the tyrant.<sup>187</sup>

Although, as Read notes, young middle-class Edwardians were 'losing interest even in the outward observance of religion', the scholastic experience of regular exposure to Anglican morals and character-based virtues, nevertheless affected schoolboys' reaction to calls for wartime volunteers.<sup>188</sup> From the viewpoint of senior churchmen such as Winnington-Ingram and MacNutt (and many clerics of similar 'Church militant' persuasions), appeals to abstract ideals of honour, sacrifice, heroism, liberty, justice, glory, chivalry, civilization were highly effective in motivating public

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<sup>184</sup> Marrin, *The Last Crusade*, p.139. Whether Christ died for 'chivalry' (the medieval system and customs of knighthood) remains a dubious proposition – even when voiced by a bishop.

<sup>185</sup> Arthur Winnington Ingram, *A Message for the Supreme Moment, delivered on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1914 at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields*, per Lambeth Palace archive; Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1996), p.70.

<sup>186</sup> Winnington Ingram quoted in Annette Becker, 'Faith, Ideologies and the 'Culture of War'' in John Horne (ed.), *A Companion to World War 1* (London, 2010), pp. 237-8.

<sup>187</sup> Frederick Brodie MacNutt, *The Reproach of War: Addresses Given in Southwark Cathedral, November 1914* (London, 1914). MacNutt had attended St Pauls and Trinity College, Cambridge.

<sup>188</sup> Read, *Edwardian England*, p.56.



schoolboys who had been raised on the ethics of Empire, classical mythology, competitive sports and habitual chapel-centred propaganda.<sup>189</sup> Irrespective of personal faith, conflating character-based principles of manliness and *faux* religion proved very powerful: such entreaties would surely have moved a doubtful ex-public schoolboy. And the disciplines associated with communal chapel attendance and the necessary obedient conformity with elements of ritual observance, prepared many boys for the commitments necessary to begin and effect meaningful military steadfastness in wartime. In 1914, muscular Christianity arrived in earnest.

The character dimensions to the Christian teaching received by public schoolboys before 1914 melded with the other sources of manliness, patriotism and duty to form a dynamic that propelled them to volunteer. However, the extensive schoolboy devoutness, claimed by many Ecclesiastical headmasters, was an illusion maintained for school promotional reasons in response to real and imagined parental demands. That most of these parental requirements were made for aspirational class-social reasons, rather than faith-based ones, intensified headmasterly delusions with an ironic degree of disingenuousness.

**'Institutions must assume responsibility for all aspects of the individual'**

As Foucault observes, an effective institution, 'must assume responsibility for all aspects of the individual, his physical training, his aptitude to work, his everyday conduct, his moral attitude, his state of mind' - an environmental scenario entirely applicable to public schools.<sup>190</sup> Overall, the foundational attributes of Edwardian boarding school life were ideal for the propagation of life-changing beliefs and attitudes. The approach to key moral and character-based educational aspects explored in this chapter (manliness, soft and hard socialization, religious motivation) relied upon institutional surroundings and conventions designed with national service-based futures in mind.

The outlook of a schoolboy product of these policies would have consequently been modelled in many ways. Through the school as an institution, he became familiar

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<sup>189</sup> Some clerics took the opportunity to blame the outbreak of war upon the decline in Christian consciousness itself. Addressing a Boy Scout Camp in early August 1914, the Bishop of Bath and Wells said that war had 'come about through the selfishness and indifference to the ways of Christ ... if they were to be loyal they could not keep out of it ... the spirit of loyalty, trustworthiness and duty which was making them do what they had to do' a homily that neatly coalesced ideas of Christian observance, character virtues, personal sacrifice, and obligation. Per the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 3 August 1914. Such exhortations were not confined to senior Church figures: appealing to potential feelings of 'guilt', Canon Ingles, Vicar of Witham Church in Essex preached in September 1914: 'I shall forever be ashamed of my parish if she does not send out all her young men, and those of the proper age to fight. ... I want to see all the single men from 19 to 35 years clean out of Witham parish.' per the *Essex County Chronicle*, 11 September 1914.

<sup>190</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*, p.235.

and compliant with the idea of lengthy periods of familial separation, periods that exposed him to the importance of unquestioning obedience, strict discipline and the need to conduct his life according to stringent rules. Through techniques of soft socialization he grasped the complex nuances of mannered gentlemanliness, most significantly through honing his diction, practising his eloquence – and expunging his regional accent. Adversity-based hard socialization introduced and unfailingly emphasised the spectrum of apparently intrepid abstract character qualities that collectively established manliness. Among these qualities, manly vigour embraced strength of mind, energy and virility: he understood the concept of loyalty to institutions, class, and nation; daily victimisation and hardship shaped his courage and fortitude. He learned the values of straightforwardness in speech and manner. As an occasionally-discovered miscreant, he expected and tolerated severe punishment. He learned to welcome and to be at ease within a strictly homosocial environment; he became comfortable with the diminution of much of his persona and 'self'. He came to prize orthodoxy and abhor unconventionality.

In the school chapel, despite some concealed scepticism, he engaged with the tenets of Christian-based morality: honour, duty, honesty, sacrifice and various other virtues as evidenced by the scriptures. He relished the unifying power of community bestowed by chapel occasions: as a potential soldier, he related to the historical 'Crusader' concepts promoted through hymns and sermons. He became an expert in simulating unshakeable doctrinal belief and, over time, he became an English Protestant supremacist: although indifferent to (and bemused by) the detail. He came to assume that, for all his unconcerned doubts as to Gospel veracity, Christianity, as taught and practised in the Church of England, was certainly more sound than other Christian teaching and infinitely superior to all non-Christian convictions – and besides, all the best people were Anglicans.

Many of the institutionally-formed and chapel-based attitudes and values outlined in this chapter coincided with military recruiters' expectations for the intake of junior officers. However, a principal activity within any school will relate to instruction - the dissemination of ideas, knowledge, reasoning, skill – and belief. The next chapter examines the typical public school curriculum and its effect upon boys' patriotism, the drive to provide army training through the OTC and the dawning of youthful militarism in Edwardian public schools.

## CHAPTER 2 - CURRICULUM

### **'To root in the youths of the country the aptitude for arms and a feeling of patriotism'**

As outlined, Thomas Arnold's tenets of 'Godliness and good learning' became modified during the late nineteenth century through the introduction of organised sports, prefectorial systems and muscular Christianity ideals considered necessary for Empire administration.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the 'good learning' aspects of the experience remained key to personal development insofar as points of narrow-minded Empire knowledge and, more significantly, belief in supremacist and militarist principles. This chapter therefore addresses three comprehensive questions. Firstly, how were public schoolboys indoctrinated in the classroom into believing in a form of patriotism that was belligerently supremacist in respect of race, religion and Empire entitlement? Secondly, aside from the socialization efforts described in the previous chapter, by what means were boys schooled into believing warfare represented a desirable method for resolving international differences? And, how did the idea, that death in a patriotic military cause was glorious, become established? Finally, how did the inclusion of OTC training within the Edwardian curriculum affect boys' attitudes to military service? What gave rise to this major change and, given that Empire policing had hitherto been the principal priority of the nineteenth-century British army, was the instruction received relevant to fighting a European land war?

### **'The two terms were practically synonymous' - indoctrination and education.**

To begin with, this chapter examines typical curricula within Edwardian public schools and assesses how the teaching of three core subjects influenced boys towards wartime volunteering. Beyond manliness intentions and the challenges of socialization in austere, quasi-religious institutional environments, the public school curriculum was the basis for classroom-based learning. Through their lessons, how were pupils urged towards jingoistic nationalism and warfare enthusiasm? These two connected ideologies, advanced as conclusive, typically incorporated five key principles: belief in the notion of English supremacy over other nations and races, disdain for adherents of non-Christian religions, the infallibility of Britain and the Empire, warfare as a satisfactory way of resolving international disputes, the concept of battlefield death as glorious.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Most importantly, the young had to be given models of how the Anglo-Saxon should behave and which of his innate virtues he should cultivate and how ... if he had to earn his living, he elected to become an army or navy officer, a senior civil servant, a clergyman, a barrister, or joined a branch of the Indian or Colonial administration'; per Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London, 2000), pp.206-7.

Curricular content and method are significant since, through lessons, schools indoctrinated pupils by imbuing and reinforcing these English supremacist and glorious warfare beliefs. In his study of propaganda history, Oliver Thomson highlights education as a powerful vehicle for the manipulation of young minds.<sup>2</sup> And the psychologist Leonard Doob, in his examination of approaches cultivating patriotism, suggests that classroom experiences did much to inculcate pride in nationhood, since a child will be:

surrounded by patriotic messages: in school textbooks and 'word of mouth' about glories of the past, the opportunities of the present, and the destiny of the future.<sup>3</sup>

Richard Gatchel, in an essay exploring educative malpractice, notes there were no belittling connotations attached to Edwardian indoctrination, an approach entailing the infixing of belief rather than conveying knowledge:

the employment of 'indoctrination' was no more offensive in educational circles than the use of 'education'. Indeed, the two terms were practically synonymous.<sup>4</sup>

Clearly, exploring classroom indoctrination practices is difficult since much depended upon individual teachers. However, an inspection of public school textbooks proves fruitful. Many books seem primarily focused upon embedding nationalistic belief rather than simply imparting knowledge and urging critical analysis - history and geography books especially.<sup>5</sup> And classics, whereby Homeric youths, often depicted as young gods, were worshipped before suffering glorious death in battle, also influenced boyish attitudes to war. The classical stories remain primary texts, but their persuasive impact can be gleaned from contemporary writings and memoirs. Evidence shows that presenting classical legends as historical truths modified attitudes to war and death.

Approaches to teaching history, geography and classics, as evidenced by typical textbook content, would suggest that later decisions to volunteer for war service

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<sup>2</sup> Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: A History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999), p.4. Thomson notes that 'indoctrination of the very young is much easier than that of adults, reaches much deeper and is very much harder to erase' and cites the nineteenth century British public school ethic as an example of the inculcation of nationalist and imperialist propaganda. pp.81 and 243.

<sup>3</sup> Leonard W. Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations* (Westport CT, 1964), p.37.

<sup>4</sup> Richard H. Gatchel, 'The evolution of the concept', in I. A. Snook (ed.), *Concepts of Indoctrination* (London, 1972), p.9.

<sup>5</sup> Works that focus on the history of the school textbook include, for example, Valerie Chancellor, *History for their Masters: Opinion in the History Textbook, 1800-1914* (Bath, 1970); William E. Marsden, 'Poisoned History: A comparative study of nationalism, propaganda and the treatment of war and peace in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century school curriculum', *History of Education*, 29:1, (2000), pp. 29-49, and Michael Lieven, 'Bias in school history textbooks: representations of the British invasion of Zululand', *Paradigm*, 2:1, (2000) per

<http://faculty.education.illinois.edu/westbury/paradigm/index.html> [accessed 12 May 2012].

were positively influenced. It was the partisan textual substance of these subjects which, when coupled with indoctrinating educational practices, nourished nascent belief systems. As Thomson suggests, early training represented a key constituent of long-term propaganda:

Educational subjects ... have nearly always been taught in a biased manner, bringing up new generations to have attitudes compatible with the dominant group in society. ... [One] trait is to exaggerate military success and ignore failure, painting the picture of warlike superiority as a justification of effort for future conquest.<sup>6</sup>

Indoctrinated jingoistic beliefs underwrote the moral certainties driving volunteering impulses - feelings of duty, loyalty, glory, sacrifice, class-leadership, patriotism, righteousness. To take Thomson's point, much Edwardian nationalist teaching served as 'justification of effort for future conquest'. And as Mangan notes, 'the process of jingoistic indoctrination of the public schoolboy into naive, heroic and self-denying patriotism' was evident within almost every school activity.<sup>7</sup>

Stephen Heathorn reports that subject textbooks were widely used in elite schools before the First World War.<sup>8</sup> Their evidence, in respect of promoting nationalism, is most revealing. Examination of history books exposes their supremacy contentions and related doctrinaire ideas: the infallibility of Empire, the magnificence of the monarchy, the faultlessness of the elite classes, the invincibility of the military.<sup>9</sup> British warfare descriptions and images constantly cemented impressions of noble endeavour, heroic sacrifice, and just causes bravely fought for. Taught geography was also used to promote youthful nationalism. Edwardian textbooks emphasised the need for Empire unity as a rejoinder to Boer War controversy. For example, this brief introduction, from the Boer War commander, Lord Roberts, to a widely-used geography textbook, couples stirring images of: Empire magnificence and unity, English racial supremacy over her colonies as 'the mother country', the timeless worthiness of dying in the cause of nation and Empire, the enduring duty (therefore) to serve when required. To the impressionable young mind of a ten-year old in (say) 1905, such a text, amid a constant corpus of similar exhortations, could be reasonably assumed to have helped influence an enlistment decision nine years later:

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<sup>6</sup> Thomson, *Easily Led*, p.34.

<sup>7</sup> Mangan, 'Review of *The Old Lie*', p.527.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Heathorn, "Let us remember that we, too, are English': Constructions of Citizenship and National Identity in English Elementary School Reading Books, 1880-1914', *Victorian Studies*, 38:3, (1995), pp.395-428.

<sup>9</sup> It is important to distinguish between textbooks and 'readers'. The latter were used to teach reading skills within elementary schools rather than to communicate (say) historical fact and dogma - albeit nationalistic doctrines were frequently evident.

Her Majesty's dominions, bound together by one common aim and object - to uphold the honour of the mother country and to die if need be for her interests ... We stand, ... ready now, henceforth and forever, to fulfil the glorious destiny of our race.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to examining the content of history and geography lessons, it is important to understand the ideas behind elitist teaching approaches. Edwardian educational certainties included deep-rooted ideas surrounding English supremacy and Christian Godliness: the propagation of such tenets was therefore expected by parents. Historically, instilling spiritual conviction had been the evangelising responsibility of the clergy and since headmasters and senior staff were mostly ordained Anglican Ministers, they were practiced preachers. For example, almost the entire complement of Dean Close staff, including the headmaster, at the beginning of the twentieth century were ordained.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it was traditional for Edwardian public schoolboys to be instructed as to what to *believe* since their entire curricular experience would be managed and executed by men who had, through their calling, been trained in indoctrination skills.

Some definitions of educational indoctrination prove helpful. Roger Scruton proposes two tests which help establish whether method and content factors can be categorised as indoctrination. He asserts that, in respect of method, indoctrination fails to engage with contrary arguments and inhibits the exercising of critical faculties. This view has recently been supported by the linguist, Bridget Goom, who suggests that judgments within history textbooks, in particular, are derived:

from the grand narratives of the history writer's and history learner's culture. ... Rejection of assumptions ... [is] extremely difficult for young learners.<sup>12</sup>

Secondly, as to lesson content and indoctrination: Scruton suggests that conclusions are habitually foregone, are based upon assumptions deserving intellectual question, commonly embrace a closed system of connected dogmas - all of which emanate from a base ideology.<sup>13</sup> It is this content designation of Scruton's criteria that merits exploration since the total institution environment anyway discouraged challenges to ideologies presented: pupils risked punishment if doctrines were challenged. And, as noted, Singer's 'cult' explanation states that thought reform objectives will be achieved if teaching is conducted in a way that 'puts forth a closed system of logic and an authoritarian structure that permits no

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<sup>10</sup> W. R. Chambers, *Britain beyond the Seas: A descriptive account of the British Colonies and Dependencies* (London, 1902), p.9.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Whitney, *At close quarters: Dean Close School, 1884-2009* (Hereford, 2009), p.3.

<sup>12</sup> Bridget Goom, 'An Analysis of a Children's History Text', in Foley, J. A. (ed.) *Language, Education and Discourse: Functional Approaches* (London, 2005), p.121.

<sup>13</sup> Roger Scruton, A Ellis-Jones, Dennis O'Keefe, *Education and Indoctrination* (London, 1985), pp. 16-25.

feedback' - entirely applicable to public school methods.<sup>14</sup> Even though Empire and national issues were addressed in regular debates such platforms reflected, rather than mitigated, the effects of prior indoctrination.

**'Teachers should interpret the national character, the national ideals' - history**

The Edwardian educationalist, James Welton suggested in 1914 that history teaching should make a boy feel:

his country has a right to demand service of him ... and the surest way to arouse this feeling is by teaching him history to bring home to him the debt he owes.<sup>15</sup>

History teaching illustrates several of Scruton's content points, in particular his thinking as to foregone conclusions. For example, an almost exclusive focus upon teaching English national and British imperial history predisposed the promotion of infallible nationhood. The teaching of European history was minimal within the pre-1918 syllabus - albeit this position was urged by educational authorities: for example, the Whitgift School 1910 Lower Remove (13-14 year-olds) history syllabus included just three topics: English history from the Renaissance to the Battle of Waterloo, Growth of Empire, 'Trench's Study of Words' (a philological history of the English language and its usage).<sup>16</sup> The educationist, Winifred Mercier, in an address to the Historical Association in 1909, suggested:

Teachers of history should interpret the national character, the national ideals, and educate their pupils in the ethos of their own race.<sup>17</sup>

In a similar (1905) chauvinistic vein, the Eton College Vice-Provost, C. H. K. Marten, argued that teaching British national history signified superior patriotism: 'one may be pardoned for thinking that no people has a nobler or more inspiring story'.<sup>18</sup> Moreover a 1909 Board of Education guide to teaching history advocated the 'passing over' of periods of 'bad government or squalid political intrigues' in English history:

in order to secure more time for a fuller treatment of events such as the Crusades, the Civil War, the reign of Elizabeth, the great wars for Colonial Supremacy.<sup>19</sup>

History textbooks dedicated to nineteenth century episodes were selected for examination since attitudes to recent situations would inevitably shape reactions to

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<sup>14</sup> Margaret T. Singer, *Cults in our midst* (San Francisco, 2003), p.69. See Chapter 1 for details of Singer's theories as to educational cults.

<sup>15</sup> Welton, *Principles and Methods of Teaching*, p.266.

<sup>16</sup> Per 'Work of the Year and Form Lists, 1910', Whitgift School archive.

<sup>17</sup> Cited by Krishan Kumar, 'Sociology and the Englishness of English Social Theory', *Sociological Theory*, 19:1,(2001), pp. 41-64.

<sup>18</sup> Cited by Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge, 2003), p.219

<sup>19</sup> Both quoted by Raphael Samuel, 'Continuous National History', in R. Samuel, (ed.), *Patriotism: The making and unmaking of British national Identity* (London, 1989), pp. 12-13.

1914 circumstances.<sup>20</sup> To commence with a ubiquitous foundation work: a biographic history, *Queen Victoria and her People*, published to coincide with the diamond jubilee, reaffirmed Queen and Country values that would (after gender adjustment) come to dominate First World War recruitment campaigns. Published by The Educational Supply Association as a jubilee souvenir, it was distributed for use by children throughout public (and state) schools. The hagiographic conclusion reiterates the matriarchal saintliness presumed by the work:

Whilst our Sovereign Lady is the most queenly of women, she is also the most womanly of queens. The predominant feelings in her breast are the love of life and the love of her people. She feels, who can doubt it? as a mother to the whole family of her kingdom. ... from first to last she has been the centre of our national life. The story of her life and the story of her people's life are woven inextricably together. That story we have tried to tell, but we have miserably failed in our attempt, unless that story kindles the imagination and helps each reader to realise the greatness of the empire to which he belongs; unless it makes him proud to call himself an Englishman and inspires him with the desire and determination to do his duty to his Queen and country; unless it impresses him with feelings of loving loyalty and admiration for our Sovereign and raises his heart in gratitude to God for the blessing He has showered upon this favoured land of ours.

Indoctrination denotes implanting belief rather than knowledge: this excerpt, from a widely-used textbook source, exemplifies the types of values promoted by the technique. The beliefs embrace: duty to Queen and country; admiration for the Queen as a woman, mother and monarch; gratitude to God for his favour to Britain; the greatness of empire and nation. This is an impressive list for a short extract clustering around two vital tenets: monarchical righteousness and national infallibility. The masculine pronouns imply that the work is aimed at a readership of literate, aspirational young males and its motivating objectives are clearly expressed.<sup>21</sup>

It is doubtful whether, given the total institutional atmosphere, any public schoolboy had sufficient courage to challenge such patriotic creeds. But insofar as Scruton's content indoctrination definitions are concerned, all three of his components are evident: conclusions are foregone, assumptions deserve confrontation, maxims can be unified to form an ideology (Queen and country). This textbook represents a barely-concealed agenda for eliciting loyalty and emotional commitment to future national service. Undeniably, mandatory devotion to Queen and country, albeit

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<sup>20</sup> James Welton, *Principles and Methods of Teaching* (London, 1914), p.267; within his chapter on teaching history, Welton suggests 'the text-book should more and more become the backbone of the instruction as the pupils advance in age'.

<sup>21</sup> Reverend C. S. Dawe, *Queen Victoria and her People: The Holborn Series* (London, 1897), pp. 250-1. The Rev. Charles Sherwill Dawe was a prolific author of History, Latin and English grammar textbooks that were widely used in Edwardian schools.



dubiously cultivated, would profoundly impact 1914 volunteering when responses to Lord Kitchener's omnipresent 'King and Country' posters proved positive. Public schoolboys, as representatives of an implied readership, were specifically urged towards patriotic service by such nationalistic textbooks: the clause 'inspires him with the desire and determination to do his duty to his Queen and country' was pertinent and targeted.

Another frequent topic within history textbooks addressed the nineteenth century acquisition and custody of Empire. Within several works, British military capability is depicted as confronting forces of villainous insurrection - such groups comprising racial or religious stereotypes. The British army is invariably portrayed as invincible and the justification for a continuum of Empire-based policing campaigns, from skirmishes through full battles, is expressed as overflowing with moral rectitude. For example, descriptions of the 1878-9 Zulu War within a work by J. Franck Bright exemplifies representations of recent military and racial supremacy, supported by justifications for military action based upon presumed British dominance and prestige. The conflict was needed because:

An outrage or two had been perpetrated by Zulus ... an English surveyor had been robbed, some missionaries declaring that they were persecuted had withdrawn from the country ... these slight events appeared clear proofs of the overweening confidence and hostile intentions of Cetchwayo.

Accounts of delivering a punitive ultimatum to King Cetchwayo follow. His refusal provoked a full-scale British assault upon Zulu forces - an army described as consisting of 'savages':

For the establishment of English prestige it was thought necessary to undertake a fresh invasion of the country.<sup>22</sup>

It appears disproportionate to describe the alleged Zulu 'slight events' as 'outrages' necessitating 'regime change' through the dethronement of Cetchwayo. The action is portrayed as a reprisal for displaying 'overweening confidence' and entertaining 'hostile intentions' towards the colonial power. English prestige was the concept considered vulnerable, so that lesser grievances were overstated to justify invasion. The text also displays presumed racial superiority. The use of the epithet 'savages' is illuminating, unmistakable in derogatory meaning to schoolboys. Domestically, 'savages' was a pejorative label used by gentlemen to describe the lower classes,

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<sup>22</sup> J. Franck Bright, *A History of England: Period iv, Growth of Democracy, Victoria, 1837-1880* (London, 1905), pp. 548-9. Note that Bright, born in 1832, was therefore aged 73 when this work was published; it is surprising how many historians writing in Edwardian times were of advanced years. A prolific author of history textbooks for use in public schools, Bright was educated at Rugby and taught at Marlborough College.

specifically the urban poor.<sup>23</sup> And imperially, savages covered a parallel underclass: non-white, non-Christian, speaking non-European languages, wearing different (or fewer) clothes, resistant to forced colonisation.<sup>24</sup> Irrespective of Zulu motives to defend their territory against colonial intruders, the war was depicted as a creditable campaign against a race.<sup>25</sup> None of the examined textbooks contain any censure as to the morality of British military action. For impressionable schoolboys, imbued into a culture of elitist supremacy, incessant portrayals of colonial flawlessness and military dominance heightened their eagerness for military volunteering.

Assumed English supremacy runs thematically through history textbooks many of which adopt the primitive and derivative indoctrination approaches to implanting beliefs.<sup>26</sup> To return to the 1911 *A School History of England*: this textbook concludes with a special appeal: 'the only safe thing for all of us who love our country is to learn soldiering at once, and to be prepared at any moment' - defensive words that reflect European rivalry worries, growing anxieties concerning Empire stability, fears of racial disharmony and alien insurgency.<sup>27</sup> An exhortation to 'be prepared', with its echoes of the recent (1907) Boy Scout motto, may have swayed impressionable youngsters towards favouring the associated entreaties. The implications of racial primacy emerging from a distinguished children's writer such as Rudyard Kipling, a Nobel laureate with respected views upon nationhood and Empire, would also have fortified the effectiveness of any indoctrination.<sup>28</sup> Then again, inflammatory *zeitgeist*

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<sup>23</sup> For example, in the opening paragraph to *The Forsyte Saga* (first published in 1906) Galsworthy describes membership of the extended Forsyte family as follows: 'He has been admitted to a vision of the dim roads of social progress, has understood something of patriarchal life, of the swarmings of savage hordes': John Galsworthy, 'The Man of Property', *The Forsyte Saga* (London, 2001), p.11.

<sup>24</sup> Note also the portrayal of non-Europeans within the Sherlock Holmes stories, much-read by Edwardian schoolboys; for example in *The Sign of Four*, Watson describes an Andaman islander as a 'savage'. Conan Doyle often portrayed foreigners as embodying villainy while extolling the virtues of Englishmen - of whom, Holmes was the epitome. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Sign of Four', in *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (Ware, 1986), p.82.

<sup>25</sup> The campaign was not without its irony: arguably, Zulu resistance to British subjugation in 1879 could be reasonably compared to Belgian resistance to German invasion in 1914.

<sup>26</sup> As described in Thomas F. Green, 'Indoctrination and beliefs' in I. A. Snook, (ed.) *Concepts of Indoctrination* (London 1972), p.30 and examined in the previous chapter, p.60.

<sup>27</sup> C. R. L. Fletcher and Rudyard Kipling, *A School History of England* (Oxford, 1911), pp.239-240. It will be recalled (see chapter 1) that in this archetypal supremacist work, Australian aboriginals are equated to 'a few miserable blacks' and South African Zulus are again designated as 'fierce savages'. Kipling received the Nobel prize for Literature in 1907.

<sup>28</sup> Also in May/June 1911, the Festival of the Empire was staged at Crystal Palace to celebrate the coronation of the new King, George V. Paradoxically, this athletic occasion was exclusively 'white' (UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) designed to stress Anglo-Saxon racial supremacy. Katharine Moore, 'One voice in the wilderness: Richard Coombes and the promotion of the pan-Britannic festival in Australia 1891-1911', PhD thesis, (Queen's University, Belfast, 1989), per <http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/SportingTraditions/1989/st0502/st0502f.pdf> [accessed 18 November, 2011].

may have been provocative in that sentiments might have been affected by 1911 events that accentuated foreigner tensions. Kipling and Fletcher's 1911 work, in reminding a receptive young readership of prior instances of Colonial rebelliousness and savagery, may well have capitalised upon the anxious feelings inflamed by, for example, the Sidney Street reportage.<sup>29</sup>

**'Territory where white men can live in health and work in comfort' - geography.**

Geography teaching also advocated British pre-eminence. Most school textbooks studied the post-Boer War Empire - frequently in a quantifying way, using language rich with matchless phrases. For example, *Britain Beyond the Seas* (1902), begins:

The British flag floats over one-fifth of the land-surface of the earth; the sway of the British monarch is acknowledged by more than 400 millions of people - one-fourth of the entire human race. ... Britain is in possession of immense tracts of territory where white men can live in health and work in comfort, ... a world-wide Empire.

Further maxims flagrantly record Britain's moral rights to Empire - acquisition: 'ours by right of discovery or colonisation', enforcement: 'based not upon force but upon freedom', unity: 'we stand ... to fulfil the glorious destiny of our race'.<sup>30</sup> As discussed in the OTC exploration herein, there was a rallying purpose to post-Boer War geographical texts resulting from the effects upon national confidence following the imperfect British victory.<sup>31</sup> Published when post-Boer issues were causing anxiety, the textbook's tone positions 'Empire' as the fundamental purpose of the race. It assuaged disquiet by stressing the existing colonists' unwavering unity with the mother country. There was logic to this approach: most white Australians, New Zealanders and (to a lesser degree) Canadians and South Africans were first or second generation British settlers.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> In January, people were shocked by the widely-reported hostility of a group of Latvian anarchists that culminated in their death by fire during the siege of Sidney Street, London. J. B. Priestley notes that the Sidney Street affair caused 'xenophobia in the air ... a hatred of foreigners or even a general vague suspicion of them, does not suggest a people feeling secure and at ease'. J. B. Priestley, *The Edwardians* (London, 1970), pp.201-2.

<sup>30</sup> W. R. Chambers, *Britain beyond the Seas: A descriptive account of the British Colonies and Dependencies*, (London, 1902), pp. 5-9. Bridget Goom writes of 'solidarity' within history and geography textbooks whereby the use of such referents as 'our' indicate an assumption of readership acceptance and viewpoint in respect of the points being made - the 'primitive' beliefs. For example 'the glorious destiny of *our* race'; '*ours* by right of discovery' epitomise a supremacist attitude and much else. Bridget Goom, 'An Analysis of a Children's History Text', J. A. Foley, (ed.) *Language, Education and Discourse: Functional Approaches* (London, 2005), p.124.

<sup>31</sup> The sapping of national morale can be seen in a recollected memoir by 2nd Lieutenant Eardley Davidson: 'In addition the shame of the Boer War, and failure in the field, made more biting by the hostility of all other nations, sapped confidence.' Per Liddle Collection, GS 0421, W. E. F. Davidson, 2nd Lieutenant serving with the 2nd Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment, and with the RFC (Royal Flying Corps), on the Western Front, 1915-1918. Unpublished autobiography.

<sup>32</sup> See Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (London, 2000), p.317 and ch. 10 'The Edwardian Empire and the People', pp. 319-333.

Aimed at older boys, *A Geography of the British Empire* (1903) focuses upon the physical features of colonies and the economic benefits that Britain derived from their natural resources. Its point of interest from a supremacist outlook, centres upon the absence of references to indigenous populations.<sup>33</sup> Even though Edwardian-era geography teaching concentrated on commercial and physical aspects of nations, it remains surprising that, according to this work, Empire nations existed exclusively for Britain's benefit. Throughout, the significance of Empire as an indispensable source of food and materials for the mother country is emphasised, yet original inhabitants are hardly mentioned. For example, thirteen pages describe India: aside from their contribution to population figures the only references to Indians relate to mutiny, treason or religious otherness, for example:

Delhi was the scene of some of the most stirring incidents during the mutiny.

Cawnpur, the scene of Nana Sahib's foul treachery.

Benares is considered very sacred by the Hindus ... haunted by 'holy' men of unique filthiness and deformity.<sup>34</sup>

Why are supremacist assertions necessary to a review of later wartime volunteering enthusiasm? The reason centres around the indoctrination of derived convictions as distinct from encouragement towards reflection and understanding. An inculcated belief system that consistently reinforces national, imperial, religious and racial supremacy can theoretically accept no doubts or challenges to its plausibility. However, when the Boer confrontation had arisen (and had been suppressed by morally questionable methods), then resulting national unease might explain why, in 1903, it was felt necessary to bolster the nation's Empire resolve through textbooks aimed at a new generation of potential military leaders.<sup>35</sup>

Implanted maxims pre-supposing English invincibility as consequential to breeding, class, creed, education, race, and culture were rarely tested - yet, in 1914, conflict with a capable European enemy arose for the first time in generations. Ingrained within the psyche of ex-public schoolboys, were beliefs that had been scholastically indoctrinated for most of their lives: indestructibility, ascendancy, righteousness - principles that would be intensified by OTC participation. And these convictions had been drip-fed by school history and geography lessons that broadcast and nourished unassailable nationhood dogma - precepts proposed, by later recruiters of privileged young men, as being worth fighting for.

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<sup>33</sup> L. W. Lyde, *A Geography of the British Empire* (London, 1903).

<sup>34</sup> Lyde, *A Geography of the British Empire*, pp.73-8.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, 1992), p.521; herein, Pakenham writes of 'a wave of outrage about the concentration camps'.

**'Connected in an unbroken and living union with Greece and Rome' - classics.**

How was the concept of 'glorious' warfare advocated to public schoolboys? In response, classical studies merit serious examination. An example illustrates why: Lieutenant Alexander Gillespie's close friend, Tom, was killed on the Western Front in early 1915. Writing home, Gillespie described his sorrow using Homeric imagery that had persisted since his Winchester schooldays:

After Tom was killed I found myself thinking perpetually of all the men who had been killed in battle - Hector and Achilles and all the heroes of long ago who were once so strong and active, and now are so quiet.<sup>36</sup>

Gillespie's words illuminate the attachment pupils had to the classical legends read and translated at school. But his letter implies that Hector and Achilles were seen by him as real: real enough to cite their memory for a fallen companion and real enough to connect Tom to the shared heroics underpinning their 'strong and active' reputations. But what was the authentic source for this analogy? Certainly not casual elective reading - rather, it stemmed from doctrinal classroom teaching with an implicit purpose of fomenting manliness and militarism as inculcated bi-products.

History and geography lessons supplied the persuasive content that fuelled pupils' supremacy ideas, but the curricular moral framework was mostly provided by the classics - the languages and literature of ancient Rome and Greece. Between 1880 and 1914, even though science and modern languages were beginning to influence learning as part of a widening of education programmes, classics remained dominant.<sup>37</sup> Lewis-Stempel notes that public schoolboys spent almost half their classroom time with Greek or Roman texts.<sup>38</sup> Teaching staff complements included many classicists and although this trend would moderate, by 1905 over fifty per cent of Eton masters were classics teachers, and in 1914, of the 114 listed Clarendon Commission headmasters, 92 would be classicists.<sup>39</sup> At Dean Close school in 1899, around eighty per cent of the resident masters were classicists, a ratio not dissimilar to the other researched schools.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> A. D. Gillespie, 'Letter: 5 May 1915', *Letters from Flanders, written by 2nd Lieut. A. D. Gillespie, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, to his home people* (London, 1916), p.133. Gillespie had been educated at Winchester School during 1903-8. He was killed at the battle of Loos on 25 September 1915, a few months after writing the letter.

<sup>37</sup> At Eton in 1884, for example: 'there were twenty-eight classics teachers, six mathematicians and one historian, but not a single scientist or modern linguist. This situation was not untypical, although other schools were slightly more receptive to modern subjects.' Hartmut Berghoff, 'Public Schools and the Decline of the British Economy 1870-1914', *Past and Present*, 129, (1990), p.152.

<sup>38</sup> John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks: The Short and Gallant Life of the British Officer in the First World War* (London, 2010), p.18.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Parker, *The Old Lie: The Great War and the Public School Ethos* (London, 1987), p.86. The Clarendon Commission was originally set up in 1861 to examine Public Schools.

<sup>40</sup> See *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus* (1899), p.12.

The pupil population was also split into classicists (Greek, Latin, classical mythology, ancient history etc.) as opposed to modernists (science, mathematics, modern languages, art etc.). In 1910 for example, both the fifth and lower sixth forms at Whitgift contained over fifty per cent of pupils taking classics as a defined priority.<sup>41</sup> Although classical prevalence can be partially explained by university entrance requirements, its teaching was viewed as necessary by some pupils. In a 1909 Bloxham debate that discussed classical education merits, one speaker stressed the exclusive connotations of the subject as he advocated: ‘that mankind is divisible into two classes - those who lead, and those who follow. Classics being essentially the training for those who lead’.<sup>42</sup> And in a later Malvern forum, two extraordinary debating claims were made:

classics alone will bring out the best in a man, and make him a man, not a machine, as mathematics will make him.

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all that is lovely and beautiful in life, we owe to the ancient philosophers and poets. To appreciate this spirit, we must read and learn the classics.<sup>43</sup>

Classical preference and disregard for technology was marked for many within the 1914 intake of junior officers. As de Groot observes, ‘budding officers could recite Plato in the original Greek, but had little knowledge of physics or chemistry’, an awareness that might have proved valuable within a modern, mechanised conflict.<sup>44</sup>

Since classical education was so esteemed, it is important to appreciate the judgments that safeguarded the subject’s perpetuity. In 1906, T. E. Page, a Charterhouse master, extolled classic’s beneficent impact on almost every aspect of existence:

We are connected in an unbroken and living union with Greece and Rome. Their history is an organic part of our own, their words breathe on our lips, their thoughts are wrought into the tissue of our intellectual being.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> ‘Work of the year and form lists - 1910’, Whitgift School archives.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Debating Society Report’, *The Bloxhamist*, March 1909.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Debating Society’, *The Malvernian*, April 1915. The motion was: ‘that in the opinion of this House, Classical education is an absolute absurdity’. The motion was lost.

<sup>44</sup> Gerard de Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the era of the Great War* (Harlow, 1998), p.35; also see Daniel Pick, *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age* (Yale, 1996), p.163 wherein Pick writes of: ‘a set of problems about the relationship between modernity and military conflict’.

<sup>45</sup> T. E. Page, ‘Classics’ in *Public Schools from Within: A Collection of Essays on Public School Education, Written Chiefly by Schoolmasters* (London, 1906), p.9. Many classically-educated fathers, men who later despatched their sons to Edwardian public schools, viewed *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* as ‘the Bible of the Greeks’. Indeed Homer’s content resembled the Bible in that noteworthy excerpts became infixed into the minds of educated men - *en passant* Homeric allusions would be instantly comprehended (and appreciated) by peers; Richard Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1980), p.204.

Academic passion for classics had survived since the early nineteenth century. Writing in 1809, Edward Copleston believed that, within classical studies, a high degree of moral usefulness was available - ethics and beliefs that would directly relate to, and influence, subaltern recruiting a century or so later:

A high sense of honour, a disdain of death in a good cause, a passionate devotion to the welfare of one's country, a love of enterprise, and a love of glory are among the first sentiments, which those studies [classics] communicate to the mind.<sup>46</sup>

From a positive perspective, the classics, notably Homeric and Vergilian epics, represented models of civilization that many thought merited replication.<sup>47</sup> From the 1870s, several morally appropriate ideas were judged to be embraced by classical literature in that many values (including honour, loyalty, duty, sacrifice, courage, leadership) appeared ever-present. For many pupils, however, the belief that worthy textual values would be morally beneficial proved improbable since, as Edward Mack reflects: 'for all, save the very brightest students, classical studies usually meant long hours of translation that left little time to consider literary content and meaning'. Translation itself was considered constructive, 'the very dullness and toughness of the classics was deemed to hold moral value in instilling endurance and perseverance, and an ability to put up with things one did not like doing'.<sup>48</sup>

At Whitgift, older boys studying for university entrance qualifications would work upon unseen translations and Greek or Latin compositions that demonstrated an understanding of several classical texts. For the fifth form this would include works by Homer, Caesar, Livy, Virgil, and, to a lesser extent Aristophanes, Euripides, Xenophon and Lucian. Sixth-formers would also study Thucydides, Cicero and Plato's Socratic dialogues.<sup>49</sup> Manly values, particularly those surrounding the idealisation of warfare, were successfully infused during the formative years of many 1914 volunteers. Soldiering dominated the classic genre: the works of Homer and Caesar, for example, portrayed war as positive, natural episodes with army leaders cast as heroes who fought personally and directed strategy.

There are pragmatic explanations for the ascendancy of classicism and the relegation of more modern subjects. Ancient Greek and Latin, as acquired languages, were considered important contributors to intellectual development.

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<sup>46</sup> Quoted in Victoria Tietze Larson, 'Classics and the acquisition and validation of power in Britain's 'imperial century', (1815-1914)', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 6:2, (1999), pp.185-225. Edward Copleston was later the Provost of Oriel College, Oxford.

<sup>47</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.99.

<sup>48</sup> Edward Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion Since 1860* (New York, 1941), p.125. and Humphrey Reader, 'The Most Popular War in History: Hard Schools of Endurance' per [http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/mostpopularwar\\_03.htm](http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/mostpopularwar_03.htm) [accessed 23rd August 2011].

<sup>49</sup> 'Work of the year and form lists - 1910', Whitgift School archives.

Observable familiarity with and appreciation of the classics identified young men of culture: such knowledge was seen, by parents and mentors, as essential for later (albeit traditional) career success and social positioning. Such views should be juxtaposed with unenthusiastic feelings towards science and technology, subjects considered by some middle-class parents as leading to socially inferior occupations since quests for professional specialism were implied. These were concepts in society that remained mistrusted as career paths.<sup>50</sup> Even though in some segments of Edwardian society, science was evolving towards greater acceptability, there was still some parental resistance to the sons of gentleness settling for a scientific or industrial career in contrast to more traditional professions or governmental occupations. More pragmatically, Oxford and Cambridge universities required classics-based qualifications for entry.<sup>51</sup> And from a military viewpoint, a classics base denoted 'the mark of a gentleman, and gentlemen made the best officers'.<sup>52</sup>

To these classically-inspired cultural ideas, embracing moral abstractions such as duty, honour, loyalty, manliness, was added a further construct critical to privileged Edwardian education. This was, that war represented opportunities for adventure, acclaim, heroism and that the inevitable death of some young men in battle should be accepted as 'glorious'. This meant that within the classics schoolroom, stories of intrepidity and sacrifice were presented for four reasons: to develop pupils' intellect through Latin and Greek translation; to encourage appreciation of epic literature; to enthral pupils by tacitly urging emulation of the embedded morals within the narratives; to portray youthful warfare as a romantic, adventuresome, noble ideal that merited their participation if summoned. The first three aims might be considered commendable: however, the fourth suggested a form of indoctrination since, as Brian Crittenden notes, the techniques represented a form of miseducation, inasmuch as they involved:

the teaching of what is false or wrong as though it were true or right; what is probable as certain; what is metaphorical as literal.<sup>53</sup>

The teaching of classics to gain credibility for a set of ideological beliefs - for example, the rationality of heroic warfare and glorious battle-death - to the extent that boys might be persuaded to volunteer, qualifies as indoctrination since the

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<sup>50</sup> Wilkinson, *Prefects*, p.68-72.

<sup>51</sup> Anthony Wood writes that Britain's university population in 1913 'numbered 33,000 as against Germany's 60,000 and whereas Germany produced 3,000 graduate engineers every year, in England and Wales only 500 emerged with a degree in any branch of mathematics or science'. But, presumably there were many graduate classicists, Anthony Wood, *Great Britain 1900-1965* (London, 1976), pp.22-3.

<sup>52</sup> de Groot, *Blighly*, pp. 17-20.

<sup>53</sup> Brian. S. Crittenden, 'Indoctrination as Miseducation', in Snook (ed.), *Concepts of Indoctrination*, p.138.



desired beliefs are advocated, having been based upon evidence purported to be true.<sup>54</sup> The phrasing of the eulogistic Gillespie letter demonstrates this point. The presenting of legends as histories, fictional heroes as real personages, allegories as historical episodes, matches Crittenden's 'indoctrination' qualification. Although solid generalisations cannot be made as to whether classical stories were taught as truth or myth (since such distinctions depend on individual teaching methods), examples of them being understood as truthful abound. Consider Rupert Brooke's excitement as his troopship steamed towards the Gallipoli beaches:

Do you think ... they'll make a sortie and meet us on the plains of Troy? It seems to me strategically so possible. Will Hero's Tower crumble under the 15" guns? Will the sea be polyphloisbic and wine-dark and unvintageable?<sup>55</sup>

Ernest Raymond's autobiographical work of First World War recollection *Tell England* also exposes classical influence. In this extract, a recruiting Colonel stresses the Gallipoli front credentials to a pair of ex-public school soon-to-be volunteers, who had apparently been taught classics as historical truth:

He reminded us that the Dardanelles Straits were the Hellespont of the Ancient world, and the neighbouring Aegean Sea the most mystic of the 'wine-dark seas of Greece'.. such an array of visions that the lure of the Eternal Waterway gripped us, and we were a-fidget to be there. ... This roused the jingo devil in us, and we burst into applause.<sup>56</sup>

In the aforementioned 1909 Bloxham debate that discussed the merits of a classical education, a staff member suggested that such studies provided an entrance to 'that great other world which constitutes classics', an appeal implying that accepting an alternative reality was important to intellectual fulfilment. This was a suggestion comparable to the evangelical proposition that the credence of biblical truth was essential to achieving moral perfection.<sup>57</sup> A frequent theme in classical texts was that of youthful heroism in battle, specifically that shown by divinely-inspired Greco-Roman/Trojan commanders against serious odds. Within *The Iliad*, Homer glorified war as much as any poet: the principal belligerents, Ajax, Achilles, Patroclus and Hector were conspicuous among abundant athletic, élite young men.<sup>58</sup> Each was a warrior leading soldiers into combat, yet, when necessary (and often motivated by revenge or jealousy) never hesitating to engage personally. Throughout, warfare is portrayed as regular, effective and an inevitable solution to various state and

<sup>54</sup> See I. A. Snook, *Indoctrination and Education* (London, 1975), pp. 51 and 64.

<sup>55</sup> Rupert Brooke letter to Violet Asquith, February 1915 quoted in Rupert Brooke and Edward Marsh, *Rupert Brooke: Collected Poems - with a Memoir by Edward Marsh* (London, 1992), p.150. Brooke is referring to Book 1 of Homer's *Iliad*.

<sup>56</sup> Ernest Raymond, *Tell England* (London, 1922, 40<sup>th</sup> ed. 1965), p.179.

<sup>57</sup> 'Debating Society Reports', *The Bloxhamist*, March 1909.

<sup>58</sup> Or as Kitto's translation of Homer records the *arête* of Achilles: 'the most formidable of fighters, the swiftest of runners, and the noblest of souls'; H.D.F. Kitto, *The Greeks* (Harmondsworth, 1963), p.172.

personal disputes: the numerous deaths are routinely anticipated, violent but consistently honourable.<sup>59</sup> Throughout, although protagonists are portrayed as enjoying abundant physical strength and cunning, a profusion of positive character traits (single-mindedness, loyalty, honour, courage etc.) fortifies each endeavour.

In Edwardian England, as the potential for European war became deliberated, the heroic warriors of the classical stories became candidates for schoolboy emulation.<sup>60</sup> In assessing the impact of classical education upon the First World War, Richard Jenkyns acknowledges that Homer, the poet who (alongside Horace) had the greatest impact upon subaltern volunteering, ignored the common people. Homer's works only spoke of and to an élite. With the poet's focus upon 'chivalrous heroism, of renewal through battle and self-sacrifice', young privileged men became attitudinally changed as a consequence.<sup>61</sup>

The classical scholar, Moses Finley, explains how the borders between Homeric legend and historical actuality became blurred. He denies that *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are 'poetic fiction' by asserting that 'the society portrayed and the thinking, are historical' - properties that add important dimensions to Homeric believability.<sup>62</sup> From an Edwardian schoolboy's viewpoint, any doubt surrounding the quasi-historical nature of the heroic classical stories would probably have been eclipsed by the assertive way they were presented. Regular evangelical exposure to Bible stories, whereby factual truth and allegorical significance were deemed absolute, would have conditioned most youngsters towards acceptance of Ajax, Achilles and Hector (for example) as real historical figures possessing heroic character qualities worthy of impersonation. For example, an Edwardian crib asserts that Achilles' fate was a choice as to whether:

to gain glory and die early, or to live a long inglorious life. The hero chose the former and took part in the Trojan war, from which he knew that he was not to return.

Consequently, for credulous schoolboys, death by war might seem acceptable and, for a few, even desirable.<sup>63</sup> The promotion of glorious battle-death was famously satirised in Wilfred Owen's poem 'Dulce Et Decorum Est'. Horace's original Latin words were translated and memorised by countless public schoolboys.<sup>64</sup> One such

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<sup>59</sup> As Finley assesses the various conflicts of the ancient Athenian Empire, 'War, everyone recognized, was part of life ... a normal instrument of policy which the Greeks used fully and frequently': M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Greeks* (Harmondsworth, 1979), p.63.

<sup>60</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.99.

<sup>61</sup> Jenkyns, *The Victorians*, p.340-1.

<sup>62</sup> Finley, *The Ancient Greeks*, p.25.

<sup>63</sup> E. Rhys and E.H. Blakeney (eds), *Smith's Smaller Classical Dictionary* (London, 1910), p.5.

<sup>64</sup> Translating Latin verses results in variations. Horace's original is popularly translated (John Dryden?) as 'How sweet and fitting it is to die for one's country/ Death pursues the

was 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant W. A. D. Goodwin who was serving in France during June 1916. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, a letter to his mother contained: 'it's a fine thing to have given one's life for one's country' - almost a direct translation of Horace's lines. Four days later, Goodwin was killed at the Battle of the Somme.<sup>65</sup>

Lewis-Stempel suggests the discovery of classical heroes:

forged an heroic mental template in the minds of young boys ... [this] did more than prepare boys to die for their country; in the trenches it turned to supportive scaffolding inside the head.<sup>66</sup>

This extravagant observation nevertheless contains elements of truth regarding elite education before 1914. For Roland Leighton, an Uppingham school prize-winner, classical learning moulded his attitude to the extent that war's hideous reality was mitigated by romantic ideals. 'War' he wrote,

is to me a very fascinating thing - something, if often horrible, yet very ennobling and very beautiful, something whose elemental reality raises it above the reach of all cold theorising. You will call me a militarist. You may be right.<sup>67</sup>

Although unclear, the 'ennoblement' Leighton referred to probably meant death in battle: perhaps one constructive effect of his fascination may have been that fear of death was tempered by anticipated glory. As Tony Collins observes, death in war was an event seen by many as 'ennobling, something to be welcomed in the service of one's country'.<sup>68</sup>

The philosopher, Bertrand Russell, harboured strong feelings as to the misuse of curricular subjects in order to secure youthful eagerness for war. Writing to *The Nation* soon after war was declared, he suggested that volunteering was 'encouraged by a whole foul literature of "glory", and by every text-book of history

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man who flees'; an 1863 version by John Conington records 'What joy for fatherland to die! / Death's darts e'en flying feet to o'ertake'; another (James Michie) has it 'The glorious and the decent way of dying is for one's country / Run and death will seize you no less surely'; either way the sentiment remains similar. The original is Horace, Bk 3, Ode 2, lines 13-14 per <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/horace/carm3.shtml> [accessed 10 March 2012].

<sup>65</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 0644, W. A. D. Goodwin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment, letter dated 27 June 1916. Goodwin had been educated at Bromsgrove School and prior to his war service had studied Classics at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, per 'The Educational Ladder' in *The Educational Times*, 1 February, 1912, p. 54 at [http://archive.org/stream/educationaltimes65colluoft/educationaltimes65colluoft\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/educationaltimes65colluoft/educationaltimes65colluoft_djvu.txt) [accessed 23 July 2013]. Also see 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' in Jon Stallworthy (ed.), *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* (Oxford, 2003), pp.188-9.

<sup>66</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, p.19.

<sup>67</sup> Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge, (eds), *Letters from a Lost Generation* (London, 1998), p.30. Leighton was writing to Vera Brittain in September 1914 after applying for a commission in the 4<sup>th</sup> Norfolk Regiment.

<sup>68</sup> Tony Collins, 'English Rugby Union and the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 45:4 (2002), pp. 797-817. Collins also observes that 'The importance of the warrior hero in the Greek classics was transplanted to an England which felt threatened abroad and was troubled by self-doubt at home', p.799.

with which the minds of children are polluted'.<sup>69</sup> An avowed pacifist, Russell never minced his words, and the way he conflates the 'literature of glory', with 'polluting history textbooks' was intentionally provocative. But, within a 1914 context, at a time when young men were considering enlistment, his trenchant observation, particularly germane to indoctrinated public schoolboys, seems not misplaced.

**'To root in the youth of the country the aptitude for arms' - the OTC scheme.**

Six years before the outbreak of the 1914-18 conflict, the academic curriculum was broadened to embrace the practicalities deemed necessary for waging war. As Norman Vance suggests: 'manliness tended to be diverted more and more into military channels'.<sup>70</sup> Previously, soldierly schooling was typically based around shooting, rudimentary drill and was organised by schools themselves.<sup>71</sup> However, in 1908 responsibility for a public school military instruction programme became assumed by the state through the launch of the Officers' Training Corps (OTC) scheme.<sup>72</sup> Thereafter, approaches to military training were changed: schoolboys would be coached in practical aspects of warfare as defined by the War Ministry.

The OTC scheme was key to propelling ex-public schoolboys to volunteer. Aside from recognising the main features of the scheme and the overall reasons for its inception, three important questions arise: firstly, how practically relevant was the programme to the warfare that volunteers would face in 1914? In this respect, studies of 1909 OTC camp diaries prove revealing as they reveal the challenges faced by an eager Blundell's OTC cadet. Relevance is a key issue: most boys, through the system of OTC training and examination, received formal certification (Cert. 'A' parts 1 and 2) entitling them to undergo accelerated training programmes and fast-tracked commissions. Such qualification caused them to believe, perhaps mistakenly, in their own competence as subalterns: specifically as youthful leaders in a newly-formed citizen army. A second question relates to OTC attitudinal training content: given the evangelical ethos within many public schools, (Dean Close is a good example) how was the new programme coalesced with religious tenets, Crusader concepts, issues of morality, supremacy and indoctrinated patriotism? This is important since the OTC scheme undoubtedly affected boys' attitudes towards the military in general and their own potential involvement in particular. These were factors that would affect later volunteering decisions. Finally, did the

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<sup>69</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Bertrand Russell - Autobiography* (London, 2000), p.265.

<sup>70</sup> See Norman Vance, 'The Ideal of Manliness', in Brian Simon and Ian Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin, 1975), pp.127-8.

<sup>71</sup> Albeit that some school corps were affiliated to local volunteer groups. In 1900, KES Bath (for example) became the '1<sup>st</sup> Cadet Company of the Somerset Light Infantry'.

<sup>72</sup> For details of the OTC scheme, see C. B. Otley, 'Militarism and Militarisation in the Public Schools, 1900-72', *British Journal of Sociology*, 29:3, (1978), pp.321-339.

OTC scheme exemplify a new form of militarism: if so, what was its nature and how did this contrast with German equivalents? Historians differ as to whether the OTC led to pupils becoming genuinely militaristic.<sup>73</sup> Much of the divide between such views lies in the pejorative connotations of the word 'militarist' and the opaque interpretations of its precise meaning. Herein, an approach has been taken that uses sociological and linguistic commentaries to redefine 'militarism' and to contrast this with the 'Prussianism' that it would eventually oppose.

The principal concerns leading to the creation of a training programme for apprentice officers have been explored by several historians.<sup>74</sup> Two significant anxieties resulted in pleas for greater military preparedness. Foremost was a mounting lack of confidence in the nation's capability to wage war and defend its interests following the perceived military failures of the Boer War. This triggered demands for renewed levels of national efficiency.<sup>75</sup> Such misgivings were also inflamed by widely-held fears of racial decay and degeneration coupled with beliefs that masculinity was being eroded and that intellectual, cultural and artistic deterioration reflected unacceptable levels of national degeneration.<sup>76</sup> The second concern resulted from mid-decade unease at the growing military capabilities of

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<sup>73</sup> For example, Anne Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War', *History Workshop*, 2:1, (1976), pp. 104-5 writes that, over a long period, Britain had developed 'militaristic modes of thinking' whereas Glenn Wilkinson is less certain as he draws a distinction between Edwardian militarism and the militarism seen in Germany; 'British society was conditioned to believe that military activity was necessary and desirable but unlike the 'proto-fascism' of Germany'; Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War in Edwardian Newspapers, 1899-1914* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 16.

<sup>74</sup> For a comprehensive view of Edwardian moves towards 'national efficiency' across all classes, see G. R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency* (London, 1990); for a wide-ranging look at the question of Edwardian 'racial decay' see Richard Soloway, 'Counting the Degenerates: The Statistics of Race Deterioration in Edwardian England', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17:1, (1982), pp. 137-164. The principal primary source for issues of suspected 'racial decay' is *The Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration* (1904), Vol. 1, Report and Appendix, Cmnd. 2175 (London, 1904). Vanessa Heggie has recently questioned much of the 'inherited' reasoning of racial deterioration arguing that statistics were flawed and that physical 'decay was largely due to maternal ignorance brought about by poverty: Vanessa Heggie, 'Lies, Damn Lies, and Manchester's Recruiting Statistics: Degeneration as an 'Urban Legend' in Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 63, (2008), pp.178-216. The propagation of 'national efficiency' and 'racial decay' ideas in Edwardian Britain has been explored in depth by Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War in Edwardian Newspapers, 1899-1914* (Basingstoke, 2003). Fears of cultural and/or artistic decay have been explored in Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (London, 1968). Anne Summers has examined the impact of 'national degeneration' fears on youth culture and organisations in Anne Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War', *History Workshop*, 2:1, (1976), pp. 104-123.

<sup>75</sup> For a contemporary view as to the chagrin following the Boer war see H. G. Wells, *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman* (London, 1914), p.292.

<sup>76</sup> For a contemporary view on issues of 'racial decay' and the erosion of masculinity see also Sir John E. Gorst MP., 'Physical Deterioration in Great Britain', in *North American Review*, 181:584 (1905), pp. 1-10 and George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke, 2002) esp. Ch.2 'Gender, Sex and Sexuality', pp. 32-66.

potential European adversaries, notably Germany and Russia, coupled with mounting commercial and imperial competition from rivals - typically the United States and (again) Germany.<sup>77</sup>

Fears of national degeneracy, physical, moral and social, were voiced within public schools. In a 1908 speech in Tiverton, the Blundell's headmaster, A. L. Francis, condemned corrupting factors that he felt were weakening the nation:

The present age was one of fraud and commercial immorality. Nor was it a modest age. If they looked at the army, navy, art, literature, music, religion, politics, trade, and commerce, they could see nothing but the most flagrant and unblushing self-advertisement.<sup>78</sup>

Also the virtue of manliness, nurtured by public schools, became questioned as worries about male attitudinal weaknesses and masculinity began to concern middle-class observers. Following the 1895 Oscar Wilde scandal and the growing militancy of the suffragists, some felt that 'effeminacy was infecting the male population' and that masculine 'martial spirit' was in danger of erosion.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, fears of English racial decay were deepened by suspicions that Edwardian male fertility was inferior to Victorian predecessors.<sup>80</sup>

The nation's health, competence and moral rectitude was also worrying: potential service recruits of all classes gave cause for unease. For working-class military recruits, enhancing their overall health, nutrition and service fitness became a priority. And it was thought equally vital for the intake of young officers also to be strengthened, not from worries concerning physical condition, but to bring about advances in leadership competency, the stewardship of other rank welfare, discipline application, gentlemanliness and probity. Anne Summers notes that late Victorian officers' messes had escaped the 'reform of manners' that tempered the character of several public institutions and that many regular officers continued to embrace 'social norms of hard drinking, riding to hounds and whoring'. In this respect, army commissions differed markedly from other middle-class careers. Summers confirms that for all classes, the army had been socially, physically and morally remote from Victorian society.<sup>81</sup> Remote from the mainstream perhaps, yet, in his 1874 history of the Grenadier Guards, Sir Frederick Hamilton had written:

the soldier ... will ever be more ready to follow the officer and gentleman whom education, position in life and accident of birth point out to be his natural leader ...

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<sup>77</sup> Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London, 1965), p.27.

<sup>78</sup> 'National Degeneracy' and 'Age of Humbug' reports (respectively) in the *Western Morning News* and *Daily Mail*, July 1908 retrieved from the Blundell's School archives.

<sup>79</sup> Robb, *British Culture*, p.39 and p. 59.

<sup>80</sup> Wilkinson, *Depictions*, pp.51-64.

<sup>81</sup> Summers, ' Militarism in Britain before the Great War', p.108.

than the man who, by dint of study and brain work, has raised himself ... from the plough or anvil.<sup>82</sup>

This complacent view had persisted. During (and following) the Boer War, it was deemed natural for the Army still to be officered by men who had been supposedly born to lead. Consequently, the objective of the new OTC scheme was to instruct elite boys (allegedly in possession of proper heritage, character attitudes and leadership qualities) in order to furnish reserves of young officers militarily competent to meet national emergencies. It was thought that greater moral probity should become prevalent within any new officer intake, and in a bio-deterministic age, privileged schoolboys were thought to have a surfeit of such principles through their breeding as well as their education. They were upper- (or at least middle-) class: hence, they were born to lead - and exposure to elementary military techniques would enhance their wartime effectiveness.<sup>83</sup>

Improving officer proficiency was vital. Many Boer War difficulties had been blamed on inadequate leadership since regular officers possessed little combat experience beyond Empire skirmish operations, typically against insurgents possessing rudimentary arms and equipment.<sup>84</sup> Elitism and divisions within the officer class itself had also been problematic. Educated middle-class officers had tended to join the artillery or engineers, while those charged with battle strategy were drawn from the upper-classes - having joined infantry or cavalry regiments promising eventual prestigious commands. For this group, noble pedigrees were considered more significant than education or ability.<sup>85</sup> Still holding post-Boer War influential posts, many senior army officers scorned technological innovation. Heavy artillery, mines and gas, weaponry that enabled unseen soldiers to kill each other at great distances, was deemed ungentlemanly.<sup>86</sup> For many officers, wars should be small, noble and heroic and considered as moral challenges whereby victory was achieved through character values rather than materiel-based ascendancy.<sup>87</sup>

The fact that such attitudes had been exposed as flawed during the Boer campaign shaped the Haldane reforms that founded the OTC. Headmasters were largely

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<sup>82</sup> Sir Frederick Hamilton, *Origins and History of the First or Grenadier Guards* (London, 1874) and see J Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, chapters 1 and 2.

<sup>83</sup> L.R. Pekin, *The Military Training of Youth: an Enquiry into the Aims and Effects of the O.T.C* (London, 1937), p.11. Within this work, Pekin gives a captivating, albeit critical, retrospective review of the entire OTC scheme from an inter-war (1937) pacifist perspective.

<sup>84</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, p.17.

<sup>85</sup> It is interesting that an equivalence of elitist discriminatory thinking also existed contemporaneously within the officering of the pre-revolution Russian Army. Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891-1924* (London, 1996), p.61.

<sup>86</sup> Ian F. W. Beckett, *The Great War, 1914-1818* (London, 2001), p.44.

<sup>87</sup> Gerard de Groot, *The First World War* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp.25-6.

supportive of Boer War-initiated changes. For example, several Dean Close ex-pupils had served in South Africa, and in January 1900 the headmaster had urged rifle training to be added to the curriculum 'as a result of the lessons taught by the War'.<sup>88</sup> When an outstanding ex-pupil, Roland Brooke, was killed in action, doubts as to the capability of military strategists were evident in Cheltenham. Authored by Dr. Flecker himself, *The Decanian* cited a reported conversation in his eulogy:

One of the Ladysmith gunners whom Brooke met in Cape Town summed up the situation in a short sentence. Commenting on the recklessness of human life and military reputation which lost the guns at Colenso, he said: 'Where there's no sense, there's no feeling.'<sup>89</sup>

Eight years later, as a consequence of humiliating Boer War failings such as had occurred at Colenso, the OTC scheme was launched to ensure that novice junior officers, at least, would gain rudimentary exposure to progressive military practice. Nonetheless, conservative cavalry thinking was never fully expunged before 1914.<sup>90</sup>

Another issue provoking national efficiency anxiety was alarm at German military expansion and her apparent belligerent intentions. As discussed previously, many felt threatened by challenges to Britain's pre-eminence in the naval arms race. These fears evolved to form an abhorrence of Prussianism, construed as the inordinate German glorification of the military class.<sup>91</sup> Such apprehension was both reflected in, and fuelled by, the abundant war and invasion literature that had gained in popularity.<sup>92</sup> Insofar as Germany was the primary fictional enemy to Britain, Hynes notes a pattern emerging as to textual plot structures during the twenty years prior to 1914. Earlier works focused upon German invasion anticipated and foiled (or at least easily defeated), while later texts portrayed invasion repelled with difficulty or, more doom-laden, the reality of life following defeat and occupation.<sup>93</sup> While such literature was often politically-inspired and not symptomatic of significant

<sup>88</sup> Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.34.

<sup>89</sup> 'In Memoriam', *The Decanian*, Winter 1900, p. 359. This article cites several Boer War 'avoidable hardships' undergone by Brooke and his companions. The earlier Battle of Colenso was a humiliating British defeat largely due to the eccentric leadership of General Sir Redvers Buller - see Ian Knight, *Colenso 1899: The Boer War in Natal* (London, 1995), pp. 36-56.

<sup>90</sup> de Groot, *The First World War*, pp. 25-6, and see 'Introduction' in I.F.W. Beckett and S.J. Corvi, *Haig's Generals* (London, 2009).

<sup>91</sup> A. J. Hoover, *God Germany and Britain in the Great War* (New York, 1989), p.26.

<sup>92</sup> For a guide to the substantial genre of British and German pre-1914 'war' literature see I. F. Clarke, (ed.) *The Great War with Germany 1890-1914; Fictions and Fantasies of the War-to-come* (Liverpool, 1997) especially Chapter 2, 'The Enemy Within and the Enemy Beyond the Seas', pp.102-182.

<sup>93</sup> Notable examples of such literature include, for (1) invasion easily thwarted: Erskine Childers, *The Riddle of the Sands* (London, 1903) and William Le Queux, *The Great War in England in 1897* (London, 1894) and (2) invasion repelled with difficulty or England defeated: Le Queux, *The Invasion of 1910* (London, 1906) and Ernest Oldmeadow, *The North Sea Bubble* (London, 1906).



attitudinal shifts, Hynes points to the genre's signals of 'loss of national self-confidence' and that 'anxiety and the expectation of war were a part of Edwardian consciousness'.<sup>94</sup>

The desirability of invasion literature was the topic for a 1906 Bloxham debate: 'that in the opinion of this House, stories of imaginary wars between existing nations should be suppressed'. Even though the motion was won, the fact that such works had become sufficiently widely-read to provoke formal discussion indicates that the field was conspicuous within pupils' elective reading.<sup>95</sup> In Edwardian public schools, invasion awareness, probably inflamed by *The Invasion of 1910* (published in 1906), was evident to the extent that aggressive German scenarios were simulated in pre-OTC cadet exercises.<sup>96</sup> For example, a 1906 *Malvernian* report describes a mock battle enacted on a recent rifle-corps field-day. The *mise-en-scène* placed a hostile German fleet landing troops on the Bristol channel coastline. The attackers, represented by boys from Malvern and Cheltenham, were to be repelled by cadets from Clifton and Marlborough schools.<sup>97</sup>

Anxieties regarding German intent and military capability became focused upon Britain's uncertain wherewithal for defending the homeland, the Empire, and for conducting (and winning) a European war. As previously noted, the schoolboys' hero, Lord Roberts, was ceaselessly agitating for improved military readiness. In 1906, when invasion scare novels were accelerating disquiet, Roberts outlined his post-Boer fears of military disaster. His main recommendations were:

To root in the youths of the country the aptitude for arms and a feeling of patriotism.

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For the boys and youths of Great Britain to be given an education which will teach them their duty to their country.

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To imbue them with that spirit of patriotism without which no nation can expect to continue great and prosperous.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, p.53.

<sup>95</sup> *The Bloxhamist*, October 1906.

<sup>96</sup> William le Queux, *The Invasion of 1910* (London, 1906); I. F. Clarke cites this as 'the most notorious of all the future-war stories [with] ... extraordinary success and world-wide notoriety'. See I. F. Clarke, *The Great War with Germany* (Liverpool, 1997), p.139. Clarke also notes that 'in 1906 Viscount Northcliffe commissioned Le Queux to write the serial, *The Invasion of 1910*, for his tabloid *Daily Mail*. The story did wonders for the circulation figures of the newspaper. It made a small fortune for Le Queux; there were translations into twenty-seven languages, and over one million copies of the book edition were sold'. I. F. Clarke, 'Future War Fiction: The First Main Phase, 1871-1900', *Science Fiction Studies*, 24:3, (1997) per <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/clarkeess.htm> [accessed 27 August 2013].

<sup>97</sup> 'Field Day' in *The Malvernian*, November 1906; the Germans won and invaded Bristol.

<sup>98</sup> Lord Roberts, *A Nation in Arms: Speeches on the Requirements of the British Army*, (London, 1907); Donald Read, *Documents from Edwardian England* (London, 1973), p.324.

While Roberts was the most renowned of those urging reform, many influential men voiced similar concerns in speeches and through newspapers. Senior soldiers (many retired), politicians, clerics, headmasters and school governors all supported his campaign to introduce state-sponsored military training into public schools.<sup>99</sup>

The effect of such unease was the launch of the OTC scheme in 1908 by Richard Haldane, the Secretary of State for War.<sup>100</sup> The OTC contingents, within which public schools formed the Junior Division, became responsible to the War Office.<sup>101</sup> This ministry assumed responsibility for training content, proficiency certification criteria and facilitating annual camps and inspections - King Edward became the OTC Colonel-in-Chief.<sup>102</sup> Schools were to provide consistent military instruction, including regular field-days, as well as testing and certifying cadet proficiency. Certificate 'A' was introduced: part one examined basic skills; part two, a written test for NCO qualities.<sup>103</sup>

A Blundell's 1907 magazine explained the Certificate 'A' entitlement and criteria in detail. The document explicitly states the purpose of the OTC scheme as being to increase the supply of officers. Cadets who obtained both Certificate 'A' parts could obtain favourable admission terms together with training and/or examination exemptions to Sandhurst, Woolwich - or a commission in the Territorial Army. Provided a cadet, over two years, could demonstrate physical fitness, satisfactory musketry and attendance levels, the certificate would be forthcoming following examination success. This comprised tests in drill, care of arms, squad leadership and semaphore. Schools also had an interest in the quantity of their successful OTC pupils since £10 was awarded for each certificated cadet who later enlisted as an officer in the Territorials or the Special Reserve.<sup>104</sup> The War Office also provided a start-up grant followed by £1 for every cadet parading at the annual inspection.<sup>105</sup>

Participation was open to any public school having at least one officer and thirty cadets together with adequate training facilities.<sup>106</sup> On the eve of the First World War, 79 per cent had OTC units - all had commenced their participation within

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<sup>99</sup> Searle, *Quest for National Efficiency*, pp. 76-7.

<sup>100</sup> For an analysis of the politics that led to the setting up of the OTC, see Anne Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War', *History Workshop*, 2:1, (1976), pp. 104-123.

<sup>101</sup> Universities formed the 'Senior Division'.

<sup>102</sup> Gordon Corrigan, *Mud, Blood and Poppycock* (London, 2003), p.43.

<sup>103</sup> Otley, 'Militarism', pp.329-331.

<sup>104</sup> 'The Future of the Cadet Corps', *The Blundellian*, March 1907, pp.83-84.

<sup>105</sup> Alisdair Roberts, 'Schoolboys in Khaki', in *Ties That Bind* (Edinburgh, 2009) per [www.edinburghs-war.ed.ac.uk/home\\_front/documents/PDF\\_schoolboys\\_in\\_khaki.pdf](http://www.edinburghs-war.ed.ac.uk/home_front/documents/PDF_schoolboys_in_khaki.pdf) [accessed September 1 2012].

<sup>106</sup> To qualify, an OTC school had to have: rifle range facilities; an armoury, a full time cadet instructor; an adequate area for parades and drill etc. Otley, 'Militarism', p. 330.

months of Haldane's 1908 enactment. Those already having rifle corps units were accepted automatically and others, notably those schools with strong military gubernatorial representation or military affinities within their parental community, were accepted if staffing and facilities criteria were satisfied.<sup>107</sup> Of the few schools declining to apply, most were constrained by Quaker traditions or other links with pacifist doctrines.<sup>108</sup> Within the public schools selected for this study, all but one (Sutton Valence in 1914) had joined the OTC scheme during the years before 1911.<sup>109</sup> Simon Batten, writes of the:

growing pressure for the public schools to prepare their pupils for military leadership; this only increased as great power rivalries intensified in the lead-up to the First World War... The corps activities were ... an increasingly dominant part of Bloxham school life.<sup>110</sup>

In most schools, OTC pupil enrolment was said not to have been compulsory although participation was encouraged. The Malvern head, for example, in his 1909 speech day address, stated that he wanted:

parents as well as masters to take their Cadet Corps seriously, and to encourage its efficiency to the best of their power, because it was an asset in the wealth and resources of the nation.<sup>111</sup>

And at Blundell's, the head used a mix of persuasion and appeals to duty to maximise pupil involvement in the forthcoming scheme:

very material benefits are offered to those whose patriotism leads them to bear their part in the defence of the country, and also that those who avail themselves of the scheme will be doing a good service to the Corps and to the School.<sup>112</sup>

L. R. Pekin argued that 'most boys at most schools were persuaded, cajoled or bullied into joining' and that such pressure equated to 'the moral equivalent of conscription'.<sup>113</sup> Some schools were indeed coercive. At Uppingham for instance, a school with strong military traditions:

the OTC was very largely to determine the school's ethos in the years preceding the outbreak of world war. No one was allowed to take part in any sporting contest, or win a school prize, without first having passed a shooting test.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Otley, 'Militarism', pp.329-331.

<sup>108</sup> Pekin cites nine public schools that eschewed OTC participation on religious or pacifist grounds, Pekin, *The Military Training of Youth*, pp.17-8.

<sup>109</sup> Most selected schools were accepted immediately through having an existing Rifle Corps. Other applications took longer: Dean Close joined in 1909; Bloxham in 1910; Sutton Valence (as noted) began a few weeks after war was declared in 1914. Most of these delays were due to staffing/facility issues and War Office administration. Per A. R. Haig-Brown, *The OTC and the Great War* (London, 1915) and e-book at [www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/alan-roderick-haig-brown](http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/alan-roderick-haig-brown) [acc. 2 September 2012].

<sup>110</sup> Simon Batten, *A shining light: 150 years of Bloxham School* (London, 2010), p.38.

<sup>111</sup> 'Speech Day', *The Malvernian*, July 1909.

<sup>112</sup> 'The Future of the Cadet Corps', *The Blundellian*, March 1907, p.84.

<sup>113</sup> Pekin, *Military Training of Youth*, p.22; Brian S. Smith, *A History of Bloxham School* (private publishing, 1978), p.81.

<sup>114</sup> Bishop and Bostridge (eds), *Letters from a Lost Generation*, pp.4-5.

At Dean Close, where Boer War losses had previously made a distressing impact, the prospectus stated ‘boys are expected to join the Corps unless definitely excused on adequate grounds’.<sup>115</sup> Autocratic staff could be coercive: at Bloxham, where corps parades occurred weekly, non-OTC pupils were required (by the school commanding officer) to embark upon a six-mile ‘rain-or-shine’ cross-country run.<sup>116</sup> For Sutton Valence boys, following administrative and staffing delays, OTC activities occurred soon after the declaration.<sup>117</sup> The headmaster pestered the War Office to sanction their inclusion in the OTC scheme. Eventually, this was successful; as G. T. Hardy recalls:

We drilled in shirt sleeves on the Upper, anyone who did not roll up his shirt sleeves being deemed unpatriotic. Uniforms came, a badge designed, weapons were issued, short Martini-Henry carbines that kicked like hell (we later got the long L.E. [Lee Enfield] rifle), a competition was held and first stripes awarded.<sup>118</sup>

**Fig. 5 Cadets on parade at Sutton Valence School, 1915**



At Sutton Valence’s Kent location, around forty kilometres from the coast and a hundred from Ypres, artillery sounds from across the Channel made the closeness of the war palpable. Hardy continues:

<sup>115</sup> Dean Close 1909-10 school prospectus and see Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.35-6. Whitney also notes the headmaster’s (Dr. Flecker’s) personal commitment to the setting up of a school Cadet Corps in response to a War Office circular.

<sup>116</sup> Smith, *A History of Bloxham School*, p.81.

<sup>117</sup> Sutton Valence had also undergone a major relocation in 1911; this fact, coupled with limited rifle facilities probably meant that the school did not qualify for OTC status when the scheme was originally launched.

<sup>118</sup> G. T. Hardy, ‘Sutton Valence School, 1910-1917’, (unpublished typescript memoir, c.1960). The Martini-Henry carbine was in use by the British Army from 1871 to c.1891. It had been used in the Anglo-Zulu war - notably at the Battle of Rorke’s Drift in 1879. See W. W. Greener, *The Gun and its Development* (London, 1910).

at Sutton the rumble of the guns in France never ceased, during Ypres, Passchendaele, the Somme and any other push that was going, it rose higher.<sup>119</sup>

The audible proximity of the battles, the enthusiasm of the headmaster and the fact that the school had begun their OTC participation at a time coincident with the declaration must have made Sutton Valence pupils feel that their military participation was, in some way, contributing to the national endeavour (see Fig.5).

From the pupils' viewpoint, the various activities undertaken within OTC training were generally enjoyable.<sup>120</sup> Most school magazines and personal diaries reveal the keenness of pupils embarking upon challenging, often competitive, open-air activities. For instance, the July 1914 King Edward's magazine, *The Edwardian*, records several field-day contests conducted in fine weather: bugling, drumming, tent-pitching, semaphore.<sup>121</sup> But the day's other focus upon uniform smartness and unremitting drill, was perhaps tedious in comparison. Turn-out and drill were most important to the OTC: the 1914 *Malvernian* records an inspection undertaken by a visiting War Ministry official who noted:

the good marching, the turn-out, the words of command and the work of the Cadet officers. It was noticed that in some cases the boots worn by cadets were not very serviceable.<sup>122</sup>

The drift of this report was typical within pre-war school magazines. Evidently, appraisal concerns fixed upon the corps members' appearance, and how effectively they acted in unison according to drill commands - features that would reflect the degree of military keenness and the quality of the school ethos.

But how relevant was OTC training to real warfare? In 1914-15, many Certificate 'A' alumni would find themselves billeted as junior officers within strange battlefield terrains and exposed to unfamiliar warfare mechanisms. Hitherto, death or injury had seemed remote and had probably not been seriously considered.<sup>123</sup> For all classes of newly-enlisted combatants, exposure to the horrors of First World War weaponry must have been intimidating - yet for an ex-public schoolboy, belief in the effectiveness of his newly-enhanced OTC character created confidence (sometimes tragically misplaced) in his ability to survive. As Parker observes, the blinkered

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<sup>119</sup> Hardy, 'Sutton Valence School, 1910-1917', p.12.

<sup>120</sup> Per most school magazine reports and personal memoirs.

<sup>121</sup> 'Officers' Training Corps' in *The Edwardian*, July 1914, p.338.

<sup>122</sup> 'Inspecting the OTC', in *The Malvernian*, Summer 1914.

<sup>123</sup> For example, Whitney explains the deep impact that ex-pupil Boer War casualties had upon the boys and staff of Dean Close school by: 'initially it was seen as something of an adventure - other people might be killed but people one knew were in some way thought to be immune'. Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.35-6.

attitudes and self-deceit brought about OTC training caused 'an absurd dislocation between war and killing'.<sup>124</sup>

Basic training has traditionally instructed cadets according to the situations, successes and failures encountered in prior wars, especially the immediately preceding conflict. However, in terms of tactics, methodology, weaponry and strategy, differences between the practical content of pre-war OTC training and the actuality of the First World War were unusually wide. Even though, during the South African conflict, limited trench warfare had been used by the Boers, there is little evidence that this tactic figured within pre-1914 OTC instruction.<sup>125</sup> Aside from rifle practice, general arms handling and firearms maintenance, OTC warfare preparation was centred upon open country mobile activities - scouting, patrolling, reconnoitring, traversing, advancing, signalling, retiring, evacuating.<sup>126</sup>

Certainly, all wars would encompass some mobility and the First World War was no exception. Yet there was little schooling for the static dimension to the conflict, whereby, for most young officers, the cyclical immobility of trench life tended to be constant - a stalemate interrupted by artillery salvos, occasional hazardous night patrols followed by retirements to reserve trenches.<sup>127</sup> Clearly, the actuality of trench living, suffering artillery bombardment, constant attention of lice and vermin, poison gas attacks, machine-gun enfilades, ubiquitous barbed wire could not be effectively reproduced or simulated in an instructional environment. But other reasons for this lack of connectedness are not simple to identify. While the culture of a massive military institution was notoriously hard to change, it nevertheless seems strange that technological and strategic innovations were marginalised. However, the attitudes of elderly military personages provide clues. For example, Sir Neville Gerald Lyttelton, a military staff trainer and, aged 62, a senior OTC planner, addressed the Malvern school assembly in July 1907. Lyttelton's entire combat background had been in the rifle brigade he told the boys:

The rifle was far and away the most important arm in the field. In the Franco-German war [1870-71] the proportion of casualties due to rifle fire was 94 per cent. ... The proportion was not so high now, but it could be taken at 75% or 80% so that the value of careful instruction in rifle shooting was obvious.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.68. As will be evidenced through the actions of Captain Nevill.

<sup>125</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the Boer conflict, see Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, 1992).

<sup>126</sup> Per several separate school magazines of the period.

<sup>127</sup> For a detailed description of trench life in 1914-15 see 'Stalemate', in Jay Winter and Blaine Baggett (eds), *1914-18: The Great War and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century* (London, 1996), pp.88-104.

<sup>128</sup> 'Speech Day Addresses', *The Malvernian*, July 1907. Sir Neville Gerald Lyttelton (1845-1931) had been commissioned ensign (by purchase) into the rifle brigade, After a long army

With its almost exclusive focus upon the efficacy of the rifle, this backward-looking, lengthy address indicates that defensive (for example, trenches), offensive (for example, long-range artillery, machine guns) and other strategic warfare changes were discounted. Such an approach by an OTC organizer partly explains the retro nature of instruction. In support of Lyttelton however, in 1907, many viewed the main role of the upcoming OTC as one of training for defence against invaders - in which event the rifle may have been key.

But coaching officering skills was more enlightened. In the school magazines examined (almost all had regular 'OTC Notes' articles), commentary was dominated by turnout, field day exercises, drill, physical exertion, the band, camp activities, command and leadership. These last two qualities represented the principal objectives: as aspiring junior officers, OTC cadets were being taught to become leaders of men first - and military tacticians, second. So that any modern warfare authenticity would have been considered less important than the ability to command men in military situations.<sup>129</sup> From a developmental viewpoint, OTC pupils practised leadership and were encouraged to show qualities of initiative - albeit, against an outmoded framework of tactics.<sup>130</sup>

For Edwardian youngsters quartered at OTC summer camps, the concept of slaughter was unimaginable. The Blundell's pupil, Cubitt Rundle, kept a diary covering his experiences at the Salisbury Plain Tidworth camp during July/August, 1909.<sup>131</sup> Rundle's account seems not untypical as the cadets became engaged in many of the mobile actions noted previously, for example:

'We sent out as vanguard, main guard, and firing line.'

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career, he was appointed chief of the general staff. Per the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34657?docPos=14> The ODB entry also states that 'Lyttelton knew almost nothing of the problems of imperial defence and strategy. Lacking administrative and strategic capacity, he was incompetent and inactive.'

<sup>129</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, p.17.

<sup>130</sup> Beckett, *The Great War 1914-1818*, p.44. Beckett also makes some interesting comments as to fears that the remoteness of long-range artillery, gas etc. might lead to reduced other rank morale and offensive spirit. Thus a need for greater officer management skills was thought to be required as a consequence of advanced weaponry.

<sup>131</sup> It is likely that Rundle was charged with writing the diary, as a record of the collective camp experience, by one of the officers named on the title page. Its fair copy presentation would suggest that it was put together from notes taken as each day's activity progressed. Formal military language is used throughout and the document *only* accounts for the military content of the stay. No glimpses of Rundle's personal opinions or feelings are evident - the diary is dispassionate and focused upon the factual. The retention of the diary in the Blundell's School archive would indicate that the intended readership would have been other cadets and school staff who had not attended the camp. The actual writing of the document probably took place over the following summer holidays ready for submission at the beginning of the new term in the Autumn of 1909 - the neat schoolboy handwriting corresponds to that of an educated 14-year old. (see Appendix A for OTC materials relevant to Rundle).

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'We scouted out in their direction.'

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'I was sent out as a patrol.'

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'Lieutenant Wheeler then sent me out alone over the same ground to reconnoitre.'

Several inspections, salutes, military band concerts and march past events occurred during afternoons and early evenings. A night exercise followed daytime activities: firing 'began at 9.30' and, for Rundle, the action became exciting as, in quick succession, he was engaged in further scouting, retiring, reconnoitring, traversing - only to be captured before returning to camp at 2 a.m. for cocoa and bed. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> he records, 'when we had massed a large force behind the hedge, we advanced company by company in rushes through some long grass'.<sup>132</sup> The diary shows that, beyond the practicalities of open country combat, boys were taught, through practice and demonstration, character skills considered essential for trainee subalterns. For example, from the night exercise entries for 31 July 1909, it is evident that abilities in discipline, leadership, observation, personal communication, steadfastness and (to a limited extent) initiative were exercised (see Appendix A).

Summer camps, field days and weekly OTC sessions familiarised boys through army exercises, while reinforcing leadership elements. However, beyond practical training, military strategists considered physical fitness and Christian moral integrity as essential attributes for young officers. Therefore, in addition to drilling proficiency, rifle care and soldierly field-craft, muscular Christianity factors became embedded within the OTC syllabus.<sup>133</sup> It seems unlikely that OTC physical activities would have significantly boosted boys' strength and bodily welfare - albeit that some, who had purposefully minimised their athletics participation, might have benefitted from the rigours of compulsory drill and field exercises.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> C. A. G. Rundle, *My Diary of Officers' Training Corps Camp at Tidworth Pennyngs Salisbury Plain*, (unpublished manuscript per Blundell's School archive, 1909). Rundle became a Captain in the 128th Pioneers Indian Army, won a Military Cross and was Mentioned in Despatches. During the First World War, he served in the Suez Canal Zone fighting against the Turks. In July 1941, while serving in the Indian Army, Rundle was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel; *The London Gazette*, 21 August 1942, p. 3665. Per <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/35676/pages/3665/page.pdf> [accessed 28 August 2013]

<sup>133</sup> Robert H. MacDonald, 'Reproducing the Middle-Class Boy - from Purity to Patriotism' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24:3, (1989), pp.526-529.

<sup>134</sup> However, Pekin disputes any claims for physical benefits that may have arisen from drill: 'military drill does it [a boy's physique] positive harm ... stiff, jerky movements carried out in badly-designed, stuffy and unhygienic clothes - and impeded by a heavy and unwieldy instrument constructed of steel' per Pekin, *Military Training of Youth*, p.32.



However, to exemplify the OTC's Christian moral dimensions, on speech day in summer 1911, Dean Close boys were addressed by Henry Wace, the Dean of Canterbury. In respect of the newly-formed OTC, *The Decanian* reports that:

He expressed his pleasure at seeing so many of the boys in Cadet Corps uniform. The training in that corps had a moral value as well as a physical one; for in that training the first and last word was 'obedience'.<sup>135</sup>

There were also moral dimensions to the OTC. In respect of loyalty, there were, anyway, several contenders for the allegiance of Edwardian public schoolboys: to nation and Empire, privileged class, school, house and sports team. Faithfulness was customarily founded and fortified through sports, the classroom curriculum and chapel-based activities. OTC training complemented these principles, so that loyalty to military contingent, co-cadets and, following promotion, subordinates, drew upon and augmented indoctrinated Christian devotion and the fidelity necessary for the sports field.<sup>136</sup>

One moral ideal that endeavoured to bond soldiery with religious purpose, was strengthened by OTC involvement. For the English crusading soldier through the centuries, a conviction that he was supported by the Almighty (and that this might preserve him) was a powerful stimulus to enthusiastic action and the stoic endurance of hardship. Simple, timeless, dyadic opposites of right and wrong, Christian and Pagan, God and Satan, had supported a belief that God favoured the English.<sup>137</sup> Eight hundred years after the Crusades, such reasoning persisted. For instance, an imperially-inspired sermon by the Rev. T. W. Crafer, early in the First World War, asserted:

We are a nation wondrously favoured by God, and we like to think of ourselves as a chosen people, whose name stands in the world for righteousness and peace... We cannot doubt that so powerful an Empire ... must be a precious instrument for good in the hands of God.<sup>138</sup>

Repeated, authoritative 'God is on England's side' messages, communicated in times of peace and war by ordained educators, emanated from chapel pulpits.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> 'Prize Distribution', *The Decanian*, July 1911, p.187-8.

<sup>136</sup> Anne Summers writes that the 'concept of military discipline was so powerfully invested with moral and religious qualities in the Edwardian period'. Anne Summers, 'Militarism in Britain before the Great War', p.119.

<sup>137</sup> The willingness of several public school headmasters, during the 1890-1914 period, to espouse ideas of boyish personal sacrifice and the 'God is on England's side in its establishment and armed protection of Empire' argument has been comprehensively explored within J. A. Mangan, 'The Grit of our Forefathers' in John M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1992), pp. 113-139.

<sup>138</sup> Crafer quoted in Hoover, *God Germany and Britain in the Great War*, p.69. At the time, Crafer was vicar of All Saints Church, Cambridge then later, Dean of Queen's College London.

<sup>139</sup> Stirring written reminders of divine watchfulness and approval were also constant in some schools. Throughout the First World War, week by week, casualty lists of Malvernians

For example, a 1915 address by the Blundell's head stipulated that: 'today, though the end is not yet, if we all play our parts, we have under God's providence the full assurance of victory'.<sup>140</sup> However the OTC scheme had introduced a more practically-inspired, military layer over such homilies. Within the muscular Christianity ethos, the image of Christ became fused with the ideal of manliness - in particular with the envisioned masculinity of the fighting soldier. Military metaphors, representing the model Christian's internal, spiritual struggle, were constant in Edwardian chapel oratory and were re-emphasized in hymn lyrics. Christ himself was referred to as 'The Man's Man', 'the Great Commander' or 'the most perfect and knightly character in the whole history of chivalry'. His church was 'the oldest fighting regiment in Europe'.<sup>141</sup> Through his school exposure, an imaginative OTC cadet might see himself as an embryonic crusader. As Ernest Raymond's recruiting Colonel suggested to his young Gallipoli candidates: 'you're Christians before you're Moslems, and your hands should fly to your swords when I say the Gallipoli campaign is a New Crusade'.<sup>142</sup>

Any crusading self-perception would be reinforced at OTC gatherings. Returning to Rundle's Tidworth camp diary, three of the four hymns sung at the Sunday service reflected images of the crusading soldier battling non-believer armies, i.e. 'Fight the Good Fight', 'Soldiers of Christ Arise', 'For All the Saints'.<sup>143</sup> Other hymns frequently sung at OTC events included 'Onward Christian Soldiers' and the belligerent 'Christian dost thou see them?' (see Appendix B).<sup>144</sup> For many cadets, restatement of the idea that OTC soldiering extended the crusader ethic toughened the supremacist indoctrination that had supported much of the curriculum. Such thinking peaked during the 1914-1915 recruitment drives - helped by newspapers, music-hall enlists, politicians, clergymen and other public speakers. The attachment of a high degree of God-bestowed righteousness to the English cause during the First World War remained throughout the conflict. As Marrin observes in respect of the First World War recruiting drive:

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were pinned to the school chapel door together with various quotes urging resolve, patriotism and continued recognition of Godly support. For example, at Christmas 1914: 'Then pealed the Bells more loud and deep, God is not dead, nor doth he sleep, the wrong shall fail. The right prevail.' [taken from 'I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day' H. W. Longfellow, 1863]. Presumably the purpose of the message was to reassure pupils that God was on the side of loyal Englishmen - even unto death. George Chesterton (compiler), *A History of Malvern College Chapel, 1899- 1999* (2000), p.3.

<sup>140</sup> Easter Monday Chapel address, 'Our Duty to Germany', A. L. Francis, *The Blundellian*, June 1915.

<sup>141</sup> Marrin, *The Last Crusade*, p.152.

<sup>142</sup> Ernest Raymond, *Tell England* (London, 1922, 40<sup>th</sup> ed. 1965), p.179.

<sup>143</sup> Evening Service Hymn Sheet, Tidworth Camp, August 1<sup>st</sup> 1909.

<sup>144</sup> See Appendix B for the warlike lyrics within all these hymns.

Appeals to idealism have always been important in mobilizing energies for the fight. In the Great War, the conflict ... was transformed under the pressure of events into a holy war, ending as a frenzied crusade against the Devil incarnate.<sup>145</sup>

Linking the singing of bellicose hymns at a 1909 OTC camp to an eagerness for First World War volunteering five years later might seem unconvincing. Yet there are factors within the religious aspect of OTC training that impinge upon youthful attitudes to war, soldiering and enlisting. As with the classroom-based curriculum, most of the moral messages emanating from OTC involvement instructed the boys as to what to believe rather than to know, reason or interpret. Many of these beliefs coincided with the supremacist imperial certainties that bolstered significant parts of the academic programme. Their OTC experience therefore enhanced already-implanted beliefs in: the superiority and moral blamelessness of the British nation, the assurance of Divine support, the duty of all able-bodied men to enlist if required.

Righteousness and pre-eminence were trumpeted by doggerel published in *The Malvernian* when 'Oh England, Mighty England' (see Appendix O), penned by an anonymous pupil, appeared in the school magazine shortly after OTC inauguration. It reveals the effects of unalloyed patriotic indoctrination as it unashamedly salutes military and moral supremacy, glorious battle history, and positions England at the pinnacle of international attainment. The first of five (very similar) stanzas reads:

Oh England, mighty England, thou mistress of the sea,  
Rise up, accept the homage each nation offers thee.  
Proud bearer of that banner which mighty sons unfurl'd.  
Proclaim thy vast dominion to all the sensual world.<sup>146</sup>

Feelings of nationalistic moral supremacy also abound in a 'Diary of the War' article written by an anonymous Blundell's ex-cadet serving as an officer on the Belgian-French border. Writing of his experiences after a 'weary retirement' from Mons, he was keen, despite the setback, to contrast the enthusiastic willingness of his unit to advance, with the defeatist compliance of the German foe:

Early on 6<sup>th</sup> September [1914], the welcome order came to advance ... 'Be prepared to move at a moment's notice.'. We moved almost at once. I think all weariness left us. ... Some Uhlans were taken this day. I have not yet met a German showing any distress at his capture, officer or man.<sup>147</sup>

One of the most expressive, albeit idealistic, acknowledgements of school-inspired character, religious motivation and OTC-provoked duty is encapsulated by Colonel May's 1922 foreword to the dedication of the Bloxham war memorial:

The School OTC, started in 1910, bore splendid fruit. Many of its old members undertook military service immediately war was declared, their previous training

<sup>145</sup> Marrin, *The Last Crusade*, p.124-5.

<sup>146</sup> Poem from *The Malvernian*, April 1909 - and see Appendix O for the full text.

<sup>147</sup> 'A Diary of the War', *The Blundellian*, April 1915, p.161.

enabling them at once to obtain commissions ... Old Bloxhamists, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardships, faced danger, and pursued the path of self-sacrifice. ... I have been greatly struck by the deep religious feeling that exists in the heart of nearly every man.<sup>148</sup>

This retrospective tribute to the soldiers *in memoriam* cites some of the attributes indoctrinated and reinforced by the OTC programme: national loyalty, divine inspiration and comfort, duty and self-sacrifice. At school, these axioms had been embraced by 'soldier as crusader' propositions whereby attitudes could be modified through indoctrination. The psychologist, Elliot Aronson, writes that, to be effective, the sources and situations of persuasive indoctrination must ideally be credible (headmasters or established OTC training officers), trustworthy (endorsed by the reputation of the school, the authority of the church, the traditions and history of the British army), attractive (school end-of-term speech-days, OTC summer camps and congenial field-days).<sup>149</sup> Public schoolboys were model candidates for such urging.

From a propaganda perspective, the 'soldier as crusader' construct moved from the general to the particular in August 1914.<sup>150</sup> From the outset, church leaders and headmasters attacked Prussian Protestantism, labelling it the perverted antithesis of ennobled English Christianity.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, presentations of the conflict as a Holy War and the enemy as the anti-Christ, echoed the OTC hymnic depiction of Christianity as a combative philosophy - thereby precisely confirming the messages within the combative hymns familiar to ex-cadets. So that the alleged atrocities of the German army in the early months of the war, fitted closely with the diabolical paradigm ingrained through hymns and manipulative chapel services. Enthusiastic volunteering was inevitable given such indoctrination - 'Christian, up and smite them, counting gain but loss, In the strength that cometh by the holy cross' would have seemed like a call to arms.<sup>152</sup>

Beyond crusader training, the character values introduced and reinforced by the OTC were supposedly centred around discipline and leadership. However, Pekin

<sup>148</sup> *Bloxham School Archives*, A foreword to the school roll of honour prepared by Colonel H. A. R. May, (December, 1922). Colonel May's address notes that during the First World War, 398 Old Bloxhamists served in the military; there were 207 casualties which included 94 deaths, pp. v-viii.

<sup>149</sup> Elliot Aronson, *The Social Animal* (New York, 1992), pp.72-9.

<sup>150</sup> Shannon Ty Bontrager, 'The Imagined Crusade: The Church of England and the Mythology of Nationalism and Christianity during the Great War', *Church History* 71:4 (2002), pp. 774-799.

<sup>151</sup> For example consider the words of Scott Holland, Professor of Divinity at Oxford University who Wilkinson quotes as saying on 6 September 1914: 'every day reveals the black blind horror of Prussianism. It is the very devil. It has to be fought: and killed. It is the last word in iniquity. I could not have believed that man could be so diabolical.'. Per Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1996), p.15.

<sup>152</sup> Hymn lyrics from 'Christian dost thou see them?' by the Rev. J. M. Neale DD, (1818-1866).

challenges claims that such qualities were enhanced by OTC participation.<sup>153</sup> OTC discipline, he suggests, was limited to slavish obedience to orders communicated or, in the case of NCOs, the re-issuance of orders, received as commands, to junior cadets - a constant alternative mix of 'subordination or subservience'. OTC leadership skills were thus uncreative, even though, from a chain of command perspective, the derived discipline was at least operative. Such can be evidenced by Rundle's camp diary: almost every action he undertook was in response to an order received rather than resulting from his own enterprise. Pekin also argues that any OTC leadership talent emanated from a numerically small band of NCO cadets who were habitually drawn from established school prefects and/or sports team leaders - and thus were, by definition, practiced authority figures in the school hierarchy.<sup>154</sup>

It can be argued that OTC activities *per se* were harmless, enjoyed by pupils and that useful grounding in the basic methods of military life was imparted to privileged youngsters who, at the time, were predicted as being essential to national security and Empire. So much is true - yet thousands of boys volunteered during 1914-15 believing they had received a protective character-based dimension to their education, supplemented by knowledge gained from the OTC, and that this meant they were well-equipped for a major European war.<sup>155</sup> This supposition was false: beyond academic knowledge, public schoolboys' entire curricular, athletic, chapel and OTC education had been directed towards maximising character, leadership and manliness values ahead of technology, situational analysis and modern military method. As one hostilities-only Corporal, a Lewis machine-gunner in the Northumberland Fusiliers would later observe in respect of officer performance at the Battle of the Somme:

The officers were mainly public schoolboys. They came through the officers' training in the public schools [OTC], and they were given commissions. They weren't taught to think. Only to lead.<sup>156</sup>

Since the post-Arnold reforms, it had been assumed that character-based factors alone were indispensable to later life success - whether within trade and commerce, the armed services, the great professions or high-ranking service to Empire or the home nation. An indoctrinated belief that wars were consistently won by the side exhibiting a greater degree of honour, steadfastness and self-sacrifice was itself catastrophic since a partially-repressed sensation of personal invulnerability may

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<sup>153</sup> Pekin, *Military Training of Youth*, pp. 32-36.

<sup>154</sup> Rundle, *My Diary of Officers' training Corps Camp*, pp.1-4; Pekin, *Military Training of Youth*, pp. 32-36.

<sup>155</sup> de Groot, *The First World War*, pp.25-6; Robb, *British Culture*, pp.71-72 .

<sup>156</sup> Joshua Levine, 'Corporal Harry Fellows' in *Forgotten Voices of the Somme* (London, 2008), p.59.

have informed a reckless decision to enlist when called upon. Irrespective of the sundry values of character, it's possession could never act as protection against shells, mines, gas, machine-gun fire, disease. Many of these boys, perhaps like the cheerful Bloxham group depicted below, had been manipulated to contradict this patent truism.<sup>157</sup>

**Fig. 6 - Bloxham OTC cadets on a 1911 Field Day**



**'The cheapest and best form of national insurance' - militarism.**

Quasi-religious enlightenment and character-building OTC camps represented just part of the national efficiency doctrine used to inspire young men towards soldierly thinking during the years before 1914.<sup>158</sup> Oliver Thomson notes that methods for inspiring youngsters with military enthusiasm included many elements: martial statues (especially equestrian), commemorative arches, flags, anthems, ceremonial parades, military bands, memorials, cigarette cards, collectibles etc.<sup>159</sup> Moreover, the patriotic press together with abundant soldierly-themed product advertisements championed the armed services (see Appendix N).<sup>160</sup> Toys were also significant: a mass market for lead soldiers, war-related jigsaws and other war-play paraphernalia

<sup>157</sup> OTC cadets from Bloxham School, clearly enjoying themselves on a 1911 field day.

<sup>158</sup> See Searle, *Quest for National Efficiency*, pp.54-67.

<sup>159</sup> Thomson, *Easily Led*, p.7. Also see Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum* (Manchester, 1971), p.168-9.

<sup>160</sup> D. Newton, *British Labour, European Socialism and the struggle for peace, 1889-1914* (Oxford, 1989), p.340.

emerged during the 1890s such that by 1905, Britain was producing five million model warriors per year and toy soldiers had replaced train sets as the foremost masculine nursery game.<sup>161</sup> For economic reasons, the majority of such playthings were enjoyed by those middle- and upper-class boys who were destined for public schools. As Graham Dawson suggests, war-based toys were used to foment childish imperialist patriotism and to initiate the martial spirit necessary for the successful prosecution of wars: later participation in school OTC operations would provide a chance for older boys to become 'model' soldiers themselves.<sup>162</sup>

As a consequence of ubiquitous soldierly imagery and national efficiency calls, public awareness of the role and importance of the military expanded. But, to what extent could the public school OTC scheme have been defined as militarist? And if schools embraced militarism, then what were the distinguishing components? Firstly, it is important to understand the meaning(s) of 'militarism' since the word can be reasonably applied to several social and cultural formations. Ian Worthington, drawing upon the work of the sociologist, Stanislaw Andreski, cites a meaningful definition of militarism. This equates it to an amalgam of 'militancy' (eagerness for aggression), 'militarisation' (readying a nation for war), 'militocracy' (rule by military elites) and 'militolatry' (adulation of military virtues).<sup>163</sup> By any standards, these four characterizations, with the possible exception of the militarisation sense, could not be said to have reflected British society during the years before 1914. However they precisely coincided with how Prussianism was viewed (and despised) by many English people as war approached. The views of several clergymen, for example, were not untypical: Hoover notes that, early in the war, many referred to Prussianism as the anathematic idea they were opposing, and by 'Prussianism' they implied the glorification of a dominant ruling military class. Frequently Prussianism was maligned as 'pagan, anti-Christian, undemocratic, illiberal, brutalizing, and culturally stifling'.<sup>164</sup>

Another useful definition is offered by de Groot: true militarism requires the satisfaction of three criteria to be so described - the domination of government and society by military elites; a tendency to overvalue military power; the dissemination

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<sup>161</sup> See Beckett, *The Great War, 1914-1918*, pp.280-1 for descriptions of 'war' propaganda aimed at children.

<sup>162</sup> Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London, 1994), p.234-6.

<sup>163</sup> Ian Worthington, 'Socialization, Militarisation and Officer Recruiting: The Development of the Officers' training Corps', *Military Affairs*, 43:2 (1979), pp.90-6, and Stanislaw Andreski, *Military Organisation and Society* (London, 1968), p.186.

<sup>164</sup> Hoover, *God Germany and Britain in the Great War*, p.26.

of military values into wider society.<sup>165</sup> In the first respect, Britain was emphatically not governed by the military. Secondly, belligerent army (as contrasted with naval) power had not been of social concern since the Empire policing adventures of the late nineteenth century.<sup>166</sup> And even in the face of fictional and implied German threats, calls for military preparedness through conscription had always met with lukewarm responses.<sup>167</sup>

But de Groot's third criteria (disseminated military values), together with Andreski's theory of militarisation (putting a nation in readiness for war), are more relevant to determining the degree that public schoolboys had been influenced towards a form of militarism. Humiliation at South African failure, together with a growing perception of German naval expansion, gave rise to fresh quasi-militaristic interest - this within a context of national disquiet that was also being inflamed by the popular press. For OTC cadets, the burgeoning anxiety was epitomised in an open 1912 recruitment letter written by Lord Roberts for distribution through public school magazines. Recognising that their OTC training would help in the development of militarily-oriented leadership skills, his letter urged all boys, upon leaving school, to press upon able-bodied eligible males of their acquaintance the importance of undergoing armed training in anticipation of defending the nation.<sup>168</sup>

Since the Boer War, junior officer shortages had been a constant worry. Haldane announced in a 1907 Commons debate, 'there is no more serious problem to be solved than how to get over the deficiency of officers' - and continued:

There was only one source from which we could hope to get young men of the upper middle-class ... and that was the public schools. ... You are not in any danger of increasing the spirit of militarism there, because the spirit of militarism runs fairly high both there and at the Universities.<sup>169</sup>

Consequently, public schools, originally founded as evangelical institutions of scholarship, were modified to form establishments that, through the OTC, also became concerned with developing soldierly attitudes and skills. In the process, a meaningful relationship with the concept of a nation in arms was fostered.<sup>170</sup> In several ways therefore, the direct OTC training of middle and upper-class youths in

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<sup>165</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, pp.39-40.

<sup>166</sup> MacKenzie (ed.), 'Introduction' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p.3. Summers also contrasts the wearing of military dress by German cabinet ministers with their British counterparts - Summers, 'Militarism in Britain', p.104.

<sup>167</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, p.40.

<sup>168</sup> Lord Roberts' letter reproduced in *The Decanian*, September 1912.

<sup>169</sup> 'Supply - (Army Estimates)', *House of Commons Debates*, (25 February 1907), per Hansard.

<sup>170</sup> Wilkinson, *Depictions*, p.6.



military practices indicated that at least one crucial segment of society was becoming more militarist and militarily aware.

So that, as far as the military training of schoolboys through the OTC was concerned, de Groot's third 'militarist' criterion (disseminating military values) was satisfied by the scheme since such propagation was a stated objective - after all, the OTC was founded at a time when forthcoming war was thought quite possible.<sup>171</sup> Even more significant is Andreski's requirement for militarisation to happen before militarism within society can be assumed. The fact of setting up the OTC, in effect the training of prospective reserve officers to oversee a volunteer army, matched with a philosophy of putting a nation in readiness for war. Such a prepared readiness plan set Britain, in part, alongside other combatant European nations. However if, before August 1914, most nations were preparing for war, then the major difference between British and German efforts were ones of motive - in simple terms - defensive vis-à-vis aggressive. In announcing the OTC scheme, Haldane had stressed that militarisation of the nation was to be conceived in purely defensive terms: 'not for aggression but for its [the nation's] own defence in cases of great emergency'. He added that the Boer War had taught the nation 'to put aside the spirit of militarism and to reflect upon war as well as other things with a view to better preparation and better organisation'.<sup>172</sup>

Public school headmasters were eager to insist that the new OTC did not represent militarism. The Malvern head advised the 1909 speech day assembly, of the defensive purpose for the OTC:

He was no militarist, as he had stated there and elsewhere many a time. ... He believed that universal - or practically universal - military training - not service - was the cheapest and best form of national insurance. The defensive forces of this land and of the Empire must have officers. Where were the officers to come from? They must come from the class that sent its sons to the public schools.<sup>173</sup>

Defensive militarism, in the sense of training young men in armed vigilance against perceived threats, was consistently promoted as justifiable and prudent. Yet, such an attitude was not unflawed. Despite headmasterly denials of OTC militarism, within the context of potential European conflict, any manipulative training of youths to become more militarily warlike makes disavowals seem dubious - even though a

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<sup>171</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.68.

<sup>172</sup> *House of Commons Debates*, (March and July 1906) quoted in Worthington, 'Socialization, Militarisation and Officer Recruiting', p.93.

<sup>173</sup> 'Speech Day' in *The Malvernian*, July 1909. The headmaster chose his 'national insurance' metaphor carefully: Lloyd George's tax-raising 'People's Budget', unpopular with the moneyed classes, had been revealed a few weeks previously. In his budget speech he announced what would become the National Insurance Act - welfare for those hit by unemployment or illness.

belief in military preparation as homeland protection against invaders was rational. But an advocacy of non-militaristic OTC preparedness, in defence of perceived threats to British economic or Empire supremacy, seems hypocritical: most particularly when the vilification of 'Prussianism' on account of Germany's own armed expansion (claimed to be undertaken to match rival capabilities), is recalled. The practical militarisation differences between English and German militarism, as construed by public school OTC cadets, is indistinct. Thus, indoctrinated *idée fixe* senses of militaristic right versus wrong, Christian versus Pagan, defence versus invasion or insurance versus Prussianism would support the drive for privileged young Englishmen to volunteer in 1914.<sup>174</sup>

Kingsley Fradd was probably one of the young men so driven. The brief military career of this Bloxham pupil typified the migration from OTC cadet to commissioned subaltern upon the outbreak of war. As revealed by his enlistment papers (see Fig.7), Fradd had left Bloxham School in July 1914 aged seventeen. The papers show he had been promoted to sergeant in the OTC and would have thus been considered excellent material for a junior commission. On leaving school, he joined the Bank of Nova Scotia in Ontario but presumably had returned to Britain after a few months.<sup>175</sup> His application shows him being accepted, via the City of London Territorial Association, into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the London Regiment of the Royal Fusiliers in November 1915. This battalion was headquartered in Tufton Street, Westminster a short way from Fradd's home in Fitzroy Square.<sup>176</sup> A few months of training preceded his deployment, as a Second Lieutenant, in France. Aged eighteen, Kingsley Fradd was killed in the first hour of the Battle of the Somme (at Gommecourt) on 1 July 1916 - one of 19,420 British soldiers killed on that single day.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> McIntire, 'National Status'. Matthew McIntire writes that threats to British economic supremacy were also key to the quest for the improved national efficiency that drove schemes such as the OTC formation. The German Protestant theologian, Ernst Troeltsch also highlighted a perception of British hypocrisy in respect of 'militarism': 'The English Christian feels divinely appointed to bring the kingdom of God to earth, not at the end of time but now, in history, and thus he feels morally obligated to give the world the values he considers most important: freedom, order, and personal liberty. For this purpose God expects Britain to maintain a great navy at all times. Militarism is wrong for the German, of course, but navalism is permitted for the British - another example of Albion's double standard' per Hoover, *God Germany and Britain*, pp. 54-5.

<sup>175</sup> See employee First World War records at

[http://scotiabank.com/archives/scotiabankers\\_world\\_war\\_1.html](http://scotiabank.com/archives/scotiabankers_world_war_1.html) [accessed 25 June 2012]

<sup>176</sup> See <http://battlefields1418.50megs.com/2londons.htm> [accessed 28 June 2012]

<sup>177</sup> Batten, *A Shining Light*, p.43; in July 1916, the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion had been attached to the Machine Gun regiment of the infantry. Kingsley Fradd is buried at the Hebuterne Military Cemetery in Pas de Calais - per the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website at: <http://www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/322380/FRADD,%20KINGSLEY%20MEREDITH%20C> [accessed 28 June

Fig. 7 Kingsley Fradd - application for a commission

*Assistant*  
Adj. Gen. L. 228

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY A CANDIDATE FOR APPOINTMENT TO A  
COMMISSION IN THE TERRITORIAL FORCE.

*N.B.—It is of great importance, that the names given in the Birth Certificate should be correctly stated on this form, and it is to be clearly understood that, where they differ, the names and date of Birth given in the Birth or Baptismal Certificate will be accepted for Official record.*

(1) Regiment or Corps for which recommended  
If more than one Battalion Regt., for which Battalion recommended

Rank to which to be appointed

1. Are you a British subject by birth or naturalisation? (If by naturalisation, a certificate from the Home Office should be attached.)
2. Nationality by birth of your Father? (If naturalised, see 60c.)
3. Are you of pure European descent?
4. What is your full Surname?
5. What are your full Christian names? (See "N.B." above.)
6. What is the exact date of your birth? (See "N.B." above.)
7. What is your height?
8. At what school or college were you educated?
9. What is your address for correspondence?

1. What is your profession or occupation?

2. Are you employed in any capacity under the control of a Government Department, and, if so, have you obtained the consent of the Department concerned?

3. Do you now hold a Commission, or are you now serving in any of His Majesty's Regular, Reserve, Territorial, Auxiliary, Indian or Colonial Forces, the Channel Islands Militia, or the Officers Training Corps? If so, state the nature of the commission you hold, or the capacity in which you are serving.

Have you held a Commission in or have you served in any of His Majesty's Regular, Reserve, Territorial, Auxiliary, Indian or Colonial Forces, the Channel Islands Militia, or the Officers Training Corps?

If so, state—

- a. The Regiment or Corps in which you served.
- b. If commissioned, the date of the resignation of your commission.
- c. Your rank on retirement.
- d. If not commissioned, the date of your discharge.
- e. The circumstances in which you retired, or were discharged; and
- f. Whether you have served in any campaign. If you have, attach a statement certified by a Senior Officer who is personally cognizant of such service.

Have you been nominated for any other Regiment or Corps?

I certify the above answers to be correct.

15.10.15 Usual Signature of Candidate *K.M. Fradd*

11) W 4792—502C 45,500 S.S. H.W. (P.214)

*472 No. 10 London N7. (R.F.)  
Accepted for  
1st Bn. London Regt.  
2nd Lieut.  
Yes, by birth  
English  
Yes.  
Fradd  
Kingsley Meredith Chatterton  
24 August 1897  
1st Lt.  
London (Highgate)  
All Saints School, Bloxham, Oxon  
41 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy, W.*

*London Territorial Force Association  
109, 251, 253  
312 NOV 1915*

*no*

*no*

*I have served in the Officers Training Corps.  
Bloxham School Officers Training Corps.  
not commissioned  
Sergeant  
July 1914.  
1st Bn. School.*

*no*

*no*

'The hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth'.<sup>178</sup>

A middle-class Edwardian father with a son enrolled at an English public school would have been unlikely to have disputed this prosaic statement by the Dutch philosopher, Erasmus. Asked, in (say) 1913, to define what was meant by 'proper' in this context, the father's response would probably have centred upon the abstract character qualities discussed within this and adjacent chapters. He might have selected the development and nurture of: manliness, leadership, honour, obedience, duty, teamwork, self-sacrifice - all cemented within a 'good learning' context that sought to implant Godliness alongside patriotic values. A public school youngster's unshakeable belief in and commitment to such factors would have been deemed essential in order for him to make his way in the world.

2012]; he is commemorated at St Mary's War Memorial, Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Munster Square, London., Per <http://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/st-mary-s-war-memorial> [acc. 10th Sept. 2012]. 1 July 1916 British battle deaths as recorded in Dr. Gary Sheffield, *The Somme* (London, 2003), p.68.

<sup>178</sup> Reputedly said by Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536).

Most fathers would consequently have seen belief-based outcomes as being far more significant than the devices used to provoke them. Curricular subjects *per se* may not have been high on a parental list aimed at defining proper education factors. Considered by many as book learning, the fact that history, geography and classics were not overtly advocated as character-forming would have downgraded their worth in comparison to the more evident institutional efforts at socializing gentlemanly values and instilling the imprecise, but highly-prized, qualities of manliness and muscular Christianity.<sup>179</sup> Yet, as has been shown, the three classroom subjects explored herein were vital to instilling ideas of 'my country, right or wrong', 'our glorious Empire' as well as introducing and reinforcing the notion, through classical exploration, that to die in the military service of the nation, was a somehow fulfilling, praiseworthy ideal.

Military recruiters, especially in wartime, would value any individual possessing defined qualities of character especially if those were joined with indoctrinated feelings of unswerving patriotism and eagerness for battle - feelings that, perhaps unobtrusively, had been infused in the classroom ahead of the sports field, the chapel or parade ground. When the OTC-driven soldiering and leadership skills were combined with the supremacist outlooks derived from classroom lessons then the final subaltern package would approach completion. However, as will be examined in the next chapter, organised competitive sports served as the most significant mechanism for stimulating character. Athleticism, in the eyes of almost everybody connected with the public school system, seemed to draw upon all of the other aspects of the institutional and curricular experience to render the complete, albeit innocent, individual - ready to capitalise upon and succeed in almost any opportunity open to him. Tragically for many, in August 1914, that opportunity would be bloody war with Germany.

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<sup>179</sup> See Ch. 4, 'Childhood' in F. M. L. Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society* (London, 1988); many parents viewed 'grammar, geography, history and all that kind of thing' as superfluous perhaps without realising that certainly history and geography were two of the main vehicles for cementing patriotic pride.

## CHAPTER 3 - ATHLETICISM

### 'Games were at least concrete, explicable, alive, fun'

In Edwardian public schools, many austere factors combine to form images of forbidding institutional sombreness. But while examples of bleakness abound, more upbeat activities provided agreeable boyish recreation and acted as diversions from the severe environment and tedious classroom experiences. As Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy suggests: 'a major reason for the success of games ... was the appalling boredom of the classics. Compared to them, games were at least concrete, explicable, alive, fun'.<sup>1</sup>

Fun, however, was a secondary objective: team sports were judged indispensable for developing character.<sup>2</sup> Competitive participation in activities requiring teamwork and skill was deemed to implant the behaviour patterns demanded by the gentlemanly society most pupils had been born into or, by parental proxy, would aspire towards. Although some thought them trivial, sports were believed key to embedding manly values. Also games inspired confidence and the leadership skills necessary for career success.<sup>3</sup> Character-forming public schools, as W. D. Rubinstein suggested, provided:

an educational mechanism for training the governing and managerial personnel for the most productive and fastest-growing part of the economy as well as for ensuring British dominance overseas.<sup>4</sup>

Most schoolboys, even iconic fictional ones, relished games teamwork. Here, Tom Brown deliberates with his games master:

'The discipline and reliance on one another which it teaches is so valuable, I think,' went on the master, 'it ought to be such an unselfish game. It merges the individual in the eleven; he doesn't play that he may win, but that his side may.'

'That's very true.' said Tom, 'and that's why football and cricket are so much better than any others where the object is to come in first or to win for oneself.'<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon, 597-1977* (London, 1977), p.149.

<sup>2</sup> A brief but pertinent summary of the 'athleticism' abstraction can be found at Malcolm Brown, *1914: the men who went to war* (London, 2004), p.117; a more comprehensive history can be found within 'Part 1: The Growth of the Ideology' in J. A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge, 1981), pp.13-96.

<sup>3</sup> A. L. F. Smith M.A, Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, mounts a stalwart defence against charges of athletic triviality in 'Athletics', T. E. Page (ed.), *Public Schools from Within: a Collection of Essays on Public School Education, Written Chiefly by Schoolmasters* (London, 1906), p. 201-207.

<sup>4</sup> For an incisive summary of aspirational 'business' gentlemen vis-à-vis the nobility, see H. Taine, 'Gentlemen as an Exclusive Social Class', (1872), translated E. Hyams (1957) in W. L. Guttsman (ed.), *The English Ruling Class*, (London, 1969), pp. 36-39. Also, see the comment and argued response within W. D. Rubinstein, 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Industry, 1820-1914', *Past & Present*, 132 (1991), pp. 150-170, and M.J. Daunton 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Industry 1820-1914: Reply', *Past & Present*, 132 (1991), pp. 170-187.

Much of the historiography that reviews pre-First World War society and education acknowledges the powerful influence of sports in public schools. Foremost among the genre is James Mangan who concentrates upon the games cult and analyses how sports were used to effect socialization, cultural modification and social control. Mangan's study of school magazine impact, poems and other textual elements surrounding athleticism is valuable.<sup>6</sup> And Gerard de Groot's studies of society highlight the way games were believed effective for priming privileged British youngsters for war.<sup>7</sup> And as his title implies, Peter Parker explores the educational preparation of officers for war and the dubious ways that games were used to promote war-based glory.<sup>8</sup>

This chapter evaluates how the sporting ethos was cultivated within second-tier establishments.<sup>9</sup> It takes a fresh approach to school magazines by exploring the character-based reportage (both negative and positive) in contrast to criticisms or commendations of sporting skills. Such articles affected boys' reputations as moral individuals rather than adept (or incompetent) sportsmen. And the extent to which games became linguistically analogised to war is examined: in letters from 'somewhere in France', action-based sporting metaphors and references are abundant. Finally, the degree to which the games ethic influenced front line behaviour is explored: in particular those instances when previous school-centred athleticism prompted reckless conduct – sometimes with grievous consequences.

Since it was popularly held that sportsmen were gentlemen, middle-class parents felt team games that furthered their son's social and commercial opportunities should be enthusiastically embraced.<sup>10</sup> The probability of securing respectable professional positions would be increased by character qualities groomed, in large

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (London, 1857), p.350.

<sup>6</sup> See especially Mangan, *Athleticism*.

<sup>7</sup> Gerard de Groot's principal work in this area is *Blighty: British Society in the era of the Great War* (Harlow, 1998) especially the first four chapters.

<sup>8</sup> Parker's title taken is from Wilfred Owen, 'Dulce et Decorum Est' in Jon Stallworthy (ed.), *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* (Oxford, 2003), p.188-9. The last lines of the poem read: 'My friend, you would not tell with such high zest / To children ardent for some desperate glory / The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est / Pro patria mori.' The 'friend' was the writer of jingoistic doggerel, Jessie Pope, whose verses encouraging volunteering were published in many newspapers during the early months of the First World War. Peter Parker, *The Old Lie: The Great War and the Public-School Ethos* (London, 1987), pp. 250-1. Not without controversy, *The Old Lie* attracted a waspish review by Mangan, one which centred upon omissions rather than content. J. A. Mangan, 'Review' in *The English Historical Review*, 105:415, (1990), pp. 526-7.

<sup>9</sup> That is: Bloxham, Dean Close, Whitgift, King Edward's - Bath, Blundell's College, Malvern College, Sutton Valence - as defined previously.

<sup>10</sup> W. J. Reader, *At Duty's Call: A Study in Obsolete Patriotism* (Manchester, 1988), pp.94-7.

part, by athletic endeavour.<sup>11</sup> Such convictions merit examination: to ascertain the character components included within the athleticism concept, to link these to the qualities desired by military recruiters, to examine the methods and effects of indoctrination and internal propaganda upon boys' games enthusiasm, to assess the impact of team sports upon subaltern performance.

There is an important, albeit melancholy, dimension to resulting insight. As noted, the games-based development of character was championed for the positive reason of exploiting the life opportunities available to privileged, educated boys. Yet in practice, the educational athletic dimension shaped attitudes, especially those concerning teamwork and self-sacrifice, so that many young men enthusiastically volunteered for service in 1914. Thousands died or suffered injury: an immensely negative outcome in tragic contrast to the advantages envisaged. This chapter seeks to enlarge comprehension of the divergence between intent and actuality.

#### **'Men who could conjugate Latin verbs and kick a ball into touch' - school sports**

The relating of school athleticism to wartime volunteering has two principal strands. Firstly, the influence that games were widely presumed to have upon character development is fundamental. Irrespective of academic ability, sporting participation and the attitudes exhibited were regarded, in schools and society, as contributory factors to the re-engineering of individual outlook and behaviour.<sup>12</sup> Character-building games effects were valued higher than intellectual competence. As T. L. Papillon, an extensively-published Latin scholar and schoolmaster, explained:

Many a lad who leaves an English Public School ... who has devoted a great part of his time and nearly all his thoughts to athletic sports, brings away with him something beyond all price: a manly straightforward character, a scorn for lying and meanness, habits of obedience and command, and fearless courage.<sup>13</sup>

That these views proliferated is endorsed by Tony Collins:

School rugby had a higher moral purpose: its goal was to train young men to be leaders of the Empire. .... In the eyes of many it had long been seen as a more than adequate form of military training. ... Rugby union saw itself as vigorous, masculine, militaristic, and patriotic.<sup>14</sup>

The second factor was the specific military relevance of sports. Beyond the character attributes considered necessary for professional or Empire success, the British army insisted upon educational criteria within its junior officer intake. Even in

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<sup>11</sup> George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London, 2001), p.115. In respect of professional advancement, Orwell recalls from his own schooldays 'boys used to count the plum stones on their plates by chanting 'Army, Navy, Church, Medicine, Law''.

<sup>12</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.206.

<sup>13</sup> The Rev. T.L. Papillon, 'The Public Schools and Citizenship', in Page (ed.), *Public Schools from Within*, p.283.

<sup>14</sup> Tony Collins, 'English Rugby Union and the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 45:4 (2002), pp. 797-817.

1914, officer volunteers were required to have attended a recognised public school: grammar school applicants were summarily rejected.<sup>15</sup> This discrimination was based upon several suppositions: that leadership qualities originated as attributes of birth, that gentlemen were preferable to professionals, that honour transcended ability, that effective officers emanated from a quality education received at a prestigious institution. This last point merits definition: school prestige was based upon firstly, the priority (measurable by the quantity of Oxbridge places secured) allocated to classical education and secondly, the school's success in sporting competition against rival establishments. The character attributes of team games were thought sufficient to groom the leadership necessary for command and that working towards an Oxbridge degree confirmed mental adequacy. De Groot, noting the preference for games-inspired character over intellect, trenchantly observes:

Since 'good' public schools placed heaviest emphasis upon a classical education and athletic prowess, it could be said that Britain built her army from men who could conjugate Latin verbs and kick a ball into touch.<sup>16</sup>

#### **'Bravery in the face of scrums, humility under your captain' - games background**

It is important to understand the background to public school athleticism since its introduction addressed issues of curbing sin and exercising physical control, ahead of more positive objectives of character development. Thomas Arnold's priorities of 'Godliness and good learning' had been concerned with pupils' soul, intellect, and morality: chapel-centred schools meant that moral messages were imparted by preaching alone.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, schoolboys remained unacceptably unruly and itinerant so that mid-Victorian reforms aimed at widening horizons from constraining biblical-classic priorities towards more enthusiastic, energetic and socially-aware pursuits. The physicality of organised games would hopefully curb disorderly behaviour and escapist inclinations.<sup>18</sup>

The drift from chapel to playing-field was also targeted at eradicating sin by promoting manliness. But as Gathorne-Hardy suggests, personal manliness was 'an abstract, fairly complex concept, particularly for adolescents'.<sup>19</sup> Improvements in manliness and honour would be confirmed by boyish successes in fighting sin - specifically, the onanistic and homoerotic desires visited upon male juveniles in

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<sup>15</sup> R. C. Sherriff, 'The English Public Schools in the War', G. A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness* (London, 1968), pp.136-7.

<sup>16</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, pp.17-19.

<sup>17</sup> T. W. Bamford, 'Thomas Arnold and the Victorian Idea of a Public School', in Brian Simon and Ian Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin, 1975), pp.67-8.

<sup>18</sup> Ian Weinberg, *The English Public Schools* (New York, 1967), p.45; Colin Veitch, 'Play up! Play up! And Win the War!': Football, the Nation and the First World War, 1914-15', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 20:3 (1985), pp. 364-5.

<sup>19</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p.147.



monastic environments.<sup>20</sup> In his review of late-Victorian sexuality, Peter Cominos notes that:

a rector who had associations with three public schools wrote that in them 'all open or avowed practice of the vice of masturbation was sternly repressed' ... Respectable schools emphasized the expenditure of energy primarily through its concentration upon organized and compulsory sports and games.<sup>21</sup>

Monitoring individual achievement in striven-for purity struggles was problematic - veracity was difficult to authenticate. Prior to the panacea of sports, the success (or otherwise) of boys' campaigns against perceived sin, was held to be visually apparent: 'the effects of the struggle marking the face'. Two paranoid ideas became juxtaposed - the evangelistic educators' fixation upon masturbation as an ungodly act yoked to boyish terror of either discovery or groundless accusation, so that:

how much easier and more exciting to judge such things in the simple concrete world of games. Now character showed up in action: bravery in the face of scrums, humility under your captain.<sup>22</sup>

As games ethics overtook chapel-based character development, athletic ability also surpassed intellectual attainment. Sports were perceived as complementary to Christian teaching, so that muscular Christianity ideals became entrenched.

The army underwrote this emphasis upon sports: *Field Service Regulations*, the Edwardian officer's bible, declared 'success in war depends more on moral than physical qualities' - those qualities being best developed on playing fields rather than in classrooms.<sup>23</sup> And in 1904, Colonel George O'Callaghan-Westropp, a member of the Royal Commission on Militia and Volunteers, argued that:

situations may arise in a good cricket or football team requiring as quick a decision, perhaps a shade quicker, than a company commander with his line of skirmishers in the field.<sup>24</sup>

In 1908, as noted, post-Boer War pressures meant that curricula and games were extended by the new OTC so that infused character qualities would be augmented

<sup>20</sup> The diversion of energy away from 'immoral practices' is explored in Ilana R. Bet-El, *Conscripts: Lost Legions of the Great War* (Stroud, 1999), pp.187-8, and by Cominos (see footnote below).

<sup>21</sup> Peter Cominos, 'Late Victorian Sexual Respectability and the Social System', *International Review of Social History*, 8:1 (1963), pp. 18-48. More recently, Alan Hunt also writes that 'the most intensive focus of the quest for juvenile purity was directed at youthful masturbation; while this was tinged with concern about homosexuality, its major target was to establish the sexual self-control deemed essential for adult sexual self-restraint, and it was upper- and middle-class boys who were subjected to incessant moralisation and close surveillance' - presumably at public schools. Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation*, (Cambridge, 1999), p.100.

<sup>22</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p.147.

<sup>23</sup> Quote from *Field Service Regulations, Part 1 (Operations)*, (War Office, 1909, reprinted, with amendments, 1912), p.13.

<sup>24</sup> This startling comparative observation reveals much about contemporary perceptions of both games and battlefield leadership; cited by Geoffrey Best, ' Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in Simon and Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School*, p.142.

by military instruction. Over the eighty years before August 1914, the character focus of privileged education had shifted from evangelism to athleticism. Then, fortified by OTC-inspired militarism and the cult of team sports, supremely confident in their physical and cognitive ability to lead soldiers in battlefield campaigns, thousands of ex-public schoolboys volunteered as subalterns in Kitchener's Army.

### **Men of character come to the front - the promotion of character qualities**

The qualities theoretically entrenched by team games and their military relevance merit analysis. Through the language it was couched in, the aura of beneficial athleticism was proclaimed as the panacea to repair moral failings and realise perfection.<sup>25</sup> There was an all-inclusiveness surrounding the character-forming objectives games were intended to achieve, so that the moral scope for improvement embraced almost the entire spectrum of admirable personality traits. Most advantages were encompassed by one of seven broader categories: courage, leadership, commitment, conformity, teamwork, sacrifice, self-control. These goals, including subordinate derivatives, were acclaimed as advantages accruing from sporting participation and all coincided with manliness ideals.<sup>26</sup> 'Character' portrayals often embraced numerous secondary abstractions. For example, in the previously-cited 1907 speech, Sir Hugh Barnes told the assembled Malvern pupils:

the thing which counted more than anything else was character. By character he meant moral pluck, perseverance, earnestness, high principle, and the courage and ability to say 'no' to temptation, and the determination to get to the 'bottom' of whatever they undertook. Again and again they saw the man of mere ability go under, and fall back into the ruck, and men of character come to the front.<sup>27</sup>

Beyond occasional addresses, public school character concepts required a lexicon dedicated to reflecting the moral nuances underpinning individual games performance.<sup>28</sup> This vocabulary merits preliminary inspection. For example, within an 1899 edition of *The Decanian*, the season's accomplishments by individual members of the football first eleven were appraised. Positive comments included: 'showing good *judgment*', 'most *conscientious worker*', 'never *shirks work*', 'always *keen and very plucky*', and 'plenty of *dash and energy*'. Some inevitably attracted

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<sup>25</sup> Reader refers to this aura as 'the mythology and mysticism of the Victorian cult of team games', Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p.95.

<sup>26</sup> J. A. Mangan cites J. E. C. Welldon, the Headmaster of Harrow School and 'persistent propagandist' as being the foremost promoter of games as vehicles for moral training: J. A. Mangan, 'The Grit of our Forefathers', in John McKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1992), pp. 120-1.

<sup>27</sup> 'Speech Day Report', *The Malvernian*, July 1907, p.60. Note the 'ruck' reference to rugby.

<sup>28</sup> Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control* (London, 1971), p.119 The sociolinguist Bernstein writes that 'language is seen as the major process through which a culture is transmitted; the bearer of social genes' - a definition that is appropriate for the exclusive vocabulary used to describe sporting attainments and failures in public school publications and (presumably) oral exchanges. Bernstein cited in Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.181.

negative comments: 'apt to *slack* in practice', 'inclined to *lose heart*', 'might perhaps *use his head* more'. Although observations on playing skills were offered, it is clear that sporting talents were deemed secondary to those character elements which were laudably displayed - or reprehensibly concealed.<sup>29</sup>

Equivalences between sport and war service were suggested to pupils. In November 1914, younger Blundell's rugby-playing boys were manifestly frustrated at their age-related exclusion from hostilities. In *The Blundellian*, the headmaster endeavoured to dispel fears of forgoing military service, by stressing rugby's character values, insofar as:

until boys are ready to take part in the sterner game of war they can find nothing better than Rugby Football for developing the dash, pluck, and endurance which will subsequently be required on the battlefield.<sup>30</sup>

Dash, endurance and (especially) pluck, were typical aspirational character traits and it is revealing that warfare ('the sterner game'), was bracketed with the real game of rugby. An examination of school magazines, works of recollection, alumni letters and speech-day addresses exposes a glossary of games-inspired abstractions that tend towards moral banality. In his evaluation of wartime diction, Paul Fussell singles out *plucky* as being 'cheerfully brave' (in contrast to *staunch* equating to 'stolidly brave').<sup>31</sup> Pluckiness, perennially linked to sporting endeavour, was admired as an essential school quality and valued by the army. Would an influx of cheerfully brave subalterns have lifted the morale of many military units? Perhaps.<sup>32</sup>

Other sporting examples of opaque abstractions include loyalty, honour, discipline, responsibility, obedience, uprightness, duty, integrity, selflessness as well as dash and pluck - even character as a concept itself. Many boys must have been baffled

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<sup>29</sup> 'Characters of First XI', *The Decanian*, February 1899, p.149. Traits have been italicised. For a synopsis of how games reporting was generally received within schools see Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.89 and p.93.

<sup>30</sup> 'Football News', *The Blundellian*, November 1914. The boys' concerns probably arose as a result of the widespread 'it'll all be over by Christmas' thinking that was present during the first few weeks of the war. As Lois Bibbings notes: 'war fever gripped the popular imagination as people prepared to enjoy the spectacle and the glory, while some young men and boys worried that if, as expected, it would all be over by Christmas, they would miss out on all the fun'; Lois Bibbings, 'Images of Manliness: The Portrayal of Soldiers and Conscientious Objectors in the Great War' in *Social & Legal Studies*, 12:335, (2003), pp. 335-358.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford, 2000); in his analysis, he also notes that *gallant* equates to 'earnestly brave' p.21-2.

<sup>32</sup> *The Bloxhamist* between 1875 and 1915 uses 'pluck' (including its grammatical variations) 146 times in those 40 years yet the expression appears only 74 times in the following 94 years (1916-2009). Reasons for such decline might include feelings that the superficiality of sporting 'pluck' was incompatible with Bloxham's considerable First World War losses, so that the term became less appropriate - albeit this theory cannot be substantiated. 'Pluck' data extracted from the CD version of all editions of *The Bloxhamist* from 1875-2009.

by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire's meaning, on a Bloxham speech day, as he exhorted them to strive to attain improved values of 'character' without indicating his precise points: the condescending presumption that his youthful audience fully comprehended his meaning is itself remarkable:

he would impress upon them most strongly ... the advantage of '*character*'. It was of the utmost importance to every boy at school and also when he left school that he should have *character*. ... *Character* would carry them through many difficulties and trials. He would like to impress upon them that it was their duty, individually, to do something whilst at school to strengthen and improve their *characters*. They could do it in the playing fields and in the school-rooms equally well and he was sure that their friends and families and relations would only be too proud to feel that they had acquired at school a *character* [emphasis added].<sup>33</sup>

However, Fussell argues that, in the static Edwardian world, 'values appeared stable and ... the meanings of abstractions seemed permanent and reliable'. Citing *A Farewell to Arms*, he highlights how Hemingway's First World War hero, Tenente, rails against near-meaningless abstracts such as glory, honour and courage that emerged as inconsequential nonsense when positioned against the realities of combat. Fussell concludes that in 1914, nobody would have understood Tenente's objections.<sup>34</sup> Although the abstractions later seemed hollow against a background of brutality and wastage, that they were judged so fundamental before 1914, bestowed a significance that overcame any practical uselessness. After all, such moralistic platitudes helped to propel earnest young men into volunteering. Empty simplifications became fixed as public school character goals: despite the speech-makers' good intentions, the Blundell's and Bloxham addresses stand as examples.

How were these abstractions allegedly infused through competitive sports? Boys were consistently told that sports would develop and improve courage, leadership and self-control and that games would develop individual powers of sacrifice, endurance, manliness and loyalty. Moreover, a games context was said to facilitate the assessment of a boy's entire character. Indoctrination was key to such ingraining: as previously suggested, persuasive axioms formed the bulk of the belief approach to character-building. Just as sustained notions of British supremacy were achieved through classroom indoctrination, questioning the moral benefits of games was inconceivable.<sup>35</sup> Roger Scruton's criteria for indoctrination included: 'closing the mind to alternative viewpoints' and that 'conclusions are foregone'. The

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<sup>33</sup> 'Prize Day at All Saints' School', *The Bloxhamist*, October 1898, p.79.

<sup>34</sup> Fussell, *The Great War*, p.21 quotes from Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (New York, 1929), p.191.

<sup>35</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, pp. 55-6.

indoctrination of games benefits fitted precisely with those criteria.<sup>36</sup> And if pupil comprehension of virtuous abstractions was any more than vaguely realised, stirring promotion was often used in reinforcement. An example is the penultimate stanza of King Edward's school song (sung frequently and formally) as it blends: manliness, heroism, honour, sports and warfare.

We call our budding heroes  
To learn the game of life,  
In cricket's manly warfare  
And football's stirring strife,  
In every action honest,  
In every danger cool,  
Come win throughout the world, boys,  
Fresh laurels for the School.<sup>37</sup>

Other sources of sports-based character shaping were also significant. The generational demography meant that most older males in a young man's acquaintanceship (relatives, schoolmasters, games-coaches, university tutors, military recruiters, early employers, clerics etc.) would also have been conditioned to strive for identical character qualities through school games.<sup>38</sup> The circular nature of games tutelage was significant: Reader notes that during the 25 years before 1914, 'it was possible for a games-mad young man to move from [public] school to Oxford or Cambridge, gather fresh athletic laurels and possibly a degree, and then spend the rest of his life as a games-playing schoolmaster.'<sup>39</sup> And, in confirmation of the messages received at school or from elder males, most of the derring-do content in boys' elective reading (for example: *The Boys' Own Paper*, *The Boys' Friend*, *The Magnet* or George Henty stories), extolled manly self-control and sacrifice virtues, often within military or sporting contexts.<sup>40</sup> Sports, war and adventure were commonly juxtaposed within the same paper, war frequently being luridly predicted (see Appendix L). This March 1900 *Boys' Friend* front page pictures a horrifying pre-*entente cordiale* scene of Parliament Square under bombardment. The story is headlined: 'Bombardment of London. The French are at our doors' - Big

<sup>36</sup> Roger Scruton, Angela Ellis-Jones, and Dennis O'Keefe, *Education and Indoctrination* (London, 1985), p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> School song printed in *The Edwardian*, December, 1908.

<sup>38</sup> Senior relatives may well have attended the same school as their offspring: shared school values would thus have been totally understood. R. C. Sherriff notes that 'it was difficult for a man to get his sons into ... [public] schools unless his family had past associations with them.' Sherriff, 'The English Public Schools', in G. A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness*, pp. 139-140.

<sup>39</sup> Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p.91.

<sup>40</sup> John Springhall provides an excellent summary of influential juvenile literature citing G. A. Henty, R. M. Ballantyne, Charles Marryat, and H. Rider Haggard as being relevant to the promotion of character-building values. John Springhall, 'Building Character in the British Boy' in J.A. Mangan and J. Walvin (eds), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987), pp.62-5.

Ben collapses, horses and people panic. Yet in contrast, the comic's masthead displays accoutrements of team games: cricket, rugby, football - together with images of schoolboys enjoying their sporting recreation.<sup>41</sup>

**'The very clever man who is weak bodily is so apt to become decadent' - the military relevance of games.**

Several games-inspired qualities were relevant for officer recruits in 1914. Physical vigour was considered essential so that previous sporting participation implied acceptable fitness. Sports requiring aerobic effort and stamina were also deemed appropriate to the intense exertion of battlefield officering.<sup>42</sup> However fitness objectives did not arise exclusively from positive health optimisation needs: as shown, Boer War failures resulted in degeneration fears and deliberations on progressive racial impurity.<sup>43</sup> Public school efforts at improving physical condition through games should be viewed within a 'national decay' context. Concerns about degeneration were certainly prominent: as young speakers during a 1903 Bloxham debate on 'England's decline' observed:

He was forced to admit there was much physical deterioration

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Our physical decay was due to life in manufacturing towns and to the vices which follow in the train of modern civilization

\*

There is a marked decay in the intellectual efficiency of the nation ...even in sport, which has always been thought to be an Englishman's great sphere, we were being beaten by Americans and Australians.<sup>44</sup>

Public school sports were considered to be defying the *zeitgeist* of national deterioration.<sup>45</sup> Representing wealthier class youthfulness, most public schoolboys were healthier than working-class contemporaries due to better environmental, dietary, healthcare and exercise situations and approaches. Typically five inches

<sup>41</sup> Adam Riches et al, *When the Comics went to War* (Edinburgh, 2009), p.65.

<sup>42</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.195.

<sup>43</sup> For an insightful historical examination of degeneration as a pessimistic phenomenon in Britain, see Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c1848-c1918* (Cambridge, 1996). From a contemporary (published in 1914) pre-First World War British socialist viewpoint – albeit diluted by the editing of the poet, Jessie Pope - see Robert Tressell, *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists* (London, 2004), p.597: 'a nation of ignorant, unintelligent, half-starved, broken-spirited degenerates cannot hope to lead humanity in its never-ceasing march onward to the conquest of the future'.

<sup>44</sup> 'The Debating Society' (motion: England is on the decline and hastening to its fall), *The Bloxhamist*, July 1903, pp. 43-4.

<sup>45</sup> Joy Schaverein writes that 'rugby is a team sport, in which the fittest and strongest excel whilst the weakest flounder and are denigrated' and Mangan notes that the games system 'was fully in accord with the Darwinian apothegm 'the survival of the fittest' - a fact that most adults viewed as 'necessary and laudable': Joy Schaverein, 'Boarding school: the trauma of the 'privileged' child', *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 49 (2004), p.694, and Mangan, *Athleticism*, p. 135.

taller, they were free of the industrial diseases and nutritional illnesses that beset working-class children.<sup>46</sup>

For public schoolboys, health was promoted from moral perspectives: through *mens sana in corpore sano* maxims, wellbeing was judged essential to uprightness. As has been noted, the Blundell's headmaster advised the boys in 1914 that rugby football fostered 'dash, pluck and endurance': however, any ill-health that prevented top-flight performance attracted little sympathy. Again at Blundell's, the magazine reported that H. W. Littleton-Grach 'had a very disappointing season owing to indifferent health, he hardly showed his best form, and has not played at all this term'.<sup>47</sup> Alec Waugh recalled that games generated: 'the production of a clear, clean mind ... the very clever man who is weak bodily is so apt to become decadent'.<sup>48</sup> Games associated with the white Empire, (cricket, rugby, football) were regarded as particularly wholesome.<sup>49</sup> Pick notes that, while some games might have been exclusively English in origin, exercise-based programmes to combat youthful degeneration were attempted by several European nations.<sup>50</sup>

Pain resistance was also important: attitudes to experiencing sports-induced injury were deemed vital to character formation. Even in school fiction, as Collins records, there was an increasing tendency:

for the sporting hero to be a 'rugger' player and for the violence inherent in the game to be presented in a cathartic, character-forming way.<sup>51</sup>

Withstanding pain was thought key to manliness and courage was only evident within games carrying risks of injury. Golf and tennis were scorned as soft: smooth cricket pitches were discouraged since unevenness of bounce caused more

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<sup>46</sup> Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, p.14. He also notes that a pre-First World War survey of Cambridge undergraduates (almost exclusively ex-public schoolboys) revealed 70 per cent attained a Grade 1 physical fitness level; this contrasted with the figure for the *entire* male population of whom just 34 per cent were in the same category. Poor diet and disease within the industrial working-class was said to be the reason; in 1904 medical authorities recorded that half of school children suffered from rickets. And see Roderick Floud et al, *Height Health and History: Nutritional Status in the United Kingdom, 1750-1980* (Cambridge, 1990).

<sup>47</sup>'Football News', *The Blundellian*, November 1914; 'Characters of First XV'. *The Blundellian*, April, 1914.

<sup>48</sup> Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, p.156.

<sup>49</sup> In (for example), works by Newbolt; see Fussell, *The Great War*, pp.25-6, for thoughts on *homo newboltiensis*.

<sup>50</sup> Pick, *Degeneration*, pp.12-14. And Geoffrey Best ironically discredited the elitist thinking that presumed better standards of English fitness over European rivals: 'there seems little evidence to suggest that French and German officers got out of breath quicker than the British - somehow or other they must have attained physical fitness without having played rugger.' Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School', in Simon and Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School*, p.141.

<sup>51</sup> Collins, 'English Rugby Union', p.798.

wounds.<sup>52</sup> Some injuries were serious: in 1894, *The Bloxhamist* reported a footballing incident, the account making an interesting moral accident observation:

Our sub-Captain was unfortunate enough to meet with an untimely accident in breaking his leg and dislocating his ankle. ... It is gratifying to think that this was a pure accident and was not caused by rough play.<sup>53</sup>

Physical courage and the ability to endure battlefield trauma were qualities valued by the military. But whether a previous inclination to risk (and shrug off) the kicked shin, the dislocated finger, the grazed knee, the ball-shaped black eye was of genuine First World War value, is uncertain.

**'Why should we worship him? Merely because he can kick a rotten football' - sports and military leadership**

A key value, prized by parents, employers and the military centred upon leadership. Games advocates felt if boys learned to make, and implement, meaningful playing-field decisions, man-management expertise and strategic decision-making, would ensue. Richard Giulianotti confirms that:

the statement ... that 'The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton' came to epitomise the dominant assumption in British imperial ideology, namely that sporting practices can contribute massively to masculine military pedagogy. The idea reached its zenith before and during the First World War.<sup>54</sup>

For several years before 1914, regular officer recruits originally stemmed from public schools. Keith Simpson notes that an officer's status was 'characterised by social and financial exclusiveness' with leadership talents assumed through breeding, school education and military academy attendance.<sup>55</sup> But the urgency of 1914 rendered this approach impractical: officers needed to be recruited and trained rapidly. Many were enlisted directly from public schools on the assumption that leadership fundamentals had been absorbed through organised games and OTC

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<sup>52</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.187. Hard uneven pitches could indeed be dangerous; it was reported that 'owing to the hard state of the ground, cricket is somewhat uncomfortable at Bloxham. F. W. Grane, while batting, was hit in the mouth by a cricket ball which loosened a tooth and severely cut his lips.': 'School News', *The Bloxhamist*, August 1897. See the Newbolt poem 'Vitaī Lampada' discussed herein: 'a bumping pitch and a blinding light'.

<sup>53</sup> 'School News', *The Bloxhamist*, November 1894, p.97. Many injuries were suffered by boys during team sports - most were minor yet severe enough to merit withdrawal from the match. Injuries were afflicted on all parts of the body, but mostly affected ankles, knees, fingers, thumbs.

<sup>54</sup> Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong, 'Sport, the Military and Peacemaking: history and possibilities' in *Third World Quarterly*, per <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ctwq20> [accessed 2 August 2011].

<sup>55</sup> See Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in I. F. W. Beckett and K. Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms: A social study of the British army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985), pp.64-8 for an incisive overview of the officer class prior to 1914.



instruction. Eligibility for accelerated subaltern training together with fast-tracked on-the-job involvement followed.<sup>56</sup> However, Sherriff observes that:

generals naturally assumed that under their experienced leadership the public schools' boys would mature into officers of the old traditional type and lead their men into victory in the old traditional way ... But these young men never turned into officers of the old traditional type ... they became leaders in a totally different way.<sup>57</sup>

'Leadership' was a wide-ranging term encompassing imprecise subsidiary values: quick-thinking initiative, group command, decisiveness or authoritative discipline enforcement.<sup>58</sup> A talent for speedy, effective reaction to changing situations is always valuable, and the practising of such ability through sporting captaincy could prove militarily useful. But true leadership talents, the motivation, discipline and deployment of subordinates in challenging circumstances, could only be exercised by few within school communities. Clearly, such skills might accrue to team captains, but would be patently unavailable to every member. The notion that creative leadership skills were absorbed by each games-playing boy is flawed.<sup>59</sup>

Conspicuous competitive sporting performance resulted in players being applauded through the award of colours. Each magazine edition would typically announce the bestowing of an individual's cricket or football colours as news items - often such accolades would follow notable performances in an important match. Bloxham cricket colours included a special blazer, silk cravat, knitted silk tie, hat-band, knitted scarf and sweater.<sup>60</sup> The internal publicity and the displaying of colours brought heightened recipient respect. Correlli Barnett notes that military and school-sporting disciplines both used uniforms and medals/colours as inducements that reflected effort, success, promotion, authority, hierarchy and esteem.<sup>61</sup> In an institutional community, where games were vital to the culture, suitably festooned senior boys

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<sup>56</sup> See Norman Vance, 'The Ideal of Manliness', in Simon and Bradley, *The Victorian Public School*, pp.127-8; Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.34.

<sup>57</sup> Sherriff, 'The English Public Schools', in *Promise of Greatness*, pp. 139-140. A poignant exemplary account of endurance and courage in practice is given in an account from 'the Front' in the Spring term edition of the Sutton Valence school magazine. The report details, a British bayonet charge in the face of German machine-gun fire and the terrible consequences. The action described was probably the second Battle of Ypres. R. E. B. Denny, 'With O.S. at the Front', *Sutton Valence School Magazine*, April 1915, pp.63-4.

<sup>58</sup> Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 19 and 224 Simkins cites Lt-Colonel A. J. Richardson's view that equates military leadership with the 'character and determination needed to ensure discipline' - an outlook that seems to eschew values of initiative.

<sup>59</sup> Even those non-captaining sportsmen appointed (additionally) as prefects would gain very limited leadership experience from an initiative perspective. The Assistant Master of Eton College, notes that direct leadership experience can only be gained by a few at Edwardian public schools for logical reasons. Rev. C. A. Alington M.A., 'Social Life', in T. E. Page (ed.), *Public Schools from Within: A Collection of Essays on Public School Education, Written Chiefly by Schoolmasters* (London, 1906), pp. 154-161.

<sup>60</sup> 'School Colours', *The Bloxhamist*, July 1922.

<sup>61</sup> Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (New York, 1972), p.35.

who consistently exhibited sporting prowess became venerated as heroes embodying all that was admirable.<sup>62</sup> Some non-sporting boys were nonetheless cynical: as Alec Waugh's hero, Gordon Carruthers, complained,

A man with his footer cap is idealised and worshipped. He may be an utter rake; probably is, most likely he has no brains at all. .... Why should we worship him? Merely because he can kick a rotten football down a rotten field.<sup>63</sup>

The aforementioned much-mourned Dean Close scholar, Roland Brooke, killed in South Africa in 1900, clearly attracted hero-worship as a result of his sporting and leadership skills: 'he had been Senior Prefect (Head of School) for three years ... and was highly thought of - a good cricketer and also twice Victor Ludorum'.<sup>64</sup>

Since the 1830s, the daily running of schools had mostly been devolved to prefects, albeit Arnold's prefects were drawn from pious, scholarly pupils. Sixty years on, competent sportsmen were frequently promoted to prefects ahead of their academically-successful peers.<sup>65</sup> As Parker notes:

How much easier to have a ruling body composed of those already respected. ... Once headmasters had decided to make their sportsmen community leaders they began to believe that this was an almost democratic gesture of electing those most admired.<sup>66</sup>

Although promotion emanated from games-inspired reputation, leadership skills did not naturally ensue: providing authority to boys did not necessarily inspire supervisory proficiency.<sup>67</sup> Nor did it confer the moral mindset or practical talent required for leading wartime troops. As Wilkinson suggests, school isolation 'gave the student [prefect] little chance to see how men lived beyond his tiny world'.<sup>68</sup>

Boys lacking captaincy experience were assumed to absorb the rudiments of leadership by observation. However, for army recruiters, junior officers *par excellence* comprised those who were former sporting captains and prefects since, beyond games-inspired character, attitudinal aspects of prefectship overlapped with model subaltern approaches. These included: obedience to superiors, familiarity

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<sup>62</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.84.

<sup>63</sup> Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, p.156.

<sup>64</sup> Rev. Charles Whitney, *At Close Quarters: Dean Close School, 1884-2009* (Hereford, 2009), p.34.

<sup>65</sup> Lucinda Watkins, 'Ideals of Masculinity: a study of two public schools, Cheltenham College and Dean Close Memorial School, 1816-1914', (unpublished dissertation, York University, 2007), p.23. R. B. Westmacott writing of his personal 'fagmaster', notes that this individual was 'head boy and captain of football and cricket, so naturally he was superman and tin god combined to us kids' - evidence that athletic prowess was a major route towards gaining authority, within school at least. R. B. Westmacott, 'Some notes on Sutton Valence School', (unpublished diary and memoir), 1908-11, p. 51.

<sup>66</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.81.

<sup>67</sup> See Rupert Wilkinson, *The Prefects: British Leadership and the Public School Tradition* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 20-2, for a description of the typical authority levels devolved to prefects.

<sup>68</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, p.71.

with exercising authority, enforcement of discipline and rules, partiality for visible status through uniform and colours/decorations, securing respect as a consequence of office, confidence and swagger derived from positional power.<sup>69</sup>

**'Success in cricket or football, are the very qualities which win the day in peace and war' - the relevance of athleticism to war**

Several historians submit that sports represented war by other means. Wilkinson suggests: 'schoolboy energies were ... channelled into institutional wars of the playing field', de Groot writes of 'turning the spirit of the playing field into a dangerous martial obsession'.<sup>70</sup> Norman Vance ascribes the equivalence to the deformation of manliness ideals during the pre-war years: 'public school manliness passed from moral earnestness into vigorous games mania, and finally a recruiting campaign'.<sup>71</sup>

Simpler ideas arose within schools: during an 1898 Dean Close debate discussing the motion - 'arbitration is preferable to war in the settlement of international disputes', one advocate recommended 'differences between schools are settled by matches, so international disputes should be settled by war'. Others claimed 'war brings out human powers which are latent in peace, and it clears the air' and 'England's Empire has been won on the field of battle'. However, supporters of the motion advocated non-violence; the pro-arbitration proposer prophetically remarked:

It is the height of brutality that vast armies should be slain when peace is open. War has lost the glory it once had. Men can be killed by hundreds at the pressing of a button.

The horrors of later artillery bombardment in Flanders would substantiate this view. Nonetheless, the motion was defeated (7 for, 37 against). Dean Close boys backed war and some seemed swayed by sporting analogies.<sup>72</sup>

Connections between sports and warfare are overstated by traditionalist historians sympathetic to public school approaches to sport, and patriotic character-building.<sup>73</sup>

A few analogise youthful games-based competitiveness with the bellicosity and resolution of war. For example Gathorne-Hardy suggests:

<sup>69</sup> Barnett, *The Collapse*, pp.34-5.

<sup>70</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, p.21; de Groot, *Blighty*, p.2.

<sup>71</sup> Norman Vance, 'The Ideal of Manliness', in Simon and Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School*, p.134.

<sup>72</sup> 'Debating Society Minutes: 26 February 1898', *The Decanian*, April 1898. The Dean Close boys' jingoistic views may have been influenced by widely-reported rivalries within the 'scramble for Africa' - and events in the Sudan whereby, in early 1898, the war against Mahdist rebels (Dervishes) had intensified.

<sup>73</sup> For example, see John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*; Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*.

principally [games] are canalised aggression. ... games trained mind, character and body for anything. It trained you for war - or at least the straightforward notion that a lad who'd had a good rugger training was well on the way to commanding troops.<sup>74</sup>

And compare his (1977) points with an 1895 speech by Harrow head, J. E. C. Weldon. The similarity is conspicuous:

The pluck, the energy, the perseverance, the good temper, the self-control, the discipline, the cooperation, the *esprit de corps*, which merit success in cricket or football, are the very qualities which win the day in peace and war. ... In the history of the Empire it is written that England has owed her sovereignty to her sports.<sup>75</sup>

The crediting of military successes to public school games strays towards the combat-inspired origins of individual sports. Lewis-Stempel (quite plausibly) notes that javelin, archery and boxing were 'obvious in their bloody origins' and may have had 'a past purpose in training a man for war'. Moreover, the less militaristic team games - football, rugby, cricket - are commended for progressing 'the subtle arts and senses of deployment, spatial awareness, momentum'. At first, such fragile observations seem not entirely extravagant, yet when, within a First World War context, such skills become extrapolated to being 'as useful on the warfield as on the rugger and soccer pitch', credibility collapses. Lewis-Stempel even assigns bellicose relevance to cricket, asking rhetorically: 'what is a bat but a shield?'.<sup>76</sup>

Retrospective claims of correspondence between team games and practical officering in the First World War are sterile. Ensuing comparisons destabilise the stated purpose of sports: to develop the character qualities deemed beneficial to young officers or servants of Empire. As illuminated by the quoted speech-day addresses and school songs, boys were constantly reminded of the character dimension to sporting activities and the connectedness of those acquired virtues to various post-school occupations - within which military careers were prominent. As the psychologist, Joy Schaverein records:

The sons of the moneyed classes were sent away to perpetuate the establishment and its values through careers in the army, the law, medicine, the church and the making of money. ... the rugby field is the training ground.<sup>77</sup>

#### **'Sacrificing personal glory for the glory of the team' - teamwork and the military**

Teamwork was an important sports-induced military benefit: productive inter-dependent relationships with individuals united in competitive effort was thought vital. Joanna Bourke notes that games fostered male bonding, and she highlights

<sup>74</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p.147.

<sup>75</sup> J. E. C. Weldon, 'The Imperial Purpose of Education', *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 26:839 (1894-5), quoted in John M. MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1986), p.121.

<sup>76</sup> John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks: the Short and Gallant Life of the British Officer in the First World War* (London, 2010), p.17.

<sup>77</sup> Schaverein, 'Boarding school: the trauma', p.694.

the need, within institutions driven by discipline, for the purposeful stimulation of small group attachments. Public school athleticism, with its emphasis upon team spirit (tantamount to bonding), cemented *esprit de corps* values capable of transfer to adult occupations: especially, those military roles reliant upon communication, discipline and collaboration.<sup>78</sup>

Competitive games certainly encouraged team and school allegiances together with the comradeship feelings necessary for later service.<sup>79</sup> Throughout school documentation that reflected competitive sports (match reports, performance assessments, chapel addresses, letters home), teamwork was an overarching concept cited as essential to success. The reverse was also true: defeats were often attributed to poor cohesion, inadequate communication and inferior collaborative tactics. This extract from the *Bloxhamist*, wherein bungled teamwork (or combination), was thought central to a footballing defeat, is typical:

The line want more cohesion before they can be effective. The three inside forwards at present have a tendency to bunch together in the centre, muddling one another, and allowing the opposing centre half to look after them all without unduly exerting himself. Besides combination, more dash is needed.<sup>80</sup>

But sound combination attracted praise as this extract from a victory report shows:

When the whistle blew for time, we remained victors by 2 goals to 1. It was a most pleasant and well-contested game throughout, and our team showed a most unusually high standard of combination.<sup>81</sup>

Individual sports (boxing, running, fencing, shooting), attracted far less magazine coverage than team games.<sup>82</sup> Although boys usually competed collectively, activities were conducted as personal contests with minimal interaction between teammates - collective significance being limited to aggregating individual scores. Most schools socialized new boys through compulsory football or cricket participation in matches between discrete groups (houses or dormitories).

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<sup>78</sup> Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996), p.137.

<sup>79</sup> Occasionally, overstatement might distort First World War accounts of the engendering of loyalty by public schools. This results in statements that might ooze romantic hyperbole. Lewis-Stempel writes that 'so intense was the loyalty of an Edwardian public schoolboy that, as a soldier, his school could be uppermost in his thoughts when death waited on the horizon.' Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks*, p.17.

<sup>80</sup> 'Match Report against Abingdon School', *The Bloxhamist*, , October, 1913.

<sup>81</sup> 'The School v Deddington F.C.', *The Bloxhamist*, March, 1905.

<sup>82</sup> For example, a report on a 1912 shooting match between Bloxham School and the local Banbury rifle club received very terse coverage in comparison to football or cricket contests – even though the shooting team comprised eight individuals: 'The School versus Banbury Rifle Club. The Corps' first shooting match was held on October 5th, 1912, and resulted in a defeat by 52 points. Conditions—1st Practice—Range 200 yards, Bisley targets and scoring, sighter and five rounds. 2nd Practice—Range 500 yards. Targets—Banbury, figure target; Bloxham, bull's eye target, 18 in. bull. Bisley scoring. Rifles as issued [followed by individuals' scores]'; 'Shooting Match', *The Bloxhamist*, November, 1912.

Obligatory games meant that new participants became involved in unifying teamwork.<sup>83</sup> Aside from the rapid integration of new pupils, a supportive team spirit produced shared feelings in victory or defeat, and provided a shelter whereby individual failings might be mitigated or camouflaged.<sup>84</sup>

It was believed that collective involvement contributed to manly character formation as well as strengthening loyalty. As evidenced by the Bloxham reports, magazines were eager to disparage or praise teamwork competence: the situational dynamics of groups was thought to be vital as were individuals' contributions towards team success. It was important to embed these concepts permanently so that subordinate combination skills, as exhibited by individual players, were also assessed critically: these included self-sacrifice, communication, and commitment to shared effort. These were often commended or deplored in periodic character profiles. Some 1914 reports on Blundell's individual cricket-team players relate to subsidiary teamwork values, for example: 'his concealment of any personal fatigue on long days have been of great value' could be seen as commending the boy's self-sacrifice; 'as acting-captain might have shown more roughness of tongue on occasions' implies that communication and leadership skills were lacking; 'with patience and industry might develop into a more certain performer' would suggest that greater effort was needed - all in the interests of the team.<sup>85</sup>

Public school teamwork values were patently of value to the military: any educational endeavour that improved how youngsters cooperated within competitive groups had applicability to officer performance. Such team thinking is supported by Western Front correspondence. For example, an extract from a letter by Thomas Dyson to an erstwhile teammate, recalls their shared football experiences and the bonds that persisted:

What a game war is! There are more thrills in one second than at a dozen footer matches but we still keep jogging on, very happy and jolly for the most part. Truly life's pathway is strange yet intensely interesting even in its uncertainty, or, perhaps I should say because of it.<sup>86</sup>

And from a military perspective, the more instinctive the loyalty, the better. House or school loyalties had been established intuitively - irrespective of group merit.<sup>87</sup> This concept was germane to how subalterns considered men within their command since a capacity for visceral fidelity could be readily transplanted to military units -

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<sup>83</sup> Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p.87.

<sup>84</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *Public School Phenomenon*, p.150.

<sup>85</sup> 'Characters of XI', *The Blundellian*, July 1914, p.117.

<sup>86</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 0724, Thomas Dyson (rank unknown), letter to Gnr. Henry W. Harwood (Royal Garrison Artillery) dated 12 July 1915.

<sup>87</sup> De Groot, *Blighty*, p.35.

upwards to regiments or battalions, but equally downwards to the platoons within a junior officer's command.<sup>88</sup> An example of how a young First World War officer, Lt. H. A. Collins, established reciprocal loyalty within his platoon, is evidenced in a letter home. Collins asks for 'underwear for his men because some are awfully poor and only have what they stand up in': a poignant display of allegiance to men who had perhaps enlisted as a refuge from poverty.<sup>89</sup>

Alongside openly promoted teamwork values, others were advanced less explicitly. Brian Stoddart highlights the less overt values of obedience, conformity and rules:

by playing team sports, participants were thought to learn ... the value of obeying constituted authority, respect for the rules, conformity within the conventions.<sup>90</sup>

And Correlli Barnett suggests that army interest in school games centred upon establishing common military approaches:

The [school] playing-field had become what the parade ground is to an army - a powerful instrument for inculcating common responses, common values and outlook. Games were now formal and compulsory rituals, governed by fixed and complicated rules.<sup>91</sup>

A need for consistency throughout the military made sound logistical sense. Officer single-mindedness, typically introduced and reinforced by school sports, helped to ensure unity of attitude, purpose and response. The outlook that had unified players in complex rule-based sporting ventures, were analogous to the collaborative needs of later subaltern service.

Yet commonality and conformity goals challenge explicit school aims of fostering initiative and individualism. This anomaly was deprecated by Dr. Jane Harrison, who wrote of public school athleticism:

teamwork and self-sacrifice produced a herd instinct which stifles creative thought and critical enquiry. The warriors of 1914 were driven by a thirst for primary sensations; they sought to drown their individual consciousness in collective militancy.<sup>92</sup>

Prosaic abilities to conform or show commonality, were never promoted as character-forming in prospectuses so that the idea of teamwork ethics stifling individuality becomes intriguing if herd instincts indeed inspired ex-public school volunteering. Yet as bi-products of a teamwork ethos, herd values might well have encouraged some limited enlistment as privates through (for example), the

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<sup>88</sup> Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p.91.

<sup>89</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 0342, Lt. H. A. Collins, letter to his mother dated 13 November 1914.

<sup>90</sup> Brian Stoddart, 'Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 30:4 (1988), p.653.

<sup>91</sup> Barnett, *The Collapse*, pp.34-35.

<sup>92</sup> Jane Harrison, *Alpha and Omega* (London, 1915), p.227.

formation of the Public Schools' Brigade during the early war months.<sup>93</sup> As Richard Aldington suggests, games-inspired pressures to conform had crude nationalist dimensions as boys:

accepted and obeyed every English middle-class prejudice and taboo. What the English middle-classes thought and did was right, and what anybody else thought and did was wrong.<sup>94</sup>

**'Mind and character were being more effectively developed on the playing field' - games propaganda**

Harrison also wrote of public school 'obsession' with sports.<sup>95</sup> And De Groot describes the exclusive precedence devolved to exercise obsession:

If there was an obsession, it was in the way building character was linked to physical exercise, to the exclusion of other stimuli.<sup>96</sup>

'The learning of ideology, beliefs and approved behaviours' was one of Singer's coercive conditions necessary to effect thought reform.<sup>97</sup> Pursuant to that idea, Springhall suggests games obsession was inflamed by magazine propaganda:

The public schools had produced in most of their pupils an obsession with football or cricket which was indoctrinated by school magazine worship of athletic prowess.<sup>98</sup>

These references to obsession merit questioning: to what extent did sports so dominate public school life and how was that achieved?

Magazine circulation was almost entirely internal to the school community - staff, pupils, parents, governors, sporting competitors, alumni, benefactors - clearly, managers felt that extensive sports exposure portrayed schools favourably. Springhall's point is valid: propagandising school magazines indeed ensured the supremacy of competitive sports. Oliver Thomson defines propaganda as 'the use of communication skills ... to achieve attitudinal or behavioural changes among one group of people by another' and he notes that, in contrast to adults, indoctrinating youngsters requires less effort and that embedded dogmas are harder to erase. To exemplify his point, Thomson cites the practice whereby the reporting of games was

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<sup>93</sup> Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army: the Raising of the New Armies, 1914-1916* (Manchester, 2007), pp.224-5. In the early stages of the war, some boys indeed enlisted as privates in Public Schools' Brigades in order to serve alongside their pals. Far more, however, chose to take a commission in one of the many battalions desperate for new officer material. For example, in the 1915 role of service records for Bloxham School, only five (all privates) of the 196 boys listed as serving in the army had joined a Public Schools' Brigade. The great majority of the remainder were junior officers covering a range of battalions. 'Roll of Service', *Supplement to the Bloxhamist*, December, 1915.

<sup>94</sup> Richard Aldington, *Death of a Hero* cited in Brian MacArthur (ed.), *For King and Country: Voices from the First World War* (London, 2008), p.67.

<sup>95</sup> Harrison, *Alpha and Omega*, p.227.

<sup>96</sup> de Groot, *Blighty*, p.33.

<sup>97</sup> Singer, *Cults*, pp.63-69.

<sup>98</sup> Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p.119.



used as an attitudinal change instrument that also had the effect of propelling boys towards the military.<sup>99</sup>

Correlli Barnett, noting how games-inspired attitudes fitted with ideal officer characteristics, cites magazines as prioritising such factors in match reports - often ignoring talents:

This was why the emphasis on the games reports in school magazines ... was not on skill, intelligence and initiative, but on 'pluck' - or 'playing up!' ... vigour ... fiery dash ... good temper ... perseverance.<sup>100</sup>

As with the Dean Close lexical examples cited previously, magazine comments praised or maligned players' character and typically embraced quasi-militaristic standards: effort, courage, stamina, consistency, speed. In a single edition of *The Blundellian*, for example, positive ratings of rugby players include: 'most energetic and vigorous', 'never shirks', 'hard-working forward', 'very useful', 'fearless', 'gets through a great amount of work', 'fast and neat', 'a distinct success', 'has a lot of dash'. However negative comments contain: 'very disappointing', 'erratic', 'rather deficient in pace', 'rather variable', 'ought to be more useful than he is', 'weak in defence', 'a slow starter'.<sup>101</sup>

Similar profiles appeared in all schools' magazines, the ethical conduct of players were critiqued in reviews that peers and juniors could react to with prowess-inspired hero worship or failure-provoked indifference. Reputations, shaped by such outlines, would determine school fraternity standing. Implications were significant: peer respect, prefectorial promotion, the award of colours as tokens of excellence - or disinterest and disapproval towards those characterised as failures.<sup>102</sup> Frequently, even individual match reports focused entirely upon performance and the character traits exhibited by home side players and would avoid mention of events in the game - an indicator of how character significance outweighed competence. A lengthy 1913 report of a Bloxham football match serves as an example:

The first match was played at Abingdon, on Wednesday, October 8th. We did better than we usually do against Abingdon, losing by the only goal of the match.

The first half mainly consisted in Bonnewell repelling the attacks of our opponents. He was fortunately equal to the occasion, and made many brilliant saves. On the few occasions on which our forwards did break away, we might have scored a couple of goals if Riddle had had a left foot. At half-time there was no score. In the second half, with the team somewhat rearranged, we had rather more of the play

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<sup>99</sup> Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: a History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999), pp. 4-5 and 81. As well as English public schools, Thomson also cites the Hitler youth movement as instances of youth attitudes moulded through propaganda.

<sup>100</sup> Barnett, *The Collapse*, p.35.

<sup>101</sup> 'Characters of 1<sup>st</sup> XV', *The Blundellian*, April 1914, p.87.

<sup>102</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, p.71.

than before, although even now Bonnewell was tested far more often than the Abingdon goal-keeper. Abingdon scored once, and so we were narrowly defeated. The one player who really distinguished himself on our side was Bonnewell. He was both sound and brilliant, and a goal-keeper of only average ability would certainly have given away at least six goals. The backs were very unsafe. Higgs improved somewhat in the second-half, but Smith, handicapped by the slippery ground, gave a terrible display, often clean missing his kick, and seldom being able to stop his opponents. The halves were very fair, with Metcalfe the best. He got through a lot of work, and was quicker than anyone else in the team. Wilmot played a quite useful game in the first half, but was obviously fagged later in the game. The forwards were disjointed and painfully ineffective. Rowland worked hard and gave his half considerable help, which is more than can be said for some of the others. He was slow, however, and his centres were weak. Cain was not very effective; he was inclined to dally with the ball instead of going straight through, did not give the halves any assistance, and seemed rather to shirk collision with opponents. Belfield was fair in the centre, but was unable to keep the line together. Compton-Hall was very slow in getting off the mark, and gave little help to his half, but did one or two quite good things. Woolliams was also very slow, and though he got in some centres, they were nearly always too close to the goal-keeper to be effective.

Team :- Bonnewell; P. Higgs; Smith; Metcalfe; Belfield; Wilmot; Rowland, Riddle, Cain, Woolliams, W. C. Hall.<sup>103</sup>

From the Bloxham team, six are reprimanded, four are given grudging praise - only the goalkeeper (Bonnewell) is commended. The report fails to record the match's progress - its entirety is dedicated to evaluations, mostly negative, of home players' (in)competence and attitude. The language involves degrees of censure that stretch beyond the simplicity of a competitive football match: such negative coverage might have been deemed character-building, but the resulting discomfiture would surely have proved discouraging. A textual examination of words describing Cain's contribution (for example) is informative since both his personality and skill were impugned. Expressions such as 'not very effective', 'dally with the ball', 'did not ... give any assistance', 'seemed ... to shirk collision' are euphemisms for 'incompetent', 'indecisive', 'uncooperative', 'cowardly'.<sup>104</sup> Since magazine reports reflected the preconceptions of the school fraternity, such targeted reproach would be recognized by the readership as challenging a boy's manliness. The sociologist, Basil Bernstein, writes:

Forms of spoken language in the process of their learning initiate, generalize and reinforce special types of relationship with the environment and thus create for the individual particular forms of significance.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup> 'Match Report - vs Abingdon School', *The Bloxhamist*, October 1913.

<sup>104</sup> Understatement and the usage of implicit negative constructions ('not very effective') were rhetorical devices customary within the linguistics of Edwardian privileged classes. For example, consider the use of conversational litotes in an iconic Edwardian novel; when Irene Forsyte, reputed to have conducted an adulterous affair years earlier, is being discussed: 'Aunt Juley interjected resolutely: 'She - she didn't behave at all well.'', John Galsworthy, *The Forsyte Saga: In Chancery*, first published 1906, (London, 2001), p.542.

<sup>105</sup> Bernstein, *Class*, p.76.

The abundant magazine-based performance and character coverage would have reference implications for later employment. Since games-playing dominated the development of character attributes considered important to military (and other) recruiters, then any paperwork highlighting strengths (especially courage, commitment, teamwork and leadership) could influence eventual acceptance. But few publicized profiles were of functional military importance *per se*: how essential was it that 'Roberts [was] - a patient and useful bat ... very keen all round ... readily undertook the thankless task of keeping wicket'?<sup>106</sup> Yet the derived inferred qualities from such an outline (patience, commitment, sacrifice) represented constituents within a spectrum of shared beliefs reflected throughout the school system and senior recruiting echelons. Such qualities were valued in perpetuity: games-inspired character virtues were significant because an entire (older) stratum of influential class believed in their desirability and consequence.

**'We always come to school to play, we seldom think of work'**

School magazines also embedded games ethics by publishing pupils' poetry - a medium sociolinguists determine as ideal for echoing shared culture experiences and shaping collective views of reality.<sup>107</sup> Mangan suggests the importance of games verses centred around providing 'assertions, paeans and exhortations' for the propagation of games ideology - the resulting doggerel forming 'a communal symbolism which maintained a belief system'.<sup>108</sup> While 'news' coverage proclaimed the games ethos through match reports and performance critiques, pupil verses (though subjected to staff moderation) reflected boys' opinions. These frequently applauded sporting activity in contrast to disparagement for the classroom. In: 'Our School', the anonymous Bloxham poet exhibits his academic priorities:

We always come to School to play  
We seldom think of work,  
If only we amuse ourselves  
We don't mind what we shirk.  
  
Now it really is important  
To play cricket very well,  
If you wish to be in Parliament  
Or e'en a country swell.

Although light-hearted, this indicates how cricket was viewed as more deserving of pupil effort than academic work - unsurprising perhaps, given the ascendancy of

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<sup>106</sup> 'Cricket Characters', *The Bloxhamist*, July 1911, p.58.

<sup>107</sup> Dell Hymes, 'Models of the interaction of language and social life', in J. Gumperez and D. Hymes (eds), *Directions in Sociolinguistics* (New York, 1972), p.65.

<sup>108</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.180.

games. The aspirational closing lines are noteworthy: cricketing skills were seen as an entrée into parliament, rural society and (presumably) prestigious careers.<sup>109</sup>

For some more intellectual boys, games were an anathema to be avoided. Contemporary commentators equated sporting apathy and bookish tendencies with national vulnerability. W. Turley, a contributor to the Oxford University magazine, *The Dark Blue*, worried that 'a nation of effeminate, enfeebled bookworms scarcely forms the most effective bulwark of a nation's liberties'.<sup>110</sup> Some poems attacked boys who prioritised learning. For example, the closing lines to 'The Swotter' concluded:

He swotted all night, he swotted all day,  
Till he swotted his silly old brains away.  
I won't say it's right, and I won't say it's not,  
But the fellows said, 'Good job, too! dirty swot.'<sup>111</sup>

Although written as caricature, in highlighting the contempt many boys had for book-focused contemporaries, the forecast outcome of illness arising from excessive study reflects the *zeitgeist* in respect of intellectualism versus sports - sentiments consistent with military views.<sup>112</sup> De Groot summarises pre-war military disdain for study thus:

Educators held that it was not necessary to exercise the mind with challenging intellectual problems if mind and character were being more effectively developed on the playing field. The army agreed.<sup>113</sup>

While the allure of outdoor physicality and competitiveness made school games generally popular, why those who favoured curricular subjects attracted indifference and hostility is less clear. But such tendencies often continued into adulthood: for example, it was traditionally felt that army officers needed to possess versatility and qualities of mind ahead of specialist knowledge - thus rationalising the downgrading of academic learning in favour of sports-engendered character quality.<sup>114</sup> This idea is confirmed in Thomas Seccombe's preface to *The Loom of Youth* whereby, following Sherborne, the young Waugh had studied as a Sandhurst cadet in 1916. Writing of the pre-war public school ethos that Waugh had exposed in his controversial work, Seccombe observed:

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<sup>109</sup> 'Our School', *The Bloxhamist*, November 1903.

<sup>110</sup> W. Turley, 'Modern Athleticism' in, *The Dark Blue*, IV, (1872-3), p.297 cited by Margarita Diaz-Andreu, 'Introduction' in Margarita Diaz-Andreu, Sam Lucy et al, *The Archaeology of Identity: Approaches to Gender, Age, Status, Ethnicity and Religion* (Oxford, 2005), p.12.

<sup>111</sup> 'The Swotter', *The Bloxhamist*, December 1909.

<sup>112</sup> A spirit of anti-intellectualism persisted in the army even after the First World War: 'it is not necessary, nor is it wholly desirable, that all, or even the majority, of regimental officers should be intellectuals': *The Report of the Committee on the Education and Training of Officers, Parliamentary Papers* (1924), Vol. VII (Para. 6).

<sup>113</sup> de Groot, *Blighly*, p.33.

<sup>114</sup> B. H. Liddell Hart, *The War in Outline* (London, 1936), Preface, xii.

You may drudge [work hard] at games - that is the theory - that is commendable; but to drudge at the acquisition of knowledge is pitiable, and not to be endured. ... It has fairly helped, you may say, to get us out of the mess of August 1914. Yes, but it contributed heavily to get us into it!<sup>115</sup>

As Seccombe incisively observes, 'not to be endured': in an institutionalised context, the implications for non-sporting boys who directed their energy into the academic curriculum, arts or non-physical recreations, could prove dire. As exemplified by 'The Swotter', many magazine poems condemned studious boys who eschewed games. Surprisingly, contempt was also offered by staff, as evidenced by the anti-intellectual invective in this extract by Edward Oakeley, a Clifton College housemaster, as he writes of:

those precious tender plants, the boys of precocious intellect, who ... used to be seen on half-holidays walking round and round the school-close, arm-in-arm, discussing their mutual confidences whilst the games went on.<sup>116</sup>

Moral judgments abound in this extract: games avoidance in favour of intellectual activity is vilified and subjected to homoerotic interpretation - thus challenging manly ideals. As Alisdare Hickson suggests, athleticism was deemed a remedy to suppress homoeroticism, considered depraved throughout monastic schools. Attachments judged unnatural would be curbed, since, if a boy 'learned to survive the bedlam of the rugby scrum, it would (in theory) be no greater hardship to learn to live without a bosom friend'.<sup>117</sup>

Intimidation of non-sportsmen was commonplace. Most bullies were also sporting 'hearties' who embodied the manliness ethos - the same youngsters who would be enthusiastically sought as subalterns by military recruiters.<sup>118</sup> The First World War artist and RAMC battlefield orderly, C. R. W. Nevinson, writes of the abuse he received as a result of his abhorrence of games, in favour of art, during his 1904-7 Uppingham schooldays:

<sup>115</sup> Thomas Seccombe, 'Preface' (1917) to Alec Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*, (London, 1917), p.12.

<sup>116</sup> E. M. Oakeley, 'Clifton College' in H. C. Maxwell Lyte et al, *Great Public Schools* (London, 1893), p.211.

<sup>117</sup> Alisdare Hickson, *The Poisoned Bowl: Sex, Repression and the Public School System* (London, 1995), p.37. This work give a comprehensive overview of the universality of homoerotic affiliations and practices within most boys' public boarding schools during the late Victorian and Edwardian eras and the (often ineffective) attempts of staff to suppress them and punish 'offenders'. In respect of staff suppression, Hickson's conclusions are at variance with the prior views of Vern and Bonnie Bullough who determined that 'English public schools ... tolerated ... the development of strong homoerotic friendships between students.' However they agree that 'most of the English upper-class males who attended these schools accepted such homoerotic attachment as not only natural but desirable'. Vern Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, 'Homosexuality In Nineteenth Century English Public Schools', *International Review of Modern Sociology*, 9:2 (1979), pp. 261-269.

<sup>118</sup> The ex-Blundell's pupil, mentioned in the previous chapter is a good example of bullying arising from a failure to participate in sports, see West, *The Diary of a Dead Officer*, pp. ix-xiv.

I was able to escape grim afternoons of chasing a ball by going to a studio to paint and draw. ... It is now the fashion to exclude the 'hearties' from accusations of sexual interest or sadism or masochism; but in my day it was they, the athletes, and above all the cricketers, who were allowed these traditional privileges. Boys were bullied, coerced, and tortured for their diversion.<sup>119</sup>

Nevinson's victimisation was not untypical. George Orwell directly attributed bullying to issues of physical size, distorted senses of moral worth and the sportsman's elevated standing within the school hierarchy:

The lovers of football are large, boisterous, nobbly boys who are good at knocking down and trampling on slightly smaller boys. That was the pattern of school life - a continuous triumph of the strong over the weak.<sup>120</sup>

As Mangan suggests, institutionalised Darwinism, an approach that cultivated physical and psychological stamina in preparation for imperial duty and military conquest, constantly conflicted with notions of Christian civility. Malformed Darwinism became 'misinterpreted as the survival of the most belligerent rather than the most adaptable'.<sup>121</sup> Thus boys, even if not overtly coaxed by staff, were expected to intimidate heretics who repudiated athleticism. The implied justification for persecution was twofold: assertive, antagonistic, manly behaviour formed part of the developmental process for the bully and the sportsman – likewise, if shown by hapless victims, stoicism and courage in adversity indicated 'character'.<sup>122</sup>

Ironically, games were commended for lessening school bullying problems rather than aggravating them. Clement Dukes, the Rugby School physician, after noting that bullying was rife in 1906, referred to:

the benign influence of well-organised games, which afford the means of letting off, in a healthy and harmless fashion, the superfluous energy devoted of old to harmful ends [bullying].<sup>123</sup>

This observation seems dubious. Games had become an obsession to the point of forming the essence of daily education and in most schools, games involvement

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<sup>119</sup> C. R. W. Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, (New York, 1938), pp.12-13. Nevinson, the artist who created the picture 'Paths of Glory' clearly abhorred everything about his public school experience writing: 'I had no wish to go to any such school at all, but nevertheless Uppingham did seem to be the best. Since then I have often wondered what the worst was like. No qualms of mine gave me an inkling of the horrors I was to undergo. Bad feeding, adolescence always a dangerous period for the male and the brutality and bestiality in the dormitories made life a hell on earth. An apathy settled on me. I withered. I learned nothing; I did nothing. I was kicked, hounded, caned, flogged, hairbrushed, morning, noon, and night. The more I suffered, the less I cared. The longer I stayed, the harder I grew'. Cited in Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge (eds), *Letters from a Lost Generation* (London, 2008), p.3

<sup>120</sup> George Orwell, 'Such, such were the joys', in *George Orwell: Essays* (London, 1994), p.443.

<sup>121</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism*, p.136.

<sup>122</sup> An example of such thinking can be seen in Ch. 1 of Bk. 2, in Waugh, *The Loom of Youth*.

<sup>123</sup> Dr Clement Dukes, 'Health', in T. E. Page (ed.), *The Public Schools from Within*, p.181. Note that this publication (in 1906) coincided almost exactly with Nevinson's experiences at Uppingham.

was compulsory for all pupils. This was evidenced by the growing coverage of sports in all examined magazines of the period. For example, a quantitative study of 'sports and military' text within *The Decanian*, records that these topics represented 45 per cent of content in 1893 rising to 76 per cent in 1911, an increase only partially explained by the 1909 advent of the OTC.<sup>124</sup> Examination of other schools' 1911 magazines results in similar ratios, for example, the July 1911 edition of *The Bloxhamist* devoted 61.2 % of its column inches to sporting topics.

As Gathorne-Hardy writes, 'by 1900-1914, public schools, as far as the majority of their pupils were concerned, had really ceased to be academic institutions'. He also quotes another Rugby schoolmaster, J. H. Simpson, writing in 1900:

People think of the public schools, when they think of them at all, as being primarily places where boys learn to play games ... the popular impression is broadly true.<sup>125</sup>

Dukes' suggestion that the benefit of games lay in their ability to redistribute energy otherwise expended on bullying, seems little more than a clichéd platitude. Athletic heretics (like Nevinson or Orwell), were vulnerable to bullying by *sportsmen* because they lacked games enthusiasm and evaded participation when possible. Outnumbered, often alone, with no coherent protection systems and no appeal mechanisms, it must have been a dismal (and unforgettable) time.

**'It was happiness to walk the streets in our new uniforms, and to take the salutes of the Tommies': uniforms and foolhardiness; chutzpah and immaturity**

To what extent were games-inspired moral abstractions beneficial or obstructive in a highly-mechanised conflict and how was volunteering positively affected? Richard Aldington characterizes a typical, sporting, ex-public schoolboy who volunteered as a subaltern:

he was honest, he was kindly, he was conscientious, he could obey orders and command obedience in others, he took pains to look after his men. He could be implicitly relied upon to lead a hopeless attack and to maintain a desperate defence to the very end. There were thousands and tens of thousands like him.<sup>126</sup>

However, some unfortunate incidents were provoked by reckless acts resulting from a games culture that, alone, had encouraged dash and self-sacrifice within an institutional environment that, in other respects, tended towards suppressing pupils

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<sup>124</sup> Lucinda Watkins, 'Ideals of Masculinity: a study of two public schools, Cheltenham College and Dean Close Memorial School, 1816-1914', (unpublished dissertation, York University, 2007), p.19. She also notes that 'corporeal' coverage in the *Decanian* between 1904-11, the formative years for many young wartime officers, averaged at 70 per cent per annum. This contrasts with equivalent coverage during 1892-9 of an average of 53 per cent.

<sup>125</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p.151.

<sup>126</sup> Richard Aldington, *Death of a Hero* (London, 1929), p.24.

as individuals.<sup>127</sup> Although subalterns were required to lead by example, disproportionate dependence upon manliness qualities meant that:

there was a heavy price to pay ... young officers often made themselves too conspicuous. They committed foolhardy acts of courage which frequently got them killed and jeopardized the lives of their men.<sup>128</sup>

Sports-based qualities, when summarised simply as: obedience, leadership, loyalty, courage, teamwork, endurance and reliability were highly valued by the military as elements within the make-up of new subalterns. However, there were three recurrent difficulties meriting exploration: firstly, foolhardiness provoked by tradition, vanity and the team-games ethos; secondly, the effects of deliberately retarded adulthood development whereby emphasis was laid upon physical and character development ahead of practicality; finally, the concept of sacrificial glorious death. These drawbacks were all, partially, rooted in the cult of athleticism.

Understandably, a new young officer felt a need for acceptance by his peers and superiors. Conventions, initiated through school gentlemanliness traditions, were afterwards paralleled in pre-war officers' messes. For example, for the enlightenment of later novices, an alumnus, B. Lobbs, described dining rituals to *The Bloxhamist*:

The merry hum of conversation goes briskly on, and touches every topic, save one, which may be dismissed by the comprehensive term 'shop' only to be interrupted ... by the President's ' Mr. Vice - the Queen ' Immediately every voice is hushed, and the Vice-President rises and gives ' Gentlemen - the Queen.' All rise immediately, whilst the band outside takes the inflection and plays the first few bars of the National Anthem, and the toast is drunk. It is all over in a second or two. The echo of the last notes dies away, and once more the room becomes a babel of chatter.<sup>129</sup>

Overcoming such etiquette trials, which were not dissimilar to the rituals encountered as formalities when first attending school, must have been challenging for many new officers. And in several ways, the emphasis upon ritualised traditions would echo the attention given to the complex rules and protocols surrounding the playing of school team games: sacrosanct, unchanging and risking humiliation for thoughtless contravention. Ever conscious of the cliché, 'an officer and a gentleman', how a young subaltern felt he was seen to be behaving would, for many, dominate his daily routine - to the extent that his more serious priorities of focusing upon practical soldiering and leadership became destabilised.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> See Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.37 for a summary of public school 'uniformity and tradition' in an officer enlistment context.

<sup>128</sup> Bourne, *Britain and the Great War*, p.221.

<sup>129</sup> B. Lobbs, 'Sketches from Camp and Quarters' in *The Bloxhamist*, June 1896, p.57.

<sup>130</sup> See Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite*, pp.44-59 for typical admission challenges upon newly arriving at a public school; for examples of darker ritualised behaviour see the unpublished memoir by Ernest Hambloch recollecting his Edwardian days (c.1904) at Sutton



Beyond blinkered conventionality, an examination of subaltern bravado reveals that uniform issues were significant. These can be attributed to traditional class-awareness and the exercising of newly-derived authority as well as youthful sartorial vanity. The need for novice officers to acquire visible ascendancy became satisfied through uniform: a degree of tailored elegance and regalia which, together with speech and behaviour styles, starkly (and deliberately) contrasted with other ranks under their command. Costume differences emphasised a new officer as a gentleman and an embryonic military leader.<sup>131</sup>

Visible emphasis upon manliness was important: Joanna Bourke notes that officer recruits were conscious of how uniforms accentuated masculine appearance. A well-designed headdress made them appear taller, trouser-stripes gave illusions of length to stocky legs, epaulettes exaggerated shoulder width. Many volunteers chose regiments according to the uniform judged most flattering for their body shape and size.<sup>132</sup> And, as recent OTC members and team sportsmen, subalterns would be accustomed to both military uniforms and the wearing of awarded colours. They were conscious of the requirement to look smart in front of juniors, commanders and peers. Ernest Raymond captured the juvenile class-ascendancy and triumph of newly-uniformed eighteen-year old officers:

I longed to go home on leave, so that in company with my mother I could walk through the world saluted at every twenty paces, and thus she should see me in all my glory. When one day I strolled with her past a sentry who brought his sword flashing to the salute, I felt I had seldom experienced anything so satisfying.<sup>133</sup>

However, the flaunting of uniforms in battlefield situations would have serious repercussions. Keith Simpson notes:

officers' uniform and dress during the First World War symbolised the struggle between class identification, sartorial elegance and fashion ... with the functional requirements of soldiering. In 1914 the British officer had gone to war in a uniform that was impractical for active service, with rank badges conspicuously displayed on the cuff, and wearing a sword. (See Fig.8)<sup>134</sup>

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Valence School. To become a 'full' member of a dormitory, the unfortunate newcomer was subjected to some extreme physical abuse involving nakedness, lighted candles and wet towels used as weapons; Ernest Hambloch, 'Memories of Sutton Valence School', unpublished typescript memoir, (c.1969), pp. 14-5.

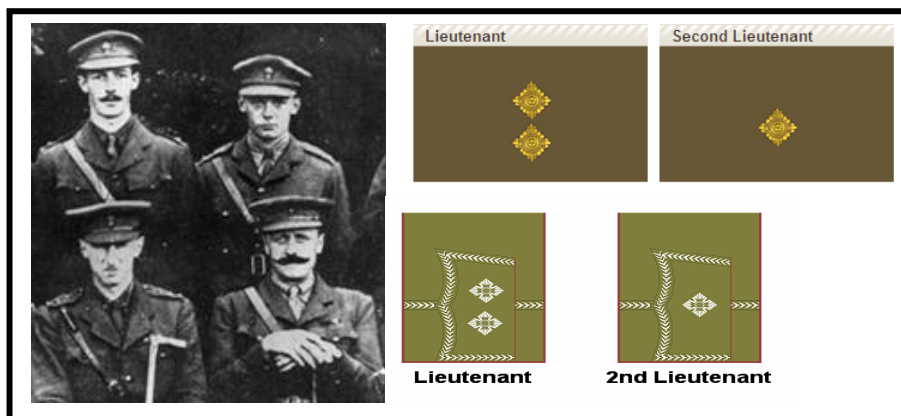
<sup>131</sup> J. G. Fuller writes that: 'the most notable thing about officers from the public schools, ... was their youth: mere schoolboys were sent straight from England, without any war experience to take charge of as hard-bitten and experienced a crowd of old sweats as one could imagine.'; J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.54.

<sup>132</sup> Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp.128-9.

<sup>133</sup> Ernest Raymond, *Tell England* (London, 1922, 40<sup>th</sup> ed. 1965), p.170. Raymond's point is well-depicted in an early-war Townsend *Punch* cartoon see Appendix M.

<sup>134</sup> Keith Simpson, 'The Officers', in Beckett and Simpson (eds), *A nation in arms*, p.84.

**Fig 8. First World War officers in uniform: rank signifiers on shoulders and cuffs.**



The deliberate wartime targeting of officers meant that conspicuous displays of distinguishing dress and insignia attracted enemy sniper fire.<sup>135</sup> Moreover, scoped rifles and quality binoculars made German efforts at identification and accuracy straightforward so that officer casualties soon became disproportionate compared with other ranks.<sup>136</sup> Nonetheless, some time would elapse before visible officer distinctiveness became discouraged: gradually, junior officers began wearing the same uniforms as other ranks. Rifles were carried instead of pistols and canes, rank badges were made less conspicuous, swords were discarded, Sam Browne belts were replaced, and the service dress hat was exchanged for the helmet.<sup>137</sup> But for some, games-inspired bravado and a desire to sport awarded 'colours' persisted as they disregarded:

the increased dangers and discomfort, [and] either failed to adapt their uniforms or adopted new articles of dress and equipment, such as brassards [armbands], walking sticks and burnished steel helmets.<sup>138</sup>

Such machismo (masquerading as manliness) continued to inflate officer casualty figures until the last months of the war. R. C. Sherriff, an infantry officer before being wounded in 1917, remembered vanity attire and its dreadful repercussions:

Distinctive tunics cut differently from the private soldier. When they led an attack, this made it easy for the Germans to pick them out and shoot them down before they turned their attention to the men.<sup>139</sup>

At first sight, connections between school games and imprudent battlefield displays of clothing and insignia might seem flimsy. Yet, for countless boys, war and sports

<sup>135</sup> Peter R. Senich, *The German Sniper, 1914-1945* (Colorado, 1982), p.18; also see Martin Pegler, *Sniper Rifles: From the 19th to the 21st Century* (Oxford, 2010), p. 31.

<sup>136</sup> During the first year of the war (1/10/1914-30/9/1915), 38.6% of officers were reported killed or wounded compared with 23.2% of other ranks per J. M. Winter, 'Britain's 'Lost generation' of the First World War', *Population Studies*, 31:3 (1977), table 7, p.458.

<sup>137</sup> Bourne, *Britain and the Great War*, p.222.

<sup>138</sup> Simpson, 'The Officers', p.84.

<sup>139</sup> Sherriff also points out that 'at the battle of the Somme thirty young officers went in with our battalion, and only four survived' per Sherriff, 'The English Public Schools in the War', in G.A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness*, p.154.

had always been easily conflated ideas. As previously noted in respect of Bloxham school, sporting achievements were visibly denoted by awards of colours (special clothing, badges).<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, promotion to school prefect, team captain or any authority position bestowing ascendancy over peers and juniors, was prized and striven for. Such outlooks would persist upon migration from sports field to battlefield milieus - so that a desire to exhibit the accoutrements of newly-gained rank remained strong. For many, a perception that parading officer insignia might prove perilous, seems either not to have been realised, or was ignored in a spirit of juvenile chutzpah - a tragic outcome that reflected the educationally-cultivated callowness of many novice officers.

The second drawback to sporting preoccupation concerns the retardation of adulthood. Such deliberate, school-inspired, extended immaturity merits examination in its own right since enforced ingenuousness had some serious effects. Consumed by embedded character ideals (for example: honour, duty and self-sacrifice), ex-pupils were ill-equipped to make enlistment decisions based upon a cogent evaluation of risks and their individual circumstances (unlike their more worldly-aware working-class contemporaries). And on the battlefield, many failed to apprehend the massive disparity between displaying games-related courage and leading troops in a spirit of battlefield valour.<sup>141</sup> This rendered some of their decisions foolhardy, and occasionally self-destructive and wasteful of other lives.

How did this happen? Although public schoolboys were cultivated bodily through team sports and behaviourally through institutionalised Evangelism, many classroom activities, as examined, centred upon imparting belief and supporting 'truths' through indoctrination techniques. For most boys, their powers to reason, analyse, challenge and create were developed only in limited ways - the formal weekly debate for self-assured seniors, perhaps, being a less than fully adequate example. The nurturing of interpretive skills seems not to have been prioritised. A physically fit, morally sound, confident boy (at least in masculine company), harbouring many prescribed values and beliefs, may indeed have emerged from the system. But a lack of trained analytical and interpretive skills, together with the unworldliness inherent throughout a sheltered, institutional system, retarded his adulthood.

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<sup>140</sup> 'School Colours', *The Bloxhamist*, July 1922.

<sup>141</sup> de Groot, *Blighy*, p.33; de Groot notes that boys were taught that skill cannot compensate for want of courage, energy and determination and that the main source for these values was found in competitive school games.

Few boys therefore left public school in the state of what might be described as 'an adult man' in comparison with working-class contemporaries. Most wage-earning boys might have been, at the age of nineteen (say), employed for at least five years, socially competent, a key contributor to family budgets and 'aware' in the sense of fulfilling domestic personal responsibilities and comprehending their individual situation in a rapidly-changing world. Some commentators linked maturity weaknesses with the public schools' obsession with team games. Mangan suggests that 'the chief weakness of the [athletic] system lay in the fact that it did not so much help as retard growth: it related prestige to physique rather than intellect'.<sup>142</sup> And David Newsome writes that: 'in its efforts to achieve manliness by stressing the cardinal importance of playing games, it [the public school system] fell into the opposite error of failing to make boys into men at all'.<sup>143</sup>

Many public schoolboys, having been imbued by the cult of athleticism to presume correspondence between games-based courage, sporting competence and moral worth, rushed to volunteer in 1914.<sup>144</sup> As implied by Newsome, they lacked the maturity to make rational volunteering choices. When such naiveté came to overlay the supremacist and militarist influences set by the classroom and OTC curricula, it meant that enlistment decisions were often founded upon misconception.<sup>145</sup> Four lines from a piece of appalling doggerel by an unknown author, presumably emanating from a public school background, epitomised the boyish fantasy of yoking sporting achievement to enthusiastic wartime service:

He'll play a game of rigger in the spirit all should have;  
He'll make a duck at cricket, and come smiling to the pav.,  
Now he's the man to look for, he's sturdy through and through;  
He'll come to call of country and he'll come the first man too.<sup>146</sup>

Postponing the onset of adulthood (and thus responsibility and prudence), also had serious implications for some young officers - and their men.<sup>147</sup> A notorious example

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<sup>142</sup> Mangan, *Athletics*, pp.186-7. Mangan also quotes the schoolmaster Stephen Foot, who had written of his experience in retrospect: 'slow growth is the best. I suggest ... that the period of boyhood pastimes [be] prolonged for as long as possible ... aping the man is a tendency which in a schoolboy should be sternly checked': S. Foot, *A Housemaster and his boys by one of them* (London, 1929), p.64.

<sup>143</sup> David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning* (London, 1961), p.238.

<sup>144</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, pp.80-1.

<sup>145</sup> Richard Aldington summed up such a simplistic public-school delusion: 'He had no doubts whatever about the War. What England did must be right, and England had declared war on Germany. Therefore Germany must be wrong': Aldington, *Death of a Hero*, p.24.

<sup>146</sup> 'The Man to Look For', (c.1910?) cited in J. A. Mangan, 'In Memoriam - John Bain, Elegist of Lost Boys and Lost Boyhood', *International Journal of the History Of Sport*, 28:3 (2011), pp.492-530.

<sup>147</sup> For example, note the immaturity underpinning the notable October 1914 letter from ex-Etonian Capt. Julian Grenfell DSO: 'I adore war. It is like a big picnic without the

of the darker effects of public school athleticism are revealed by Captain Wilfred Nevill's battlefield story, a classic instance of games-related arrested development and juvenile audacity. Nevill, aged twenty-one, served as a company commander with the East Surrey Regiment. Using four footballs, each inscribed 'Great European Cup-Final: East Surrey v. Bavarians. Kick off at zero hour', Nevill offered a prize to the first of his four platoons to dribble a ball 275 metres into the German trenches, due for attack on day one of the Battle of the Somme.<sup>148</sup> Some accounts record Nevill himself kicking off and being instantly killed by machine-gun fire.<sup>149</sup> One witness, Private Robert Cude, recorded that Nevill:

kicks [sic] off the football that is to take the boys across to Jerry. He is killed as his leg was uplifted after kicking the ball. Jerry's machine guns open a terrific fire on our chaps and the first wave is speedily decimated, men are racing to certain death.<sup>150</sup>

Another account records that, while Nevill was the organiser, he:

left the kicking of footballs to others, while he, in a manner adopted by many other officers that day, strolled with an air of nonchalant unconcern across No Man's Land, smoking and joking until he was fatally struck close to the German wire.<sup>151</sup>

Such is the fog of war. Whether Nevill personally kicked off is relatively immaterial although his reported exhibition of 'nonchalant unconcern', if true, reveals a mix of arrogance, boldness and misdirected leadership. Other rank casualties within Nevill's company were substantial, although numbers cannot be precisely attributed to his eccentric officering.<sup>152</sup> Most significantly, this episode shows Nevill as one of many young officers to whom war was analogous to competitive sporting contests. Viewed in this way, his gestures are illustrative of widespread naïvety and boyish enthusiasm for military glory. Such thinking reflected an attitude that the revisionist historian, George L. Mosse, has described as 'playing for one's school is much the same thing as fighting for the Empire'.<sup>153</sup> This interpretation was also evidenced by the lyrics of the Bloxham School song. The second verse mingles ideas of death in

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objectlessness of a picnic'; he died of wounds in May 1915. Brian MacArthur (ed.), 'Julian Grenfell', *For King and Country* (London, 2008), p.36.

<sup>148</sup> Richard Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front, 1914-18* (London, 2005), p.254.

<sup>149</sup> Neil Hanson, *The Unknown Soldier* (London, 2007), p.285.

<sup>150</sup> Diary of Private Robert Cude, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion East Kent Regiment, IWM Con Shelf, pp.36-8. Another observer, Private Price, recalled Nevill climbing the parapet beckoning others to follow: 'as he did so he kicked off a football ... the ball rose and travelled well towards the German line. That seemed to be the signal to advance.' Per Fussell, *The Great War*, p.27.

<sup>151</sup> Malcolm Brown, *The Book of the Somme* (London, 1996), p.86.

<sup>152</sup> Battalion OR casualties on 1 July 1916 totalled 140 killed, 272 wounded, 20 missing. Per the East Surrey's War Diary at <http://qrrarchive.websds.net/PDF/ESD0081916001.pdf> [acc. 16 August 2011]. It appears that two companies (B and C) participated in the attack so that the total force would have comprised approximately c.500 men.

<sup>153</sup> George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the memory of the World War* (NY, 1990), p.142.

battle, competitive cricket, war, army and navy service, love for Empire, unwavering optimism and school loyalty:

We too a roll of honour boast, we too can wield the willow  
And some our country's battles fight some face the restless billow  
Some bear to far Colonial shores a heart that nought can sever  
And still ascends and never ends their cry 'All Saints Forever'.<sup>154</sup>

The circumstances of the Nevill incident have been used by historians and sociologists to portray diverse attitudes and ideals: the conflation of war and sport, the unifying potential of football as a class-independent game, the heedless belittling of battlefield dangers, the corruption of leadership ideals, defiant English pluck, blind innocence and reprehensible naiveté.<sup>155</sup> All are representations that embrace some truth. However, although the athletic influence of his schooldays seems central to Nevill's action, aspects of his formative education have attracted less attention.

Nevill had left Dover College as head boy and cricket captain in 1913 and had commenced his Cambridge studies before volunteering.<sup>156</sup> Command of military subordinates would have felt familiar: when directing his company, the authority carried by his previous sporting and school captaincies would have made this easier. In his mind, Nevill had clearly bracketed warfare with competitive sport so that his insertion of footballs into a daunting battle scenario probably sought to position the sporting dimension as an inspirational allegory for the attack and hoped-for victory. His action was certainly premeditated: the footballs had been purchased and inscribed during a recent London leave.<sup>157</sup> As an sporting ex-captain, he would have appreciated the need for optimising the attitudes of men (his team) bent upon attacking a determined opponent. Nevill may have intended to use the footballs as distractions to maintain discipline, or to motivate and unify his men, or to reduce battlefield anxiety, or to focus other ranks upon his leadership: yet, the tragic outcome was numerically wasteful. Later, his action would be applauded as heroic in the British press and derided by the Germans as an English absurdity.<sup>158</sup>

Details in the East Surrey Regimental War Diary are not very helpful:

At 7.27 a.m. 'B' Company started to move out to their wire. Captain Nevill strolling quietly ahead of them, giving an occasional order to keep the dressing square on to

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<sup>154</sup> The Bloxham School song, 'All Saints Forever' (second verse), music by W. E. Thomas, lyrics by J. H. T. Goodwin (1893) per sheet music, Bloxham School Archive.

<sup>155</sup> Notably: Paul Parker, Colin Veitch, Paul Fussell, Neil Hanson, Richard Holmes and various IWM commentators.

<sup>156</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.169. Dover College was a second-tier English public school. Nevill was also a member of the school first teams for hockey, rugby and running.

<sup>157</sup> Veitch, 'Play up! Play up! And Win the War!', p. 363.

<sup>158</sup> Brown, *The Book of the Somme*, p.86.

the line of advance. This Company took four footballs out with them which they were seen to dribble forward into the smoke of our intense bombardment on the Hun front line. ... A very heavy rifle and machine gun fire started from our front and our left ... owing to reports of heavy casualties the CO sent ... for reinforcements.<sup>159</sup>

For many, Nevill's action can be dismissed as juvenile machismo consonant with the foolhardiness and immaturity described by Bourne and Newsome.<sup>160</sup> But repudiation of serious motive in favour of exaggerated manliness merits caution. In Captain Nevill's case, his action stemmed from public school indoctrination and a games system bent upon developing his manly character. And, in addition, Captain Wilfred Nevill was clearly an enthusiastic and charismatic soldier, perhaps also a natural, if novice, leader.

**Fig. 9 - Captain Nevill's war grave at Carnoy<sup>161</sup>**



Among young officers, Nevill was not alone in approaching the Somme attack with buoyancy - many elected to scorn the actuality of gunfire. One way of rationalising the dangers was for subalterns to use cheerful sporting and weather analogies to minimise the impact of machine-gun fire - to the point of belittlement and denial.<sup>162</sup> Even allowing for press exaggeration and the need to sanitise news for domestic consumption, one newspaper account exhibits this trend. A *Daily Mirror* report by W.

<sup>159</sup> East Surrey's War Diary, per <http://qrrarchive.websds.net/PDF/ESD0081916001.pdf> [accessed 16 August 2011].

<sup>160</sup> Bourne, *Britain and the Great War*, p.221; David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning* (London, 1961), p.238.

<sup>161</sup> The picture is of Capt. Nevill's grave at Carnoy; note the football and that Nevill had originally enlisted with the East Yorkshire Regiment, transferring to the East Surrey's shortly before this action; picture per <http://www.forumeerstewereldoorlog.nl/viewtopic.php?t=3231> [acc. 24 November 2011].

<sup>162</sup> The 1 July 1916 saw a record 57,470 British casualties (including 35,493 wounded, 19,240 killed) - mostly by machine gun fire. Brown, *The Book of the Somme*, p.92.

Beach Thomas, published five days after the battle, records an account given by a young subaltern. 'Machine guns were the feature of the day', he said:

and that's why such a huge proportion of our casualties are of the slightest and least serious sort. Look at me, a neat, clean hole through this forearm. In a week from now I'd fire a course of musketry for a wager. Yes it's mostly arms and legs and clean punctures.... The Hun machine-guns were their only salvation; but wasn't it marvellous the way our chaps laughed at that fire? I've seen them pay far more heed to a sharp shower of rain. ...They went to it as though it were a football scrum. And, begad, they came out the other side in the same spirit.<sup>163</sup>

### **'Fifteen fellows fighting-full, out for death or glory'**

'Death and glory' maxims were another consequence of athleticism. Educational attempts at rationalising and extolling death in war helped to promote volunteering and battlefield self-sacrifice. The propagation of 'principled battle-death' ideas, inspired in classrooms by jingoistic history and Homeric classics lessons, were explored in the previous chapter. Many schoolboys therefore emotionally identified with the basics of dying in the service of nationhood. However, mainly through athleticism, such learning became further romanticised: if suffering violent death was an inevitable warfare risk, then *glorious* battle-death was viewed as somehow desirable, admirable, beautiful. Such glory was held to result from self-sacrifice: an idea that bolstered the character values embedded by competitive games.

For many, of all classes, ideas of ennoblement and the glory accompanying any ultimate forfeiture became tangible when described in a widely-reproduced address by David Lloyd George in September 1914. In this oration, referring to the virtues that matter for a nation, he cited, using mountainous imagery:

the great peaks of honour we had forgotten, duty and patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the great pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven.<sup>164</sup>

The Chancellor's meaning was clear. This was the Horatian homily of '*dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*' refurbished in a convincing Evangelical way: put simply, volunteers who died in the service of nation would be fast-tracked to paradise. This concept of glory in death would be reflected throughout the war. In November 1916, for example, a further Beach Thomas report was published after a

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<sup>163</sup> 'Like a football scrum - you can't beat our fellows', *Daily Mirror*, 6 July 1916, p. 2, cols. 1-2. The German *Maschinengewehr* (Maxim) MG08 machine gun used throughout the war fired 8mm bullets at around 400 rounds per minute. The equating of such fire with a 'sharp shower of rain' is quite extraordinary. Robert Bruce, *Machine Guns of World War One* (London, 1997), pp. 12-30.

<sup>164</sup> David Lloyd George, speech in Queen's Hall London, 19 September 1914 per *The Times*, 20 September 1914. The full text of this address is attached as Appendix J and the volunteering impact of the Chancellor's important speech is closely examined in Chapter 4 herein.



visit to the Beaucourt battlefield.<sup>165</sup> Fatalities, of both sides, had yet to be removed however Thomas stressed British glorious superiority even in death. 'British soldiers' he wrote:

lie on the field of their fame, as they fell, for a day, it may be for several days. ... Even as he lies on the field the British infantryman looks more quietly faithful, more simply steadfast than others.<sup>166</sup>

Self-sacrifice exercises, insofar as the notion risked physical harm, were clearly unthinkable. As a desirable virtue however, personal sacrifice for the benefit of others was a persistent theme - the concept was a mainstay within the muscular Christianity spectrum of moral abstractions. Closely related to (but differing from) teamwork, self-sacrifice qualities, (often referenced as selflessness, self-denial, unselfishness, even generosity) were established through classics teaching, then practised and reinforced through games. Self-sacrifice from a sporting perspective meant the ceding of personal glory for the sake of the team by playing unselfishly - for example, passing the ball to a teammate better placed to scoring a goal or try.<sup>167</sup> In consequence, pupils' sporting sacrificial efforts were regularly praised or disparaged in magazine reports and character profiles.<sup>168</sup>

Collins suggests that 'the identification of games and military endeavour was at its closest during the First World War' following years of intense classroom and sporting indoctrination.<sup>169</sup> The overall message, at its extreme, was clear: any pupil making the ultimate wartime sacrifice would be held in high esteem. And, as if in confirmation, for the soon-to-be slain and their potential mourners, there was the comfort of Lloyd George's oratorical assurance of heaven. While pragmatists might argue that, in 1914, it was in the national interest for senior politicians to sanctify depictions of battlefield death, cynics might highlight a system that had been indoctrinating pupils with similar themes for years.

Contemporary narratives powerfully drove home glory messages. The most iconic piece of influential literature was the ubiquitous 'Vitaī Lampada' by Sir Henry Newbolt in 1897, and thereafter memorised by countless public schoolboys (see

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<sup>165</sup> The capture of Beaucourt-sur-l'Ancre, during the final phase of the Battle of the Somme, was conducted by the 63<sup>rd</sup> Division on 13 November 1916. Both sides experienced heavy casualties.

<sup>166</sup> W. Beach Thomas, 'With the British Army in the field', *Daily Mirror*, 22 November 1916, p.3, col.4.

<sup>167</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p. 150.

<sup>168</sup> At Bloxham, even the termly profiles of hockey players stressed a need for altruism: *Nicholl (Captain)*. - A keen and capable officer. Good dribbler, but rather selfish. Clever with both head and stick. *Whiting*. - A strong scoring forward, extremely effective in the circle. Picked up the game with remarkable rapidity. Passes accurately, and is very unselfish. 'Hockey Characters', *The Bloxhamist*, April 1910, p.22.

<sup>169</sup> Collins, 'English Rugby Union', p.797.

Appendix D).<sup>170</sup> This poem, hackneyed even by 1914, flagrantly equates the conduct of war with games - notably a tense cricket match played at Newbolt's *alma mater*, Clifton College.<sup>171</sup> Facing death, chaos and potential hopelessness, a young officer, recalling the stirring message of his school cricket captain, motivates his exhausted troops with the same words of sporting leadership. For Newbolt, English battles were fought by gentlemen: war was a civilised enterprise won by men who displayed a selfless commitment to nation, honour and playing 'by the rules'.<sup>172</sup> As Colin Veitch suggests, 'Vitaī Lampada' became 'the ultimate poetic expression of the ideological transfer held to take place between public school playing-field and the battlefield'.<sup>173</sup> Emotive doggerel certainly, but the historical significance of the work rests upon the acceptance of its moral messages by a readership already indoctrinated as to the moral equivalence of games and war. Perhaps thinking of the recent Boer War, C. A. Alington, Assistant Master of Eton school, confirmed, in 1906, that:

Mr. Newbolt has by one poem earned himself the position of schoolboy laureate, and no boy is too sophisticated to respond to the straightforward appeal of his Vitaī Lampada.<sup>174</sup>

Beyond reminding boys of the militaristic attributes of school sports, the 'appeal of his Vitaī Lampada' juxtaposed two pivotal ideas. The first centred upon the mythical power of sporting endeavour so that resulting ideals served as a code for conducting life thereafter. The second reinforced images of glorious death in battle whereby, if overwhelming opposition prevailed, ensuing decease would be sublime. In Edwardian public schools, these theories were omnipresent: for example, in the final verse of the Dulwich school football song, the do-or-die equation of sport and death in war is extolled:

Young or old this shall remain  
Still your favourite story:  
Fifteen fellows fighting-full,  
Out for death or glory.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>170</sup> See Fussell's superb evaluation of *homo newboltiensis* in Fussell, *The Great War*, p.26.

<sup>171</sup> Stallworthy (ed.), *The Oxford Book of War Poetry*, p.146. In reality, the poem's depicted action (the 1885 battle of Abu Klea in the Sudan campaign) was about as distant from the actuality of 1914-18 trench warfare as it is possible to get; the work would later be parodied and satirised by soldiers who had survived the First World War; J. O. Springhall, 'Up Guards and at them' in Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p.57.

<sup>172</sup> See also Newbolt's poem 'He fell among thieves' which combines a description of a heroic death with school athletic achievement. Stallworthy (ed.), *The Oxford Book of War Poetry*, pp.144-6.

<sup>173</sup> Veitch, 'Play up! Play up! And Win the War!', p. 366.

<sup>174</sup> Rev. C. A. Alington, 'Social Life', in T. E. Page (ed.), *Public Schools from Within*, p.160.

<sup>175</sup> Paul Jones, *War Letters Of A Public School Boy* (London, 1918), p.27. This song was performed at a concert solo, by the captain of Dulwich school football, H. P. M. Jones, on 14 December 1914. A Lieutenant in the Tank Corps, Jones was killed at Ypres in July 1917 by sniper fire. He was 21.

The 'sports as war' theme in adventure stories became popular among boys of all classes. When further supplemented by tales of glorious self-sacrifice, these works served as a powerful background to volunteering during the years before 1914.<sup>176</sup> A prominent extract from Horace Vachell's semi-autobiographical 1905 work, *The Hill*, exemplifies the ennoblement of youthful sacrificial death.<sup>177</sup> As the work closes, the headmaster of Harrow School eulogises an ex-pupil killed fighting in the Boer War:

To die young, clean, ardent; to die swiftly, in perfect health; to die saving others from death, or worse - disgrace - to die scaling heights; to die and to carry with you into the fuller, ampler life beyond, untainted hopes and aspirations, unembittered memories, all the freshness and gladness of May - is not that cause for joy rather than sorrow? I say - yes.<sup>178</sup>

Another, less strident, but non-fictional approach was exemplified by a Christmas 1915 address to the boys at Malvern. The headmaster urged positivity, lauded the courageous selflessness of alumni lost in battle, and commended the school system that had steered them towards self-sacrifice. For the Malvern headmaster, the concept of a glorious death was not distant, as shown by his use of the words 'rejoice' and 'glow':

Above all let us remember the debt we owe to those whose names glow upon our Chapel doors, 'whom neither shape of danger could dismay, nor thought of tender happiness betray,' and let us rejoice that in the hour of our country's need, Malvern was not found wanting.<sup>179</sup>

Similar sentiments were poetically reflected shortly after war was declared. The embodiment of idealism and sporting enthusiasm, Rupert Brooke, showed in a series of five sonnets, published to great acclaim in 1914, the extent to which ideas of glorious wartime sacrifice had been imbued - in his case, at Rugby School.<sup>180</sup> The most prominent of these, 'The Soldier', has been much quoted, however this short 'glorious death' extract from another in his series is perhaps even starker:<sup>181</sup>

Blow out, you bugles over the rich Dead!  
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,  
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts of gold.           (Sonnet III 'The Dead')

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<sup>176</sup> Oliver Thomson has provided a comprehensive summary of junior fiction that he believes influenced many boys of all classes. Of the authors of adventure stories, G. A. Henty was probably the most prolific and popular: Thomson, *Easily Led*, pp. 33 and 243-5.

<sup>177</sup> Notably described in David Newsome, *Godliness*. p.238. His analysis of this eulogy in *The Hill*, is cited below.

<sup>178</sup> H. A. Vachell, Ch. XIV 'Goodnight', *The Hill* (London, 1905), retrieved per <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/20280/pg20280.html> [accessed 1 March 2012]

<sup>179</sup> George H. Chesterton (compiler), *A History of Malvern College Chapel 1899-1999* (Worcester, 2000), p.15 - the embedded quotation is from Wordsworth's 'The Happy Warrior'; casualty lists of those Malvernians killed in the First World War were traditionally pinned on the chapel door.

<sup>180</sup> Brooke was 27 in 1914; he had attended Rugby between 1901 and 1907 and had represented the school in all major sports: Marsh, *Rupert Brooke*, pp.20 and 36.

<sup>181</sup> Marsh, *Rupert Brooke*, pp. 312-6.

From military and social perspectives, portraying battlefield death as splendid had two advantages: firstly, many believed that glorification would help allay the fears felt by men of all classes when deliberating whether to volunteer. The aura of glorious death in a noble cause, as depicted by Newbolt, Brooke and Vachell, was elevated to represent a faith-based ritual: if death in battle would be so blessed, and heavenly access so assured, then what remained to be afraid of?<sup>182</sup> Secondly, it was believed that combat deaths could be rationalised for mourners by citing the 'glorious' concept and linking it to the moral values being defended. For example, in an address by the Malvern headmaster on speech day, July 1915 - at a time when seventy volunteer ex-pupils, all officers, had been killed in battle - he advanced the opinion that their sacrifice had advanced the English public school system:

This has been a subalterns' war and the heaviest losses have fallen upon young officers between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. These seventy lives ... stand I think, for all the best that we can teach here; and their lives have not been wasted if they have taught the world that at our English public schools we learn the lesson of discipline and service.<sup>183</sup>

Although perhaps comforting many bereaved within his audience, this address illustrates a frequently-offered rationalization whereby juvenile worthiness was demonstrated by violent death in aid of abstract causes. And his eulogy contains some bizarre reasoning: did English public schools really teach the world how discipline and service values become infixed by elitist education? Was that why seventy deceased youngsters, 'whose lives have not been wasted' went to war? The implied and explicit character abstractions (setting examples, sacrifice, learning lessons, discipline, service) might equally have been employed to console partisan listeners after a significant sporting defeat.

A more sensitive, but similar, message was embraced by the foreword to the dedication of the School Memorial to Bloxham's war-dead. This was offered by Colonel H. A. R. May, commander of the 'Artists Rifles' (1912-1921), who wrote:

it has given me an intense admiration and love for our young men, who came forward with song and jest, laughing and smiling, waiting for their turn to face

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<sup>182</sup> For an assessment of Brooke's extraordinary contemporary influence, see the eulogy in Joyce Kilmer, 'A genius who the Great War made and killed', *The New York Times*, 15 September 1915, magazine section, p. 19, per <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F40611FD3E5F17738DDDAB0994D1405B858DF1D3> [accessed 14 August 2012].

<sup>183</sup> 'Headmaster's Speech Day Address', *The Malvernian*, July 1915, p.370. The combination of apparently principled profundities to justify such severe losses is an approach that might well be considered inappropriate when expressed to younger pupils in the audience - many of whom, in 1915, were yet to enlist.

discomfort, disablement, and sometimes death - all for the sake of a simple but unspoken ideal.<sup>184</sup>

In this message, attention is directed to the young men themselves rather than the institutional system that had coalesced them. Notwithstanding their idealised carefree demeanour, whether a boyish realisation of the risks of death or disablement existed as described seems fanciful. And the foreword euphemistically refers to the imprecise nature of the 'simple unspoken ideal' that drove public schoolboys to volunteer in such numbers - complex, moral, altruistic, dutiful, patriotic perhaps but hardly unspoken. Again, the tragedy of battlefield death, if not fully glorified by May's words, is uplifted above its obscene reality.

It seems not unreasonable to suppose that almost everything in their educational experience was viewed by most pupils through a lens committed to team sports and their associated values, rules, hierarchies, conventions and skill-sets. For many public schoolboys, athleticism represented a daily 'code of living' irrespective of whether personal sporting talent prevailed. However, the additional injection of glorious death in battle ideas meant that the morals underpinning an honourable code of living, became distorted. Newsome regards this aspect of Edwardian sports as flawed and suggests that:

its code of living became so robust and patriotic in its demands that it could be represented as reaching its perfection in a code of dying. We may recall the closing pages of *The Hill* when Henry Desmond's death in fighting for his country is made the subject of a moving sermon. [see above extract] ... This was, indeed, the ultimate of the ideal.<sup>185</sup>

And de Groot suggests that the prospect of wartime service was not only predicted during the years preceding 1914, it was, by many, eagerly anticipated:

It was generally expected that war against a European enemy would be war at its most sublime, the ultimate embodiment of the public school education: not a calamity, but a sacred rite of passage which only the most fortunate would experience.<sup>186</sup>

To restate de Groot's points: for public schoolboys, war represented sacrifice taken to its magnificent extreme; combat duty enabled transition from adolescence to adulthood. Both of these proposals seem astonishing in a twenty-first century context, yet each reflects the expectations of many Edwardian-age public schoolboys.<sup>187</sup> And Newsome's submission has much to commend it: Vachell's fictional eulogy in *The Hill* was expressed at a time (1905) when the nation was still recovering from Boer War embarrassment and doubts as to widespread youthful

<sup>184</sup> Bloxham School Archives. Foreword to the school roll of honour by Colonel H. A. R. May, (December, 1922).

<sup>185</sup> Newsome, *Godliness*, p.238.

<sup>186</sup> de Groot, *Blighly*, p.45.

<sup>187</sup> As evidenced by several debates examined herein.

degeneration were omnipresent. Vachell's 'code of dying' caught the imagination of privileged, patriotic (albeit manipulated) schoolboys who harboured little thought as to their own mortality, yet knew that they represented an elite from whom much was expected.<sup>188</sup>

For several previous years, each youngster would have been indoctrinated into the patriotic concepts of nationhood and the need to serve his country in whatever capacity was required. Selflessness values had been drilled into him: on the sports-field, by his Homeric Classics lessons and by authoritative Christian exhortations in the Chapel. If the nation required his youthful death, he would accept that as the ultimate glorious sacrifice. And de Groot's point also has merit: fictional, youthful, heroic conflict was everywhere within the world of the public schoolboy. Much of what he absorbed related to war: his elective reading of Henty and his genre, his understand of Empire battles through history and geography lessons, his learning by heart of Newbolt poetry, his appreciation of the young Greek and Roman heroes, his hard-fought matches against rival schools, his reading of quality newspapers. For such boys, catalysed perhaps by the Boer conflict, war participation may indeed have been seen as a vital step towards maturity: towards glory, if need be.

#### **'Character built or character revealed'**

In some ways, the emotional and practical divisions between hard-fought 1910 house matches and First World War battle carnage appear irreconcilable. Did the pervasive aura surrounding the public school sporting ethos and the regular playing of team games genuinely enhance individual bravery, belligerence, leadership or perseverance to the extent that patriotic combat eagerness and later military performance became optimised? Probably not. However, the constant indoctrination of the message that games helped cement manliness and build character changed pupil attitudes insofar as it became vital for boys to be seen to be constantly striving for character-centred games progress - character being perpetually prioritised over technical sporting skills.<sup>189</sup> As a result, individually manufactured impressions of dedicated athletic participation became essential to self-esteem, popularity,

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<sup>188</sup> In Vachell's *The Hill*, the lines describing the hero's (Desmond's) death at Spion Kop epitomise the conflation of glorious youthful wartime death and sports: 'he ran ... as if he were racing for a goal. The men staggered after him, aflame with his ardour. They reached the top, captured the guns, drove down the enemy, and returned to the highest point to find their leader – shot through the heart, and dead, and smiling at death. Of all the men who passed through that blizzard of bullets he was the youngest by two years'. Vachell, *The Hill*, retrieved per <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/20280/pg20280.html> [accessed 1 March 2012]

<sup>189</sup> Correlli Barnett argues that overt displays of 'character' attributes, particular those associated with 'team spirit', became more important than *winning*: Barnett, *The Collapse*, p.35.

reputation and praiseworthy school careers. An indoctrinated need to be seen to be doing the right thing would remain with most public schoolboys. A need to satisfy expectations by being seen to volunteer for service to King and country, at a time of crisis, was a powerful stimulus towards enlistment.

And what was meant by character-building anyway? Rupert Wilkinson has written that: 'public school character-building became practically inseparable from the moral glorification of games', but, if improvements in character were detected, had they been genuinely built or merely revealed?<sup>190</sup> Thus, beyond obvious physical fitness advantages, it was the mythology surrounding the supposed moral and ethical benefits rather than the actuality of games involvement that tended to modify viewpoints and reveal latent personality strengths.<sup>191</sup> If an institutionalised adolescent, through constantly iterated doctrinal messages, is imbued with the belief that playing the game will improve his character and shape him for the abundant challenges of adult life, then such in-built sporting propaganda will necessarily become the instrument of its own prediction. The evidence gathered from the schools examined suggests it was a combination of Newboltian mystique and magazine-based censure or approval surrounding sporting performance that was most influential. Intrinsically, sports were of questionable value as far as being vehicles that would contribute to the perfection of character. As Gathorne-Hardy suggests, the same patronising certainty that, within public schools, had determined classical Latin and Greek to be the mechanisms for the total training of the mind, had also settled upon the playing of team games as the indispensable ingredient to forming or eliciting character.<sup>192</sup> In many ways, these beliefs became paradoxical. Both ideas were extremely influential because everybody involved (staff, parents, boys, alumni, employers, military recruiters, politicians, the clergy, university chancellors etc.) believed them to be extremely influential.

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<sup>190</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prefects*, p.30.

<sup>191</sup> Three contrasting views as to the efficacy of games as 'character-forming' activities can be seen in Parker, *The Old Lie*, pp.83-4, Veitch, 'Play up! Play up! And win the war', pp. 364-5; Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, pp.147-8.

<sup>192</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon*, p. 148.

## CHAPTER 4 – VOLUNTEERING

**‘We simply cannot help ourselves and there are millions like us’<sup>1</sup>**

Comprehending ex-public schoolboys’ 1914-5 enlistment decisions also requires an understanding of their immediate inducements, as distinct from devices aimed at procuring working-class recruits. Although most privileged alumni enlisted as a consequence of their determinative education, working-class volunteering choices were made according to personal socio-economic circumstances and targeted recruitment campaigns. However, although most public schoolboys had been pre-conditioned towards enthusiasm for combat, they were still subjected to specially-directed persuasion, much of which drew upon the language and attitudes implanted by their scholastic background. This chapter reviews the effectiveness of those approaches, examines some ambiguities within the range of reactions to the outbreak and poses some related questions. Firstly, what were the class differences in respect of attitudes towards volunteering? How were recruitment propaganda campaigns geared to encouraging both working-class and privileged enlistment? But, most significantly, helped by simple concordance analysis techniques, how were potential officers, through the use of familiar ‘public school’ language, targeted as potential recruits within the textual material that formed their elective daily reading?<sup>2</sup>

War was declared during the Bank Holiday of early August 1914. This was a time when public schools had closed due to the summer break: instant overall reactions from physically-scattered headmasters, staff and pupils are therefore vague. Likewise, outside the capital, the reported enthusiastic reaction of the British people *en masse* was ambiguous.<sup>3</sup> Robert Roberts and A. J. P. Taylor in their respective

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<sup>1</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 1789-91, Lt. George Worthington, letter dated 8 August 1915.

<sup>2</sup> A useful summary of concordance analysis is provided by King’s College, London, a condensed version of which is as follows: ‘We read a text in order to understand what it says but we analyse it to discover how it says it. Concordance analysis focuses on the details, individual words or phrases and the contexts required to make sense of the text as a whole. It is concerned with what we do as a matter of course when we read a text but pay little or no attention to it directly. It seeks to explain impressions and trace them back to their causes in the language. A concordance derives its power for analysis from the fact that it allows us to detect patterns of usage and to marshal evidence for an argument. Since words express ideas, themes and motifs, a concordance is highly useful in detecting patterns of meaning as well. The concordance focuses on word-forms, however, not on what may be meant but what is actually written. It is an empirical tool of textual research’.

‘Fundamentals of the digital humanities: The basics of concordancing’, KCL website: <http://www.cch.kcl.ac.uk/legacy/teaching/av1000/textanalysis/concord.html>, [acc. 2 August 2013].

<sup>3</sup> See Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008), Chapter 1, ‘Going to War’. In this, the author identifies and analyses several earlier and more modern differing historiographic and contemporary viewpoints as to the extent of early British popular support for the war. Most reactions were reportedly positive. For example, Arthur Marwick records: ‘British society in 1914 was strongly jingoistic



juvenile recollections of Salford and Buxton communities, recall no spirited reaction to the declaration: to them as observant children, unresponsive indifference seemed the prevailing emotion.<sup>4</sup>

Much of the ambiguity concerning national reactions to the outbreak is due to the multiplicity of situational anxieties facing many working-class men in diverse locations, occupations and familial circumstances. Although, through patriotic lessons imparted by schools, churches and youth organisations, most felt enthusiastic about Britain and Empire, the potential effects of war (some positive, some negative) upon personal conditions determined the varied responses.<sup>5</sup> But few ex-public schoolboys foresaw being affected from financial or familial dependency viewpoints. If the early reactions of the working-classes were variously categorised between being sullenly indifferent or patriotically wholehearted, the response from elite British society was less equivocal. Figures cited by David Silbey show that boys from higher classes, proportionally, joined up in a considerably higher ratio.<sup>6</sup> A contemporary study by the US Senator and historian, Albert Beveridge, decided that the English privileged classes:

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and showed marked enthusiasm for war', Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London, 1965), p.309; and Kenneth Morgan, writes of the Welsh reaction: 'the overwhelming mass of the Welsh people ... threw themselves into the war with gusto', K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: A History of Modern Wales* (Oxford, 1981), p.159. Peter Simkins writes of 'Britain ... being swept by a rising tide of patriotism and the recruiting offices were filled with eager volunteers', Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army* (Manchester, 2007), p.49. However, George Robb writes, 'among the most impoverished, there was an indifference to the war that reflected their alienation from society', George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke, 2002), p.69 and the London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* reported 'what seemed almost unanimous was that no one seemed to want war. ... The "we don't want war" that we heard so often should be made into a song to counter the jingo one'; *Manchester Guardian*, 3 August 1914.

<sup>4</sup> A. J. P. Taylor, *A Personal History* (London, 1983), p.27 ('no demonstrations, no crowds in the street, no animated discussions') and Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum - Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century* (London, 1990), p.186. ('the fourth of August 1914 caused no great burst of patriotic fervour among us'). Both writing in recollection, in 1914, they would have been eight and nine years of age respectively.

<sup>5</sup> See Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: popular responses to the outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012) together with David Silbey, *The British Working-class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (London, 2005) for comprehensive analyses of several categories of working-class reactions and motivations upon the outbreak of war. De Groot also writes (somewhat trenchantly) that working-class recruits volunteered because, in varying degrees, they were 'deferent, desperate, drunk, bored, destitute or deluded; many sought glory, others were drawn by patriotic duty, and many simply did what they were told':- Gerard de Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the era of the Great War* (Harlow, 1998), p.46.

<sup>6</sup> David Silbey records that a total of 2,016,095 men were newly-enlisted during the first year of war - 67.4% (1,358,848) working-class and 32.6% (657,247) upper/middle-class. Caution should be exercised however as to whether such figures can be seriously considered from a 'war enthusiasm' perspective since they reflect *enlistment* rather than volunteering. Silbey points out that c25% of working-class volunteers were rejected for physical health or size reasons in comparison to c5-10% of higher class volunteers. No valid volunteering statistics

were eager, united and resolved. Never in history has this class shown its valour and patriotic devotion in a more heroic way than in the present crisis. Their courage amounts to recklessness.<sup>7</sup>

Beveridge was evidently an observer of upper-class mores: courage, patriotism, heroism, unity, resolution even recklessness in pursuit of ideals were obligatory, character-based qualities supposedly infused by privileged education. And war, as noted, was considered at least to be acceptable and, at most glorious by (for example) educated conflict aficionados such as Rupert Brooke and Julian Grenfell. Both came to epitomize the naïve generational eagerness of their class as they poetically celebrated the idea of dying in battle and welcomed their chances for participation.<sup>8</sup>

The declaration occurred when around ten thousand cadets were attending OTC camps, the news causing hurried, premature departures.<sup>9</sup> Autumn school magazines record the ways that schools were handling the changed circumstances, alumni volunteering and early school losses. British involvement was welcomed. For example, an editorial in *The Whitgiftian* observed:

At this time there is only one subject on which it is possible to write. The War has now lasted three months, and, for any indication we have to the contrary, may continue for as many years. ... Happily, our country is taking a very active part.<sup>10</sup>  
[see Appendix C]

The OTC News article in the same edition records:

the feverish anxiety on the part of present and past members of the Corps to find something to do ... the orderly room was besieged daily by crowds clamouring to be employed.<sup>11</sup>

The November edition of *The Malvernian* depicted similar eagerness, yet, even after just three months, recent pupil losses were reported. Magazine notices often eulogised the merged elements of character, personality and sporting skill.<sup>12</sup>

exist as a record of the number of ex-public schoolboys who volunteered or enlisted. Silbey, *The British Working-class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916*, pp.43-4.

<sup>7</sup> 'England Divided on War' *The Milwaukee Journal*, 7 August 1915.

<sup>8</sup> See Reader, *At Duty's Call*, p. 130. Brooke's (Rugby 1901-6) 'War' sonnets are noted in chapter three herein. Julian Grenfell's (Eton 1901-6) poem 'Into Battle' contains the memorable lines: 'And he is dead who will not fight; / and who dies fighting has increase.' His biographer, Nicholas Mosley also quotes Grenfell as saying 'isn't it luck for me to have been born so as to be just the right age and in just the right place' - almost the identical sentiment to that expressed by Brooke. N. Mosley, *Julian Grenfell* (London, 1976), p.245. Both Brooke and Grenfell died on active war service in 1915.

<sup>9</sup> Parker, *The Old Lie*, p.31.

<sup>10</sup> The title page of *The Whitgiftian*, November 1914, (see Appendix C), probably written by the headmaster, is a typical example of how schools handled the despatch of their staff and boys shortly after the outbreak of war. Note how impatience with the officer enlistment process drove some to enrol as private soldiers. The head's suggestion that the war might last years was unusual and intimates that the period of 'it'll all be over by Christmas' thinking might be coming to an end.

<sup>11</sup> 'Editorial', *The Whitgiftian*, November 1914.

Many public schools decided to confront the new reality of war through debates, many of which are revealing as to senior boys' views in respect of volunteering and the merits of war as a device for conflict resolution. Malvern and Blundell's both conducted war debates in October 1914. The Malvern motion was topical: 'that in the opinion of this house, the present crisis demands conscription' (motion lost 35 to 5).<sup>13</sup> Some reported debating points illustrate prevailing views:

It was undoubtedly the duty of every young Englishman, who was physically fit, to take up arms for his country. It might be said that there was no need for conscription, because the youth of England had responded so nobly to the call.

\*

The great victories that have been achieved in the past by English arms were not due so much to the nation's military system as to the character of the British nation - their innate heroism and perseverance.

\*

A man must serve his country voluntarily; compulsion would be an insult.

\*

England did not want to press her men into fighting; besides cowards did not deserve to fight.

\*

The British Army were amply compensated for by the quality of the troops. Moreover, the spirit of the Hun was the spirit of militarism, and so of conscription.

Even the few voices raised in favour of conscription did so from logistic or fairness perspectives: 'where were the men to come from when the patriots had been killed?' one boy asked. Another suggested:

men were willing to go if their neighbours would, but didn't see why they should join the ranks alone. Conscription for all alike was what the country wanted.<sup>14</sup>

Clearly, volunteering was strongly supported over compulsion. Speakers used character-based points to strengthen arguments and, as will be instanced, the language used (heroism, perseverance, nobleness, service, militarism, character, duty, patriotism etc.) indicates the degree to which character qualities pervaded the lexicon of abstract expression that the public school system had instilled.

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<sup>12</sup> For example, this tribute to ex-Malvern pupil Colin Knox Anderson, Lieutenant in the Royal West Kent Regiment, killed at Mons in September 1914, salutes his 'character', 'cheerfulness', 'enthusiasm', 'positivity' and 'steadfastness': 'His simplicity of character, unflinching high spirits, and enthusiastic enjoyment of whatever was in hand at the moment made him one of the best of comrades. His nature came out clearly in his cricket, for he was one of those bowlers - and he bowled fast - who would never ask for a rest, and a batsman who always hoped to hit the ball for six.' *The Malvernian*, November 1914, p.280.

<sup>13</sup> The conscription issue had been heatedly discussed in *The Times* (and other newspapers) since the early days of the war. For example a late-August editorial leader opined: 'it is the vast horde of young men who might serve but prefer to loaf at home attending cricket matches and going to the cinema - in short, the great army of shirkers ... It is a national scandal that the selfish should get off scot free while all the burden falls on the most public-spirited section of our available manhood; and if the voluntary system can do no better it will have to be changed'; 'Territorials and - others', *The Times*, 26 August 1914, p.9, col. B.

<sup>14</sup> 'Debating Society Report: 24 October 1914', *The Malvernian*, November, 1914, pp. 291-2.

The Blundell's debate addressed more general ideas: 'that in the opinion of this House, the abolition of war would be disastrous to civilisation' (motion won 20 to 8). Some surprising points were made in support:

War brings out those better qualities among us which at ordinary times lie unnoticed.

\*

This war has been a relief to England, and has proved that we really are a great nation. Frequently what appears at first to be disastrous proves to be a blessing in disguise: for instance, the Black Death ultimately gave Liberty to the serfs.

\*

The preservation of freedom and independence from tyrants was worth a huge expenditure.

\*

Men acquire virtues in war time which otherwise they do not appear to possess.

These comments reveal the extent to which war was considered desirable as they reflect different facets (curriculum, muscular Christianity etc) of the public school experience explored previously. The second, observation: 'this war has been a relief to England ...', in particular shows the effects of indoctrinating supremacist values through history teaching and the extolling of virtuous war - probably through classics lessons. The unashamed class ascendancy through dismissing the effects of the Black Death as a 'blessing in disguise' can only be wondered at.<sup>15</sup> Arguments against war, however, maintained more considered lines of opposition:

The enormous waste of war, the consumption of lives, the destruction of property and the material resources of a country, and the damage done to trade.<sup>16</sup>

An examination of several autumn term and early 1915 magazines reveals similar priorities and arguments to those highlighted above by Whitgift, Blundell's and Malvern editions. Throughout, school managers and senior pupils supported the war and urged volunteering. Ex-pupils killed in battle were eulogised, non-volunteers were deemed blameworthy, patriotism was assumed, war was accepted as orthodox, participation was deemed pleasurable.<sup>17</sup>

Superficially, during the war's early months, the idea of linking the publication, by school magazines, of dutiful responses with the stark reality of individual volunteering might seem questionable. Yet in many ways, the implied sentiments in

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<sup>15</sup> The Black Death of 1348-9 supposedly killed between a third and a half of the English population. John Hatcher, 'England in the Aftermath of the Black Death', *Past & Present*, 144 (Aug., 1994), pp. 3-35.

<sup>16</sup> 'Debating Society' report of October 1914, *The Blundellian*, October, 1914, pp. 128-9.

<sup>17</sup> For example: 'Debating Society Report', *The Bloxhamist*, October 1914 when the motion was, "that in the opinion of this house, public sports (most particularly football matches that drew large crowds of spectators) should not be continued during the present war"; and 'War Notes', *The Decanian*, February 1915 which published several enthusiastic letters from alumni 'at the front' This included one from an alumnus Reverend (The Rev. W. T. Money) who claimed to have converted a number of men from agnosticism 'for their country's sake', p.22.

the journals echoed much of the character-based instruction that had been drummed into pupils by doctrinal tuition and team sports - so that, within a war volunteering context, narrative magazine articles, letters and news items became persuasive. Perhaps a principal reason for this was that the magazines, throughout 1914-15 (and beyond), published optimistic communications from ex-pupils who had already volunteered.<sup>18</sup> In this way an orthodoxy became established so that younger pupils (or at least those who were yet to decide) having been educationally pressed towards conformity, were coaxed to join them through magazine coverage. 'We have our duty to perform ... battles have been, and may still be, won on the playing-fields of Sutton' ran as a 1914 editorial message to senior boys and Sutton Valence alumni.<sup>19</sup> Many thousands of elite youngsters eagerly signed on, most as junior officers, some as other ranks in anticipation of later promotion.

**'Let our public schools resume [their work] with every qualified young man in the sixth and fifth forms absent on service.' - the targeted recruitment campaign.**<sup>20</sup>

Beyond school magazines and the inescapable consequences of years of school indoctrination, many were additionally drawn by the undoubted effects of the officer recruitment campaign, targeted to secure upper- and middle-class volunteers who had attended a recognised public school.<sup>21</sup> An elite education greatly enhanced positive responses to copious 'enlist now' messages since the evocative ideas underpinning the targeted recruitment drive, and the resonant language used, simplified ex-public schoolboys' volunteering decisions. Obedient acquiescence to instruction had been institutionally drummed in over many years. Implicit 'enlist now' messages in public school magazines, backed up by similar exhortations in quality newspapers, must have seemed like just another authoritative command.

Serious newspapers, familiar to older boys, were key to converting their embedded enthusiasm for 'King and Country' service into serious volunteering decisions. Several communication experts agree that most successful strategies for inducing people to take exceptional action are founded in the reinforcement of existing

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<sup>18</sup> For example, a letter published from E. Townson writing to *The Bloxhamist* from Cyprus included: 'as to our future, this is rather indefinite, but Lord Kitchener, in his message to the division, before leaving England, said that it all depended on ourselves how soon we were efficient enough to go to the front. I can only say that the men are working like Trojans, and are very fit, and will be quite ready when the time comes'; 'Letter from E. Townson. Polemedia, Limassol, Cyprus, 25 October 1914', *The Bloxhamist*, December 1914, p.80. Alumni letters to school magazines from 'somewhere in France' by comparison, seem less forthcoming, probably as a result of a stricter censorship regime in that theatre.

<sup>19</sup> Editorial, *Sutton Valence School Magazine*, 105:2, Christmas Term, 1914.

<sup>20</sup> Letter to *The Times* from A. R. Cluer, 31 August 1914.

<sup>21</sup> A first-hand experience of the enlistment procedure for ex-public schoolboys is described in detail within R. C. Sherriff, 'The English Public Schools in the War', in George A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness* (London, 1968), pp.134-154.

convictions. Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell note that, when novel behaviour is being urged (such as enlisting for the wartime military), authoritative speeches or texts that remind individuals of the positive feelings they already hold in respect of the behaviour itself, or its underlying moral components, heighten the chances of persuasive success.<sup>22</sup> Specialist propaganda historians who have studied First World War recruitment methods mostly agree that intensive juvenile training is key to forming lifelong beliefs and attitudes.<sup>23</sup> In English public schools, indoctrinated ideals became (and remained) compatible with the deeply-rooted ideas upheld by ascendant British groupings. These included those men having authority and influence within society, notably in the professions, government, the armed forces and the Church. Although originally motivated by Empire service goals, the reinforcement of British military superiority, by exaggerating and glorifying previous armed successes, had strengthened efforts aimed at securing leadership manpower for future confrontations - irrespective of enemy. Such anticipatory, enduring, patriotic indoctrination had thus formed a vital background to the immediate task of recruiting subalterns at the outset of the war.<sup>24</sup>

Within the 1914 drive to secure officer volunteers, morality-based justifications were proposed by specially-seconded writers under the auspices of the new War Propaganda Bureau.<sup>25</sup> This body's communication output was directed towards potential volunteers whose superior literacy was presumed - typically, as Hynes observes, 'students from Oxford and Eton, the sons of peers and the sons of parsons' - almost all ex-public schoolboys.<sup>26</sup> Catriona Pennell notes that these

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<sup>22</sup> See Garth S Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (London, 1992), p.22.

<sup>23</sup> In particular Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: a History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999) reviews the impact of propaganda techniques upon young people; also, Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction? First World War Posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester, 2007) looks at the underlying psychology that made 1914-15 recruitment posters such a powerful mechanism. Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London, 1977) also provides a good, albeit occasionally simplistic, overview. Nicoletta F. Gullace, 'Sexual Violence and Family Honor: British Propaganda and International Law during the First World War', *The American Historical Review*, 102:3 (1997), pp. 714-47, reports on the way the British used the rumoured German sexual violation of Belgian and French women as a powerful propaganda tool.

<sup>24</sup> Thomson, *Easily Led*, pp.4, 34.

<sup>25</sup> The War Propaganda Bureau (otherwise known as Wellington House) was set up in August 1914 under the leadership of C. F. G. Masterman, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Distinguished intellectuals and literary figures (e.g. Conan Doyle, Kipling, Hardy, Wells, Masfield, Chesterton, Galsworthy, Madox Ford, et al) were co-opted to write articles and pamphlets about the war in order to justify Britain's position to neutral countries and to help secure military recruits. Such a cerebral approach was (per Arthur Marwick) 'directed at the educated classes rather than the masses' - Marwick, *The Deluge*, p.85; also see Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, p.97; M. L. Sanders, 'Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 18 (1975), pp. 119-146.

<sup>26</sup> Hynes, *A War Imagined*, p.28.

messages were geared towards answering the question 'what are we fighting for?'. Responses included: 'national honour, the rule of law, justice, the rights of small nations, fair play, anti-bullying' in order, morally, to fortify the campaign to attain the subaltern strength deemed numerically essential. These moral concepts were coupled with straightforward specific justifications for war against Germany: German militarism was a threat to European harmony, their militarism was opposed to British peace efforts, Britain's duty was to arrest Prussian bellicosity. As widely reported, the Conservative leader, Andrew Bonar Law had observed in an early September speech at the London Guildhall:

We are fighting for the moral forces of humanity. ...The German nation has allowed itself to be organised as a military machine which recognises no law except the law of force, which knows no right except the right of the strongest. It is against that we are fighting today.<sup>27</sup>

Also important was a need to protect Britain's national honour: the country could not be perceived as idle while Germany exercised an aggressive foreign policy.<sup>28</sup> And concomitant with honour-based concerns, it was vital for Britain to support Belgium and France since defeat and occupation of either country was judged disastrous for British interests and home security. Britain was anyway bound, by treaty and *entente*, to go to war alongside European allies. Also, as Trevor Wilson suggests, Germany was 'seeking a European hegemony incompatible with Britain's independence' - such ambition was depicted as unacceptable.<sup>29</sup> Many of these moral and practical arguments directly chimed with the muscular Christianity, character and nationhood doctrines that had permeated public schools as institutions and centres for learning.

As the early war progressed, press reports of German atrocities appeared. Most stories, stemming from Belgian refugees, concerned brutal attacks upon property and defenceless civilians as reprisals in response to supposed guerrilla activities. Such outrages would have contravened the Hague Convention warfare rules.<sup>30</sup> Real and imagined German atrocities were priceless to those responsible for propaganda-based recruitment: at a stroke the German soldier was recast as the ancient Hun, leaving behind trails of blood, depravity and ruin.<sup>31</sup> The image of German soldiers violating the sanctity of home and family, depicted in a highly

<sup>27</sup> 'The Need of More Men', *The Times*, 5 September 1914, p.9, Col G.

<sup>28</sup> Pennell, *A Kingdom United*, pp. 8-60.

<sup>29</sup> See Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, p.xxix; T.Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War* (Cambridge, 1986), p.12-16.

<sup>30</sup> The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 became the standards against which to measure specific atrocities against the 'customs of war.' See Nicoletta F. Gullace, 'Sexual Violence and Family Honor: British Propaganda and International Law during the First World War', *American Historical Review*, 102:3 (1997), pp. 714-47.

<sup>31</sup> James Hayward, *Myths and Legends of the First World War* (Stroud, 2002), pp. 58, 78.

successful recruitment poster ('is your home worth fighting for?' - see Appendix E), was anathema to Britons of all classes.<sup>32</sup> Beyond ubiquitous posters, privileged young men were deliberately alerted to alleged atrocities by targeted poems, news stories and *Times* articles together with trenchant *Punch* cartoons (see Appendix H).<sup>33</sup> For example, an angry poem by the journalist Barry Pain, deploring (rumoured) German outrages in Belgium, appeared in *The Times* on 28 August 1914:

**The Kaiser and God**

Broken pledges, treaties torn,  
Your first page of war adorn;  
We on fouler things must look  
Who read further in that book,  
Where you did in time of war  
All that you in peace forswore,  
Where you, barbarously wise,  
Bade your soldiers terrorize,

Where you made - the deed was fine  
Women screen your firing line.  
Villages burned down to dust,  
Torture, murder, bestial lust,  
Filth too foul for printer's ink,  
Crime from which the apes would shrink<sup>34</sup>

**'That there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England' - patriotism<sup>35</sup>**

Patriotism, consistently expressed as a classless volunteering motivation, is an over-simplified rationalisation. As Silbey suggests, it is mistaken to presume 'patriotism was a single, universal concept, the same in the inner city of Manchester as in the highlands of Scotland, in the Glasgow Gorbals as in the rural areas of Kent'.<sup>36</sup> Within patriotism and volunteering contexts, major differences in class

<sup>32</sup> Poster per Imperial War Museum website: [www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31622](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31622) [accessed 4 November 2012].

<sup>33</sup> Two examples of 1914 *Punch* 'atrocities' cartoons ('The Triumph of Culture' and 'God (and the women) our shield') are attached as Appendix H. Phillip Allingham, in his history of *Punch* magazine states that post the mid-Victorian period, it grew 'to reflect the conservative views of the growing portion of the British middle-class' - per Phillip Allingham, *Punch or the London Charivari (1841-1992)* at [www.victorianweb.org/periodicals/punch/pva44.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/periodicals/punch/pva44.html). This view was confirmed by the media historian Esther MacCallum-Stewart who writes that, at the time of the First World War, *Punch* 'was well established and widely-read. However it had become aimed at the upper-classes with little appeal for the rest of society'. Per Esther MacCallum-Stewart, 'Satirical Magazines of the First World War: *Punch* and the *Wipers Times*' retrieved per [www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com) [accessed Nov 11<sup>th</sup> 2012] Silbey also notes that *The Times* was deliberately priced so as to be outside of the reach of workers. Silbey, *The British Working-class*, p.55.

<sup>34</sup> 'The Kaiser and God' in *The Times*, 28 August 1914. p.9.

<sup>35</sup> The second/third lines from 'The Soldier' by Rupert Brooke per Brooke, *Collected Poems*, p.316.

<sup>36</sup> Silbey, *The British Working-class*, p.13. Rather than 'patriotism', Silbey prefers to use the word 'allegiance' as denoting working-class willingness to fight on behalf of: family, friends, the neighbourhood, class - as well as country.



approaches should be understood since patriotic reactions to different elements within the recruitment campaign varied according to social positioning.

A degree of patriotism existed within all classes: however, as a result of economic, employment, societal and familial circumstances, nationalistic reasons for working-class volunteering constantly competed with individual obligations. Commencing in October 1914, many First World War recruitment poster campaigns were built around appeals to patriotism, either as authoritative foregrounded messages, as represented by the ever-present 'Your Country Needs You' figure or by subtler bucolic imagery, such as 'Your Country's Call - Isn't this worth fighting for' (see Appendices F and G).<sup>37</sup> The 54 million inescapable posters, most of which relied upon visual (rather than textual) effect, were undeniably key to the overall recruitment campaign - although these images were directed mainly at working-class men.<sup>38</sup> The illustration of Lord Kitchener's pointing finger had massive impact as he seemed simultaneously, to beckon, cajole, command, threaten and shame. Guilt was a powerful motivator: several posters used feminine images to drive home the patriotic message by depicting wives and mothers enthusiastically urging their menfolk towards enlistment.<sup>39</sup> And the relentless implication was one that a modest worker would have seldom heard: he was needed! By his country! So that he would obediently do what he was told.<sup>40</sup>

Hugh Cunningham notes that in many First World War memoirs and letters, working-class patriotism derives from senses of obligation, frequently expressed as feelings that mates should stick together and see things through.<sup>41</sup> Few working-class letters contained the flamboyant patriotism epitomised by Brooke, Grenfell and other ex-public schoolboys who, redolent of their classical heroes, viewed war as a chance for gaining glory in quests for national salvation - regardless of whether such laurels were granted posthumously.<sup>42</sup> Appeals to patriotism resonated more with ex-

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<sup>37</sup> See Appendix F 'Your Country Needs You' poster first displayed in 1914 per website [www.sterlingtimes.org/memorable\\_images53.htm](http://www.sterlingtimes.org/memorable_images53.htm); also Appendix G 'Your Country's Call' poster displayed in early 1915 per [www.ww1propaganda.com/ww1-poster](http://www.ww1propaganda.com/ww1-poster) [both accessed 11 November 2012].

<sup>38</sup> De Groot, *Blighty*, p.47-8.

<sup>39</sup> Susan R. Grayzel, *Women and the First World War* (London, 2002), pp. 9-19.

<sup>40</sup> For further information on the First World War recruitment poster campaign, see Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction? First World War Posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester, 2007).

<sup>41</sup> Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism', p.25. For example W. J. Barker (b.1897), Private, The Queen's Royal West Kent Regiment: 'I joined up when I was old enough, because all my friends were joining up. I thought I'd better join up too, to give them a hand' per Liddle Archive, Western Front Recollections.

<sup>42</sup> And for example, 2nd Lieutenant W. J. Palk M.C., The 12th East Surrey Regiment, in a letter 12/7/16 to his father 'Keep smiling. I am more than pleased that I have at last been

public schoolboys since, for the entire duration of their education, patriotic adherence to every aspect of Englishness had been indoctrinated and was therefore, in 1914, a self-evident axiom within their collective conscious and subconscious psyche. For many boys, unquestioning, obedient responses to calls for service to the nation had been pre-programmed through curricula, institutional mores and the inculcation of a range of character-based values.

Cunningham also argues that, just as respectability signified different things to working and higher classes in mid-Victorian England, so did patriotism in the new century.<sup>43</sup> For all classes, patriotic allegiance had been stimulated through educational instruction: English working-class patriotism had been encouraged as a means of defusing class solidarity so that allegiance became directed towards the nation rather than co-workers. In this way, class conflict (and thus labour disputes) might be reduced and demands (such as volunteering for wartime military service), made in the cause of loyalty to the nation, could be placed upon lower-class citizenry.<sup>44</sup> The Government also urged the inculcation of privileged class patriotism with the result that, as has been suggested, Edwardian public school nationalism was blatantly supremacist, royalist, imperialist, and racist: this nationalist model became further inflated by OTC-inspired militarism. In short, state-sponsored elitist patriotism was propagated through indoctrination, as the authorities:

handed on the baton of socialisation into patriotism to the [public] school which, through, for example, the history it taught and the [OTC] drill it imposed, became the main agent of the state.<sup>45</sup>

**'The great pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to heaven' - public school volunteers and persuasion.**

Vivid recruitment poster and press atrocity messages drove home the apparent authenticity of German frightfulness. From a volunteering viewpoint, portrayal of the

given the opportunity to fight for my King and Country. I only hope I may be fearless and shall fight in such a way that you will feel proud of your son' - GS 1219. The Liddle Archive.

<sup>43</sup> Hugh Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism, 1750-1914', *History Workshop*, 12, (1981), p.25. Cunningham also records that 'in 1908 a middle-class resident at Toynbee Hall had been struck by the fact that 'certain words which had always to him signified clear and worthy ideas, such as honour, patriotism, justice, either form no part of the working-man's vocabulary or are grossly and indignantly perverted from their true sense.'" - perhaps a remark that reflected unalloyed class snobbery, but was also indicative of widely differing ideas of nationhood between the classes.

<sup>44</sup> The historian, Raphael Samuel also argues that a sense of patriotism was thrust upon the English working-classes and that ruling elites then used it 'to manipulate workers into enlisting'; there is evidence to show that this might have been true. As Gunner R J Carrier asserted in a post-war memoir 'The big men - the men with money, land, stocks and shares, factories and mines - were telling the little men, the men devoid of all save health, strength, and dependants, to go out and fight, to keep the foreigners' paw off the big men's spoils.'. Raphael Samuel, 'Preface' in *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity* (London, 1989), p. xv; J. Carrier, Royal Field Artillery, 'War Memoir', Liddle Collection, GS0272, cited by Silbey, *The British Working-class*, p.10.

<sup>45</sup> Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism, 1750-1914', p.24.

enemy as Huns: bloodthirsty, ruthless, and devoid of morality (especially in their treatment of women), was a highly persuasive mechanism that was angrily understood by all classes.<sup>46</sup> However, the 'King and Country' and 'Rural England' posters, advertisements directed at the onlooker's sense of patriotism, civic duty, guilt or self-interest, provided little that was incremental to the public schoolboy's indoctrinated sense of nationhood and his OTC-inspired credentials as a potential subaltern.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, music-hall and football match recruitment events, together with jingoistic tirades from periodicals such as *John Bull*, were steered towards coaxing working men to enlist rather than enticing privileged youngsters.<sup>48</sup> For laggards of all classes, fear of ignominy served as a powerful recruiting tool, non-volunteers having been portrayed in posters as shirkers and subject to the notorious 1914 white feather campaign.<sup>49</sup>

In 1914, most ex-public schoolboys would have been exposed to years of indoctrinated beliefs, attitudes and values.<sup>50</sup> It is important to understand the nuanced differences between these labels: 'beliefs' relate to the characteristics of a defined idea or entity, such as: 'I believe in the supremacy of my country and everything it stands for' or 'I believe in the concept of glorious death in battle'. 'Attitudes', consequential to beliefs, represent the internalised state of feeling towards an object, idea or course of action to the extent that a response becomes resolved. For example, a belief might be, 'I believe that warfare should be conducted according to pre-set rules' with the ensuing attitude being, 'German atrocities contravene warfare rules: they must be stopped and the culprits punished'. 'Values' are morally prescriptive and expressed as aspirational abstractions to be used as guidelines for behaviour. For example, an institutionalised Edwardian public schoolboy would hope to become (and to be seen as): honourable, loyal, patriotic, God-fearing, courageous, self-sacrificial etc.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, p.16.

<sup>47</sup> Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction? First World War Posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester, 2007), p.70.

<sup>48</sup> For descriptions of Horatio Bottomley's unique style of jingoism as the publisher of *John Bull* and as a regular speaker at recruitment events, see Alan Hyman, *The Rise and Fall of Horatio Bottomley* (London, 1972), pp. 150-173.

<sup>49</sup> See Nicoletta F. Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the Memory of the Great War', *Journal of British Studies*, 36: 2, (1997), pp. 178-206. Gullace suggests that although in 1914 the practice was officially written off as an 'embarrassing nuisance in need of suppression' the giving of white feathers by young women to men not in uniform was far more prolific than has been assumed. (p.181). And an entry in *The Times* personal column of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1914 read 'ENGLAND'S DISGRACE - To Brighton women, make trouser wearers, supposed men, ENLIST, unless preferred Germans on front kill you and yours'.

<sup>50</sup> See Thomson, *Easily Led*, pp.4-7, 76-81 for examples of youth-focused propaganda.

<sup>51</sup> See Jowett and O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, pp.21-5, re 'persuasive anchors'.

For all classes, a decision to volunteer still required reflection, each conclusion embracing personally significant criteria.<sup>52</sup> Yet, while many working-class youngsters were enticed by targeted poster or event propaganda campaigns, newspapers such as *The Times* exerted influence upon many ex-public school would-be volunteers - with the result that individual enlistment choices became accelerated and finalised.<sup>53</sup> Elite young men were persuaded to volunteer *now* by means of textual language derived from already respected sources. The effectiveness of language-based attempts at persuasion was enhanced by using trustworthy discourse techniques employing terms which, through their education, were familiar to ex- and current public schoolboys. Although not directly advocating volunteering, many articles in *The Times* used techniques of suggestion. The sociologist and propaganda expert, Paul Kecskemeti, notes that 'suggestion influences motivation' and while suggestion rarely engenders new motives, it rearranges, manipulates and channelizes existing ones through:

the introduction of signs which the suggestee cannot help interpreting in such a way that certain emotions will be aroused in him. The involuntary part of the response is his interpretation of the situation; the practical decisions he takes will be 'voluntary'. ... In this sense the 'manipulation' is a process in which behaviour is influenced without the desired behaviour being made explicit.<sup>54</sup>

Kecskemeti also summarises the model propagandist's role as:

someone giving expression to the recipient's own concerns, tensions, aspirations and hopes .. a voice from without, *speaking the language* of the audience's voices within. [emphasis added].<sup>55</sup>

Using these ideas, published examples from the early war period demonstrate how the main moral beliefs, attitudes and values engendered at public schools, together with the language habitually used to define and describe them, combined to underpin forceful messages that also intimated volunteering. One article in particular, is a brief *Times* leader of 6 September 1914. Exploring the concept of courage, within the context of the recently declared war, it appeared following the

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<sup>52</sup> Even though some working-class volunteering decisions at recruitment rallies (especially those organised by Horatio Bottomley) were apparently spontaneous, it is highly likely (albeit not certain) that most event-based volunteers had given considerable thought to the choice facing them prior to the event itself - the atmosphere and eloquence of the recruitment event, in effect, serving as 'the last straw' within a sometimes complex personal decision-process. See Hyman, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.161-173.

<sup>53</sup> Among the 'quality' daily newspapers of 1914, as well as *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* was also supportive of the war - the *Manchester Guardian* rather less so.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Kecskemeti, *Meaning, Communication and Value*, (Chicago, 1952), p.255; Dr. Kecskemeti was a research scientist working for the non-profit making RAND (Research and Development) corporation in Santa Monica, CA - this was a body set up by the US Government in 1950 to help define US military strategy. Previously he had been employed by the US Office of War Information.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Kecskemeti, 'Propaganda' in I. De Sola Pool (ed.), *Handbook of Communication*, (Chicago, 1973), p.864.

British retreat from Mons (the first major battle), so that most readers would have been extremely attentive to an authoritative *Times* opinion (see Appendix I, Article 2).<sup>56</sup> Another example is a textual version of the speech, 'Honour and Dishonour', made by the Chancellor, David Lloyd George MP at the Queen's Hall, London on 19 September 1914. This speech, an 'uninhibited commitment to all-out war', addressed issues central to Britain's decision to wage war and incorporated compelling promptings to enlist.<sup>57</sup> The lengthy address (c.5100 words) was widely quoted in the London and provincial media and was published as a booklet soon after its delivery (see Appendix J): copies were distributed throughout secondary schools.<sup>58</sup> It was also reviewed in *The Times* article of 21 September 1914, (see Appendix I, Article 4). Also within Appendix I can be seen a further three early war *Times* articles (making five in total for illustration purposes). These were chosen as exemplifying press reports which, through their vocabulary, intimated enlistment.<sup>59</sup>

<b>Fig. 10</b>	<b>CONCORDANCE OCCURRENCES - highlights</b>			
<b>Concept/word</b>	<b>Lloyd George Speech</b>	<b><i>Times</i> 'Courage' Article 2</b>	<b>All five <i>Times</i> 'war' articles</b>	<b><i>The Bloxhamist</i> 1895-1915</b>
Honour /duty	19	1	25	787
Sacrifice	12	4	24	114
Courage/heroism	22	23	33	304
Freedom	19	2	15	102
Patriotic/nationhood	41	1	48	600
God/Christian/faith	12	3	16	637
	<b>125</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>2544</b>
<b>Total Word-count</b>	<b>c.5100</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>c.3340</b>	<b>&gt;c.300,000</b>

The use of concordance software on these texts indicates a pattern of abstract moral and patriotic concepts which would have been familiar to ex-public schoolboys. In order, contextually, to anchor these analyses within a public school milieu and to provide a comparison base, a similar concordance breakdown was

<sup>56</sup> 'Courage' in *The Times*, Sunday, 6 September, 1914, p.3.

<sup>57</sup> Roy Hattersley, *The Great Outsider - David Lloyd George* (London, 2010), p.361.

<sup>58</sup> David Lloyd George MP, *Honour and Dishonour*, (London, 1914) retrieved per [www.archive.org/details/greatwarspeechde00lloyuoft](http://www.archive.org/details/greatwarspeechde00lloyuoft) [accessed 27 November 2012]. The speech was later translated and reproduced in fourteen languages per John Grigg, *Lloyd George from Peace to War, 1912- 1916* (London, 1985), p.173. Also see Kenneth O. Morgan, *Lloyd George* (London, 1974), p.82.

<sup>59</sup> See Appendix I for transcripts. The five short, selected 'early war' *Times* articles are: Article 1: 'Belgian's Address to the King', *The Times*, 2 September 1914, p.10 (487 words); Article 2: 'Courage', *The Times*, 6 September 1914, p.3 (810 words); Article 3: 'The Empire's Call: King's Message to Dominions', *The Times*, 10 September 1914 p.9 (529 words); Article 4: 'A Great Speech', *The Times*, 21 September 1914, p.9 (comment on the Lloyd George address) (614 words); Article 5: 'Drastic German Action - A Candid Pastoral', *The Times*, 6 January 1915, p.9 (a report on the German arrest of Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, Antwerp) (903 words).

performed on issues of *The Bloxhamist* between 1895 and 1915. In this way, the recycling of public school tenets, expressed using a lexicon familiar to ex-public school pupils, can be inferred. Fuller results from the concordance evaluations are shown as Appendix K, highlights are shown above in figure 10.<sup>60</sup> Notable within the analysis, is the frequency of references to sacrifice and other muscular Christianity values within all six early-war textual examples. The value of *The Bloxhamist* selection to this concordance exercise is to demonstrate how muscular Christianity ideals permeated, in pre-war peacetime, major aspects of school life - to the extent that persuasive pieces (in these Lloyd George and *Times* examples, persuasion to accept the necessity for war and to volunteer) drew upon a lexicon of longstanding character values surviving throughout the public school system.<sup>61</sup>

In *The Times* 'Courage' editorial, it will be seen that beyond examining courage in a battle context, the article urged volunteering. The last paragraph reads:

It [courage] can seek no distraction in the press of continued conflict; it dares not cheat itself by the frivolous pursuit of pleasure; it must with patience endure all and be of good heart. The patriot may reflect that in such a sacrifice, he contributes to the enduring riches of his country, and inspires it with the fortitude which ages hence shall rescue it from defeat in times, perhaps, more dangerous than the present. The Christian may add to this consolation his faith that life's best for man is neither here nor now.

This extract echoes the moral tone, sentiments and chapel language used by headmasters, visiting dignitaries and correspondents. Compare the views embraced by this excerpt, to similar words of encouragement in a 1912 open letter to senior public schoolboys from Lord Roberts.<sup>62</sup> At Roberts' request, out of respect to his eminence and authority, school magazine editors had reproduced it in full:

You owe a duty to the Country and the Empire of which you are members. You have great advantages as British Public Schoolboys, and as British citizens you will have even greater privileges. What do you mean to give your country in return? It is in the power of every one of you to give personal service, that is deliberately to work for your nation as well as for yourself; but personal service means some sacrifice of self, the giving up of leisure and of some amusement.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The concordance system used to analyse the texts mentioned is Antconc, version 3.2.4 (Windows) developed by Laurence Anthony of the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Waseda University, Japan. Per <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html>

<sup>61</sup> *Bloxhamist* data is extracted from a searchable PDF file; it should be remembered that all the *Times* articles were related to issues surrounding the immediate war. In contrast, the *Bloxhamist* material was all written during a period of comparative peace and addressed a myriad of subjects thought to be of interest to a public school community. Nevertheless the emphasis upon 'muscular Christianity' terminology and values is very evident.

<sup>62</sup> 'Letter to the leaving boys of Dean Close School from Field Marshal Lord Roberts', *The Decanian*, August 1912.

<sup>63</sup> Lord Roberts' letter reproduced in *The Decanian*, September 1912. Roberts had asked: 'will you kindly allow me to send through your columns the following message to the boys who are leaving school at the end of this summer term?'

With a shared sense of urgency, both extracts make appeals to patriotism and sacrifice: they urge the curtailment of leisure and both, to differing degrees, emphasise the importance of service to the nation.

Lloyd George's speech, 'Honour and Dishonour', (described as 'wonderful' by the Prime Minister) was influential in respect of urging enlistment: widely reproduced and circulated to all schools, together with a similar address from Herbert Asquith ('The Call to Arms'), the speech was read to and by many public schoolboys during September 1914.<sup>64</sup> Concordance analysis shows that, despite the speaker's non-privileged Welsh origins, expressed issues of morality and nationhood were closely aligned to the English public school vocabulary as identified by the *Bloxhamist* analysis and replicated in many magazines. Even though the address was initially directed towards London-based Welshmen, the newspapers, as Frances Stevenson noted, 'were loud in their praise - Tory papers most of all', *The Times* being especially exuberant.<sup>65</sup> Employing Lloyd George's legendary rhetorical ability, the speech justified British involvement, applauded the allies, saluted Belgian resistance, denigrated enemy principles and closed with a stunning mountainous metaphor urging men to volunteer - facing death if necessary.

This volunteering appeal began with a conceptual reaffirmation of glorious death in battle, a sacrificial idea ingrained into the minds of public schoolboys through classics lessons, sports and the chapel. One of the Chancellor's biographers, John Grigg, describes the speech as 'catching the mood of the moment, as expressed by Rupert Brooke and other articulate members of the privileged elite'.<sup>66</sup> Echoing elements of President Lincoln's Gettysburg address, 'consecrated death' became, in Lloyd George's oration, an aspirational reality as he recalled the reborn patriotism surrounding the retreat at Mons:

Some have already given their lives ... I honour their courage and may God be their comfort and their strength. But their reward is at hand. Those who have fallen have consecrated deaths. They have taken their part in the making of a new Europe, a new world. I can see signs of its coming in the glare of the battlefield. ... There is something infinitely greater and more enduring which is emerging already out of this conflict: a new patriotism, richer, nobler, more exalted than the old.<sup>67</sup>

This idea was then, sermon-like, developed in the closing paragraphs of the speech as it reached its climax:

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<sup>64</sup> Stevenson records that the speech was described as 'wonderful' by the Prime Minister; and Sir Edward Grey said he wept when he read it. A. J. P. Taylor (ed.), *Lloyd George: A Diary by Frances Stevenson* (London, 1971), p.2.

<sup>65</sup> Taylor (ed.), *Lloyd George: A Diary by Frances Stevenson*, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> Grigg, *Lloyd George from Peace to War*, p.172.

<sup>67</sup> Lloyd George, *Honour and Dishonour*, p.11. At Gettysburg, in 1863 President Lincoln had spoken of the brave men whose deaths 'have consecrated it [the ground] far above our power to add or detract' per Grigg, *Lloyd George from Peace to War*, p.170.

We have been too comfortable, too indulgent, many, perhaps too selfish. And the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation; the great peaks of honour we had forgotten - duty and patriotism, clad in glittering white; the great pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven.<sup>68</sup>

These closing lines reflected the character-based teaching, athleticism ideology and chapel-indoctrination that would have dominated public schoolboys' formative years. It includes concepts of: glorious battle-death and self-sacrifice in a patriotic cause, death being fused with ideas of atonement for selflessness lapses, duty and honour as obligatory tenets for successful living (and dying), the permanence of exalted British nationhood, the assurance of Almighty sponsorship, comfort and approval as recompense for righteousness. And if the worst should occur, a guarantee of fast-tracked heavenly salvation.

**'And caught our youth and wakened us from sleeping'**<sup>69</sup>

Rupert Brooke's extraordinary poetic enthusiasm for the war, in many ways, captures some of the public school *zeitgeist* upon learning that war had broken out. The predominant emotion was one of gratitude for being alive, and young, and available to partake in the moment - a shared, thrilling, short adventure that would probably test every physical and moral outcome of prior life at school. There is little doubt that such a sense of thankful urgency emanated from years of crafted coercion, and that the set(s) of imbued values had collectively formed a buoyant ideology that would, for many, steadily dissipate as the war progressed.

But the eagerness instilled into young men in receipt of a public school education, would stay with many of them at least until the advent of conscription in 1916. Unquestioning keenness for war service represented an unintended consequence of a system created to propel boys towards assuming leadership positions throughout government, industry, the professions, the Empire and the military.<sup>70</sup> But when, during the formative middle Edwardian years, inculcated beliefs were fortified by the 1908 advent of OTC training - and, in late 1914, were further inflamed by German frightfulness rumours, resistance to a call-to-arms would have seemed unfeasible - as Lt. George Worthington wrote to his mother in 1915, 'we simply cannot help ourselves and there are millions like us'.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Lloyd George, *Honour and Dishonour*, p.11.

<sup>69</sup> The second line from 'Peace' by Rupert Brooke per Brooke, *Collected Poems*, p.312; the first line is 'Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour'.

<sup>70</sup> J. A. Mangan, 'The Grit of our Forefathers' in John M. MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1992), p.115.

<sup>71</sup> Liddle Collection, GS 1789-91, Lt. George Worthington, letter dated 8 August 1915.



Ideology has been seen by some as a 'one-sided perspective ... composed of related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes and evaluations, which is shared by members of a specific social group'.<sup>72</sup> This seems an especially valid definition for a war context, whereby almost every mature decision-maker or influencer (in the military, the press, the church, the government) would have been a longstanding member of the specific social group peculiar to elitist education. The consistency of such inter-generational thinking and communication was a vital factor in propelling ex-public schoolboys towards volunteering. As Robert Cialdini suggests, a 'desire for consistency is a powerful motivator of behaviour', and he continues:

The drive to be (and look) consistent constitutes a highly potent weapon of social influence, often causing [people] to act in ways that are clearly contrary to their own best interest.... consistency is valued and adaptive ... a high degree of consistency is normally associated with personal and intellectual strength. It is the heart of logic, rationality, stability and honesty<sup>73</sup>

From a First World War subaltern's enlistment perspective, the consistency of viewpoints and the mechanisms used to express them would have been all-embracing and largely inescapable. Socially, he would have been surrounded by similar others who, since childhood, had harboured identical indoctrinated beliefs, attitudes and values. Almost everything related to the ethics of the war that an ex-public school would-be volunteer might have read or heard or discussed, would have been couched in familiar language and would have chimed with his own idealistic attitudes, irrespective of whether communication emanated from authoritative sources or peers. The romantic optimism and naivety, reinforced by speeches such as Lloyd George's, that suffuse these words of recollection from Vivian de Sola Pinto (writing in 1968) are exemplary. In 1914, as a fresh eighteen year-old ex-public schoolboy, his feeling towards the war was that:

At last we were being asked to fight and suffer not for imperial aggrandisement or material gain but for justice and liberty. Not only would we save the French and the Belgians, but we would rebuild our own society on a basis of social justice. This ... generous and humane enthusiasm was certainly the mood of young Britons in the first weeks of the war. Rupert Brooke gave it melodramatic expression in his sonnet beginning 'Now God be thanked, Who has matched us with His Hour'.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Martin Reisegi and Ruth Wodak, 'The Discourse-Historical Approach' in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), (London, 2009), p.88.

<sup>73</sup> Robert B. V. Cialdini, *Influence - Science and Practice* (Needham MA, 2001), p.54.

<sup>74</sup> Vivian de Sola Pinto, 'My first war: Memoirs of a spectacled subaltern', in George A. Panichas (ed.), *Promise of Greatness* (London, 1968), pp. 67-8; Pinto had been educated at University College School, Hampstead, London.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS

In his trenchant criticism of late Victorian and early Edwardian schooling, the social theorist, J. A. Hobson, explained how it represented ‘as foul an abuse of education as it is possible to conceive’: and he railed against (among other subjects) the teaching of ‘history by false ideals’; ‘the geocentric view of the moral universe’; ‘the routine of military drill’; ‘the savage survivals of combativeness’; the elevation of ‘pseudo-heroes’.<sup>1</sup> Hobson’s concerns about boys’ education in 1902 centred around what they were being taught to believe: a range of tenets which he thought were warped to the extent that youngsters’ consequential values and attitudes were effectively moulded towards blind allegiance to the concepts of nationhood and Empire. For Hobson, they were being coerced into a world of state and Imperial service: they knew no better; they had been programmed to believe in the righteousness of a cause; they would, unsurprisingly, serve the nation when required. If some of Hobson’s emotive language is stripped away, evidence from second-tier public schools suggests that he was correct in his scathing assessment, most especially when applied to the education provided by early twentieth-century public schools: privileged boys were, through manipulation and indoctrination, being compelled to comply with the wishes of the state.

Although Hobson had been attacking the promotion of ‘Imperialism masquerading as patriotism’, an analysis of second-tier schools reveals that nothing substantially changed within the public school approach to education during the Edwardian decade. Beyond just ‘Empire’, his forceful views would become applicable to the educational grooming of advantaged boys in order for them to serve King and Country in whatever capacity would be required. In 1914, the national emergency caused that requirement to be centred upon public schoolboys’ enrolment as junior army officers: to lead small companies of men into battle; to obey orders; to fight against a determined, competent enemy; to sacrifice themselves, if demanded, for a greater cause.

It is important to recognize the range of educationally inculcated beliefs which a still youthful ex-public schoolboy embraced in 1914: beliefs which almost entirely emanated from his public school and which helped to propel him into volunteering for combat service. The examination of the evidence from contemporary second-tier public school records has revealed an inventory of core beliefs, together with the methods by which they were implanted and reinforced. For such a boy, these beliefs

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. Hobson, ‘Moral and Sentimental Factors’ in *Imperialism: A Study* (London, 1902), p.115. As an ex-pupil of Derby School (1868-76), Hobson had himself been a pupil of a second-tier English public school. And see the Introduction herein.

can be compartmentalized into four overarching categories: his nation; his class; himself and his character and his views upon war.

Firstly, what drove his patriotism? What were the beliefs, as to nationhood, that manoeuvred his devotion towards the point of spontaneous volunteering? He believed in the righteousness of England: in everything the country had been, had done and would embark upon in the future. He assumed that other countries were not necessarily to be trusted; that other religions and races were inferior in every way; that the authority and the moral mores (if not the divinity) of the Anglican church were supreme. He accepted, as being unquestionably true, the positive benefits, to the mother nation and each colony, of the British Empire; he knew that 'Britannia rules the waves'. Secondly, how did he view his own position in life? What did he believe about the privileged class he had been born into: what set it apart, what was its role? He believed in the power of breeding, that almost everything positive about the exclusive classes largely resulted from genetic predetermination; he held that his class, because of who they were, had the right to acquire and retain wealth, power and influence. Leadership and character qualities were inbred, to be polished by a public school education. He would have little or no contact with the working-classes (nor any desire to consort): he believed his class to be innately superior in every way, that the working-classes were not to be trusted. He would only associate with his peers: he believed in the conventions of his class in matters of speech, manners, demeanour, dress and behaviour.

Thirdly, on what basis did he believe that his own character had been optimised? How had his schooling shaped him as a confident individual; how did he see himself as his secondary education came to a close? Gentlemanly values were vital: he knew that he had been trained as a gentleman and that acting as such, at all times, would be essential to a successful future. He was self-assured: he prized and practised his superior communication skills; he knew that the development of his character would qualify him as a military officer or, indeed, fulfilment in any other authoritative role. With pride, he treasured his deep-rooted manliness and muscular Christianity values: obedience, fairness, orthodoxy, social conformity, suppressing emotion, teamwork, duty, honour, brotherhood and a range of much else. He knew that his character had been optimised by his participation in competitive sports: perhaps most of all, he believed that he, along with his peers, understood the importance of self-sacrifice in the interests of the nation.

Finally, how did he view war? What were his beliefs as to the desirability and practice of war: how did he envisage a conflict with Germany? He recognised a

need to reinforce colonial ascendancy by military force when necessary and that war was a reasonable, indeed welcome, way of resolving international disputes. War was seen as a natural masculine activity; he saw most previous English wars and skirmishes as justifiable devices to 'teach the enemy a lesson' often fought in the interests of upholding Christian (or at least Anglican) morality as well as maintaining the Empire. In his mind, the British soldier was often cast as a crusader fighting a Holy war against a heathen foe. He did not believe that, as a freeborn Englishman, he lived in a militaristic society - unlike his German contemporaries. He abhorred Prussianism and, as the events of 1914 unfolded, he felt that war with Germany was probable and desirable. He looked forward to serving his country as an officer; he felt that his death in war was unlikely but, if the worst should happen, his demise would be painless, rewarding, glorious.

A stereotypical profile of a 1914 ex-public schoolboy perhaps: in reality, only some boys would have entertained the entirety of the above set of beliefs, although very few indeed, given the environment and the schools' stated *raison d'être*, would have maintained the strength of will to have resisted harbouring any of them.<sup>2</sup> But the bulk of those plentiful youngsters whose engineered mentality enfolded a substantial proportion of such beliefs might have found it difficult to resist a strident call-to-arms such as existed in late 1914. Those responsible for officer recruiting, consistently used the vocabulary that had surrounded such embedded beliefs in order (within speeches and serious newspaper editorials) to coax such boys into rapid volunteering.

Such significant beliefs, peculiar only to boys (and their forbears) who had attended public schools, were powerful, albeit internalised, agents of persuasion within the range of seminal decisions that would confront a privileged youth at the outset of his (somewhat delayed) adulthood. But hitherto, historians, fixing in the main upon the elite, aristocracy-focused Clarendon schools, seem to have formed few theories about ex-public schoolboys' beliefs, attitudes and values in 1914: these are often simplistically positioned as given truths, consequential to breeding and boys' highborn educational exposure. But closer examination of the specific processes by which middle-class boys, attending second-tier schools, had their beliefs ingrained through various educational techniques is revealing. So that, while much of the historiography addresses connections between public schooling and subaltern

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<sup>2</sup> See for example the *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus*, (1899), p.16: 'Boys are specially prepared, at the Parents' desire, for the Universities; for the Army; for the Preliminary Law and Medical examinations; for the Civil Service; for Business or Colonial life.'. Values of nationhood, class, character - even war - would have been cultivated in preparation for subsequent careers.

volunteering, most works treat the school-engendered beliefs as foreseeable educational details leading inexorably to enthusiastic enlistment. So much might be true: however it is important to understand the scholastic experiential totality, at least within second-tier schools, in order to determine how such inclinations were progressed by a privileged education system. Every major facet of the educational experience merits examination in order to ascertain its role in fomenting the beliefs that have been outlined. Each aspect acted as an explanatory lens, a channel through which its effect on implanting or solidifying those certainties that boosted enlistment could be gauged. By exploring: the school as an institution; the curriculum (including classroom practice, the OTC and the Chapel) and organized team sports, it has been possible to get a clearer understanding of the ethos and practices that underlay second-tier public schools in the early twentieth century.

Reviewing public schools as total institutions suggests new perceptions as to how character-forming traits were implanted by restrictive surroundings and abundant 'curtailment of the self' practices. The re-application of theories, first propounded by Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman, prove very useful in this respect even though their primary focus upon incarceration and asylums (respectively) is somewhat distanced from the more moderate attributes of a public school.<sup>3</sup> This potential gap is successfully bridged, however, by drawing upon the work of the educational sociologists, John Wakeford and Graham White who have explored the socialization techniques applied within English public schools as institutions.<sup>4</sup> And Margaret T. Singer's work on the manipulative psychology of cults sheds light on the processes of thought reform that were readily applicable to the institutional practices conducted within Edwardian public schools.<sup>5</sup> By using the defining works of these sociologists, a structure was provided whereby public school institutional processes could be examined and evaluated.

By thinking of public schools as total institutions, it becomes possible to explore how they inculcated beliefs through the indoctrination of curricular dogmas. Such an approach reveals how institutionalisation was a prerequisite to facilitating the thought reform necessary for implanting doctrinaire beliefs (supremacy, nationhood, war values). But beyond enabling the inculcation of curricular canons, the institutional environment was also ideal for perpetuating manliness - a set of

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<sup>3</sup> See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York, 1995); Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and other Inmates* (London, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> See John Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite: A Sociological Analysis of the English Public Boarding School* (London, 1969); Graham White, *Socialization* (London, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> See Margaret T. Singer, *Cults in our midst* (San Francisco, 2003).

qualities and beliefs that were directly put into effect by the institutional environment. Manliness dissemination involved: initiation rites, identity loss, monasticism, austere surroundings, strict discipline, punishment, enforced obedience, taciturnity, seclusion and 'stiff upper lip' ideals. The attitudes arising directly from institutionalised manliness practices included: the recognition of a need for strict discipline and rules (backed up by punishment); a commitment to orthodoxy in action and viewpoint; the merits of enforced monastic brotherhood paired with the importance of institutional loyalty; the tacit acceptance of Spartan living conditions and mandatory discomfort. These values, achieved through the use of institutionalised 'thought reform' techniques, were very appropriate to the nurturing of junior officer qualities. They were cultivated by the institutionalised school environment in readiness for ensuing military, governmental or Empire occupations.

Secondly, examining the wider curriculum uncovered the extent to which teaching became dominated by methods of indoctrination - a dimension, in relation to First World War volunteering, that has hitherto received limited attention from historians. An examination of school textbooks reveals that the embedding of unchallengeable beliefs (as opposed to knowledge and understanding), many of which related to nationhood, supremacy and war, dominated the history, geography and classics syllabuses. Clearly, the degree to which schoolmasters used indoctrination techniques would have varied by individual, yet, in the absence of written lesson plans (an admitted drawback), schoolbooks, primers and yearly form lists show how the focus was consistently upon doctrinal belief ahead of pupil enlightenment and analysis. Another influential curricular element that formed a cornerstone of the overall education programme centred upon the Chapel and related Divinity instruction: specifically, the merging of religious and military ideals. The inclusion within most public schools of many ordained ministers within staff complements, necessarily involved the attempted propagation of Christian beliefs and moral theories. However, in practice, pupils were less devout than was assumed (and trumpeted) at the time: institutionalisation, specifically fears of punishment, caused naturally agnostic boys to simulate reverential faith in the Holy Trinity and its spiritual attachments - albeit that many of the Christian moral messages and menaces probably struck home.

While the extent to which constant school-based Evangelism influenced later volunteering has been marginalized in the historiography, many churchmen, preaching from their pulpits, portrayed the 1914 conflict as a holy war - such an authoritative spiritual designation, at the time, was presumed to draw public schoolboys towards enlistment as a result of their spirituality. Partially true perhaps,

but since widespread pupil Christian devotion was later to be shown as fabricated, many joined up in response to the evocative conviction of Anglican pulpit recruiters rather than through deep religious commitment. They had been prepared mentally, by their schooling, to obey orders emanating from respected Ecclesiastical personages. The linkage of devout ideals with OTC training, to the extent that soldiering was analogised to crusading, blended with the supremacist indoctrination underpinning history and geography lessons. Pulpit and press portrayals of a war against the Prussian anti-Christ would have evoked OTC and Chapel crusade justifications. As a review of the 1909 Rundle OTC camp journal implied, beyond practical leadership training, if participation in a crusade was an implied reason for encouraging OTC cadets, then such motivations would surely have persisted when, in 1914, real war emerged. Clearly, even though the OTC programme was designed to hone military field-craft skills and disciplines, the character-building, moral, and crusading dimensions to the syllabus were equally (if not more) significant.

Although school athleticism has been extensively studied - notably by J. A. Mangan - the highly manipulative methods by which character development was effected has hitherto received less attention. The way that school magazine representations of past-season sporting performances applauded or belittled boys' attitudes and personalities, heightened the importance of character and downgraded the significance of sporting skill.<sup>6</sup> Games-based magazine commendation or disparagement was an ancillary tool towards ensuring that sporting character-based lessons were learned: subject recipients either basking in the glory of fulsome praise or suffering through exposure to criticism-based ignominy. Beyond efforts at optimising physical fitness, most of the character-based athletic qualities coincided with those demanded from junior officers in 1914: attributes of leadership, selflessness, teamwork, loyalty, discipline, obedience etc. For many boys, participation in team sports came to govern school life: many of the attitudes, values and beliefs engendered by games involvement would be carried forward into an ex-pupil's future career as a wartime subaltern. For example, his school-day quest to

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<sup>6</sup>The usage, throughout, of archived school magazines as a main primary source category was fundamental. The immediacy of the journals' reportage - for example, in publishing poems, speech-day addresses, near-verbatim debates, OTC news, sports events, chapel addresses, sporting character sketches and early war news reactions - was consistently revealing. The fact that magazines, designed to reflect schools' images in a positive way to an uncritical readership, were invariably moderated by senior school staff, might be considered a shortcoming - yet, in many ways, any contemporary suppression of contrary pupil views was itself indicative of the total institution environment. Access to pupil memoirs, 'letters from the front', journals and diaries compensated, to some degree, for any restrictions of pupil viewpoint within the magazines.

separate himself from juniors and lesser peers through the sporting of awarded colours translated into the vain (and perilous) practice of prominently wearing uniformed officer insignia that marked him out - both as a loftier individual in the trenches and as a sniper target. Equally as serious, were the changes brought about by constant referrals to sporting courage and selflessness. Commendable though these attributes might have been on the football or cricket field, for some, the surrounding sporting ethos led boys to liken games 'courage' to bravery on the battlefield and a sense of unwarranted personal invincibility. The widely-cited example of Captain Nevill's tragic footballing effrontery is often ascribed to his individual fearlessness, audacity and overall brio. However, upon examination, it is evident that whatever character traits Nevill exhibited in July 1916, they had probably been introduced and progressed by his enthusiastic involvement in team games at his minor public school.

One further approach, that of scrutinizing the persuasive potential for directed terminology within a context of combat enlistment, is relevant to answering the question: how were the beliefs, attitudes and values held by most potential ex-public school officer volunteers, utilised by recruiters so as to optimise speedy, positive responses? Although Paul Fussell broke new ground when he highlighted the 'special diction' that had been found in boys' elective reading materials (for example, those works by G. A. Henty and H. Rider Haggard) by citing the copious use of words such as 'pluck', 'peril', 'the fallen' etc., he omitted to explore how his (very valid) opinions as to boyish rhetoric would influence their later combat decisions.<sup>7</sup> However, what Fussell did establish showed that schoolboys read, accepted, wrote and conversed through using a form of 'character and combat' English supplemented by a jargon set that embraced a range of abstract words and expressions which had a special meaning for public schoolboys.

But while Fussell confined himself to examining words emerging from elective reading, fresh examination of 'recruiting' texts, speeches and pamphlets suggests that most of the character abstractions emanating from school-based values of muscular Christianity and sports would become powerful (albeit marginally subliminal) motivators for young men in 1914. Words such as 'courage', 'honour', 'duty', 'sacrifice', 'leadership', 'endurance' etc., having been introduced at school, would semantically persist into adulthood and would continue to have influence. The use of linguistic techniques to identify word frequencies within school materials (magazines in particular) and to compare that usage with the speeches and articles

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (2000), pp. 21-3.



prevalent in the serious press in 1914 would suggest that ex-public schoolboys were subjected to a degree of creative psychological propaganda in a quest to optimise volunteering. The work of the sociologist, Paul Kecskemeti, wherein he explores the effects of shared language as a benefit to effective persuasion, is most pertinent: the fact that ex-public school pupils were exposed to an abstract, character-based lexicon with which they were already uniquely familiar is very suggestive.<sup>8</sup> This area certainly merits more work: it would be interesting to perform similar concordance analyses on other sources (for example, parental correspondence to and from the front, war correspondent press reports, Hansard 'war progress' debates) as well as gauging how 'recruitment' reportage diminished as conscription replaced volunteering.

There are three other areas that also deserve further investigation: while studying second tier public schools helps reveal the formative reasons why privileged young men eagerly volunteered for war, a similar approach to working-class volunteering is needed. Although David Silbey's work sheds light upon the wide range of factors that motivated working men in 1914, he pays less attention to the childhood influences that many were exposed to. Schooling and church, for some, were significant as was the impact of quasi-militaristic youth organisations: the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, the Boy Scouts' Association etc.<sup>9</sup>

On a similar theme, to what extent were youngsters of all classes influenced by what they chose to read for pleasure? While some of the more recognizable war-related works (by for example William Le Queux and Erskine Childers) have been examined to understand the impact of 'invasion' literature, a range of weekly papers, comics, 'penny dreadfuls', G. A. Henty novels (and others of that genre) deserve in-depth investigation since their stories of Empire-based derring-do would undoubtedly have implanted positive war images into young minds as the works extolled patriotism and militarism.<sup>10</sup> And whereas the study of the OTC scheme explored the character-building dimensions of the programme, what difference, if any, did previous OTC involvement make to military performance? Were subaltern

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<sup>8</sup> See Paul Kecskemeti, *Meaning, Communication and Value*, (Chicago, 1952) and Paul Kecskemeti, 'Propaganda' in I. De Sola Pool (ed.), *Handbook of Communication*, (Chicago, 1973).

<sup>9</sup> David Silbey, *The British Working-class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (London, 2005). J. M. Bourne also contributed towards understanding working-class enlistment motivation in J. M. Bourne, *Britain and the Great War 1914- 1918* (London, 1989). Although John Springhall's much earlier work gave an excellent account of Edwardian youth organisations, linkage between membership and First World War volunteering was omitted: John Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain 1860-1960* (Dublin, 1960).

<sup>10</sup> Oliver Thomson notes that 'the novel is a naturally good medium for exciting patriotism and military enthusiasm, since military exploits lend themselves well to being exploited through it.' Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led - a History of Propaganda* (Stroud, 1999), p.33.

leadership and effectiveness actually enhanced through OTC activities? When it is considered that most of the volunteering officer intake had exclusively practised rifle-based mobile warfare through the OTC, insight as to the corps' relevance to trench and heavy artillery warfare would be interesting.

**'Children ardent for some desperate glory'**

Public schoolboys were coerced into volunteering partly by an education system selected on their behalf - and many died.<sup>11</sup> In his 1917 poem, using images that expose the depravity of death and injury in battle, Wilfred Owen attacks the nationalistic doggerel used to pressurise young men into volunteering for combat:

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est  
Pro patria mori.<sup>12</sup>

These closing lines, where Owen cites the Horatian ode in its original Latin, have a specially-directed poignancy. Who among Owen's imagined readership may have read and translated Horace? Those who had experienced their formative years studying classics at a public school.

The convictions and personalities of a layer of privileged young people were manipulated. Thousands gave up their lives or limbs or senses or health or reason as a final effect of individual exposure to educational re-engineering by authority figures - not with malevolent intent perhaps, but with catastrophic consequence. As T. S. Eliot writes, 'between the idea and the reality, between the motion and the act, falls the shadow'. Provoked by the horrors of the First World War, his words, in 1925, encapsulate the gulf between respectable intention and disastrous effect.<sup>13</sup> That this education was aimed at producing young gentlemen as professionals or stewards of Empire is ironic given that many of the imparted beliefs, skills and character traits coincided with the values that would thrust them into battle. So that, for many, the benefit of receiving a privileged, aspirational, manly education would prove to be a death sentence. A few years before the conflict, unmindful of the horrors yet to come, public schoolboys were indeed Owen's 'children ardent for

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<sup>11</sup> Peter Parker: correspondence in *London Book Review*, Vol.9, No.1, January 1987. Parker was commenting on a review of J. M. Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London, 1986). He points out that at some schools (Harrow, for example) fatalities were as high as 27 per cent. The Bishop of Malvern, when dedicating the war memorial of Malvern College had observed that the loss of schoolboys in the war 'can only be described as the wiping out of a generation': A. H. H. Maclean, *Public Schools and the Great War 1914-19* (London, 1924), pp.17-8 cited by Winter, *The Great War*, p.98.

<sup>12</sup> Wilfred Owen, in Jon Stallworthy (ed.), *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* (Oxford, 2003), p.188-9. Owen was reportedly addressing the poet Jessie Pope who had written several widely-published, extremely jingoistic, recruiting poems. 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori' translates to 'it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country'.

<sup>13</sup> T. S. Eliot, 'The Hollow Men', in *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (London, 2002), pp.77-82.

some desperate glory' - progressively eager to serve nation and Empire, increasingly impatient to fight for 'King and Country'.

Prior to the 1916 introduction of conscription, working-class men were subjected to imperative recruitment campaigns, notorious for their strident immediacy, yet at least they could theoretically choose whether to enlist according to a balance of familial circumstance, economic situation and sense of national obligation. For most, the idea of personal active combat was unimaginable before August 1914. But the impression that all public schoolboys had been manoeuvred, since childhood, to respond positively to such calls is inescapable. For many, the outbreak of hostilities - and the attendant call-to-arms - was seen as a patriotic finale to their education programme. In short, if working-class boys were granted a semblance of choice (and millions responded positively), privileged young men had few equivalent options. Their entire educational experience had, through the moulding of attitudes and minds, predisposed them to volunteer. The idea that privileged education would become a stimulus for idealistic youngsters to die or suffer was a tragic paradox.

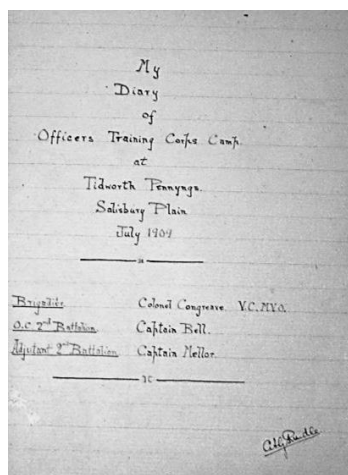
The widely-held Edwardian notion that personal participation in warfare was somehow glorious, became quashed - never to seriously reappear - as the toll of deaths and injury mounted during the First World War. Elite losses were later eulogized for the perceived destruction of potential: there are disparate post-war views as to whether the now discredited epithet 'the lost generation' equated to myth, hyperbole, a flawed explanation for a nation's problems - or was just a romantically simplified version of 'glorious death' clichés. But despite the emotion, the essential underlying mathematics would indicate that a not insubstantial quota of young men, of a privileged class being deliberately steered towards leadership, influence and authority, was destroyed or rendered dysfunctional.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Consider, for example, the conclusions of Reginald Pound: 'Leaders of stature are a missing factor in many departments of the national life, which presents as never before the embarrassing spectacle of men of minor powers wrestling with major responsibilities': Reginald Pound, *The Lost Generation* (London, 1964), pp. 274-6.

## **APPENDICES TO THESIS**

## Appendix A: Archived camp materials - Cubitt Rundle – ex-Blundells' School OTC



- (i) Captain C A G Rundle MC, 128th Pioneers Indian Army – formal portrait
- (ii) Title page from Rundle's 1909 OTC camp diary
- (iii) Rundle's OTC Certificate 'A' received by him in February 1910

July 31<sup>st</sup> Saturday

We practiced range-judging on Sidbury Hill at 6:30 a.m. At 10:15 a.m. we fell in and marched round to the NW of Sidbury Hill where we were to practice the formation and duties of an advance guard. We were told off to be the main body, while six companies we sent out as vanguard, main guard, and firing line. At 1:45 p.m. we fell in and marched out to be inspected by General Franklin, Command 4<sup>th</sup> Division. We went through the salute in battalions in quarter column, and then the general inspected each company. We then marched past in column, and Blundells was very good. After dinner, the band of the West Riding Regiment played in front of the officers mess. At 7:15 p.m. we fell in for night operations and Blundells with three other companies, under the command of Captain Pierce, marched S.W. and halted in a wood about 1000 yards E of the corner of Sidbury Hill. Here we took up our position, forming the centre of a line of outposts stretching from Clarendon Hill to Sidbury Hill. The enemy were expected to attack the camp from Salisbury in the NW. I was sent out as a patrol with two men, with orders to form a post 600 yards NW of my company's position after visiting the sentries posted to our front. Operations were to begin at 9:30, but it was nearly 10:30 before any firing

July 31<sup>st</sup> Continued

began. This was some straggling firing to the S. which gradually grew hotter. Seeing some of the enemy's scouts on the skyline to our front, we scouted out in their direction with three or four men from another school and they retreated. After driving these scouts in two or three times, the firing in the N getting stranger we retired to our hicket and I made my report. Lieutenant Wheeler then sent me out alone over the same ground to reconnoitre, giving me orders to get captured if necessary, but to give the alarm if the enemy were advancing in force. I traversed the ground again as I had been ordered and was just nearing my starting point, when I ran into a company of the enemy. Not being able to see whether they were friends or not and not wishing to give a false alarm, I was challenged before I could fire, and was captured. After taking my ammunition my captors let me go, and I took steps to find my company. The situation was that our outposts had been attacked in the centre by the enemy in force, as had been anticipated by our commander, and had retired to the back of the wood where they could shoot down the enemy as they came over the skyline. Just then 'cease fire' blew and we marched back to camp, arriving there at about 2 a.m. After drinking some cocoa returned in

- (iv) Two pages from Rundle's camp diary entry that cover July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1909

**Appendix B: Lyrics for warlike hymns sung at 1909 Tidworth and other OTC Camps**

**Soldiers of Christ Arise**

Soldiers of Christ, arise,  
And put your armour on,  
Strong in the strength which God supplies  
Through his eternal Son;

Strong in the Lord of hosts,  
And in his mighty power:  
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts  
Is more than conqueror.

Stand then in his great might,  
With all his strength endured,  
And take, to arm you for the fight,  
The panoply of God.

From strength to strength go on,  
Wrestle and fight and pray:  
Tread all the powers of darkness down,  
And win the well-fought day.

That, having all things done,  
And all your conflicts past,  
Ye may obtain, through Christ alone,  
A crown of joy at last.

**Fight The Good Fight**

Fight the good fight with all thy might;  
Christ is thy Strength, and Christ thy Right;  
Lay hold on life, and it shall be  
Thy joy and crown eternally.

**Onward Christian Soldiers**

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus going on before.  
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle see His banners go!

At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;  
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!  
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;  
Brothers lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.

**For All The Saints**

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,  
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,  
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,  
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,  
And hearts are brave, again, and arms are strong.

**Christian, Dost Thou See Them?**

Christian, dost thou see them on the holy ground,  
How the powers of darkness rage thy steps around?  
Christian, up and smite them, counting gain but loss,  
In the strength that cometh by the holy cross.

Christian, dost thou feel them, how they work within,  
Striving, tempting, luring, goading into sin?  
Christian, never tremble; never be downcast;  
Gird thee for the battle, watch and pray and fast.





# THE WHITGIFTIAN.

*"Quod et hunc in annum vivat et plures."*

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VOL. XXXII.

NOVEMBER, 1914.

No. 5.

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## EDITORIAL.

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At this time there is only one subject on which it is possible to write. The War has now lasted three months, and, for any definite indication we have to the contrary, may continue for as many years. What has happened in these past weeks might well have finished any ordinary international dispute, but this struggle is still in its initial stages, and the nations are still bracing themselves for what is to come. Under such circumstances it is natural that matters which hitherto we have found all-absorbing should lose their interest. Happily, our country is taking a very active part, and though, as yet, we can hardly realise the great issues at stake, the reality is brought home forcibly to the many who have relatives in the firing-line.

Events have, of course, not been without their effect in the School. Many have left unexpectedly, among them Mr. Paine whose loss we much regret. Tired of waiting for a phantom commission, he enlisted as a private in the Guards, and is now at Caterham Barracks. Elsewhere will be found a list, as complete as information received can make it, of Old Whitgiftians serving with the Colours. There are, no doubt, many more, as fresh names are coming in every day. The total is one of which we are justly proud—nearly three hundred of the best turned out by the School in recent years. They have the congratulations and good wishes of all Whitgiftians.

## Appendix D: The 'Close'; Sir Henry Newbolt (1862-1938); text for 'Vitaï Lampada'



### Vitaï Lampada

There's a breathless hush in the Close to-night --  
 Ten to make and the match to win --  
 A bumping pitch and a blinding light,  
 An hour to play and the last man in.  
 And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,  
 Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,  
 But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote --  
 'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

The sand of the desert is sodden red, --  
 Red with the wreck of a square that broke; --  
 The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,  
 And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.  
 The river of death has brimmed his banks,  
 And England's far, and Honour a name,  
 But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:  
 'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

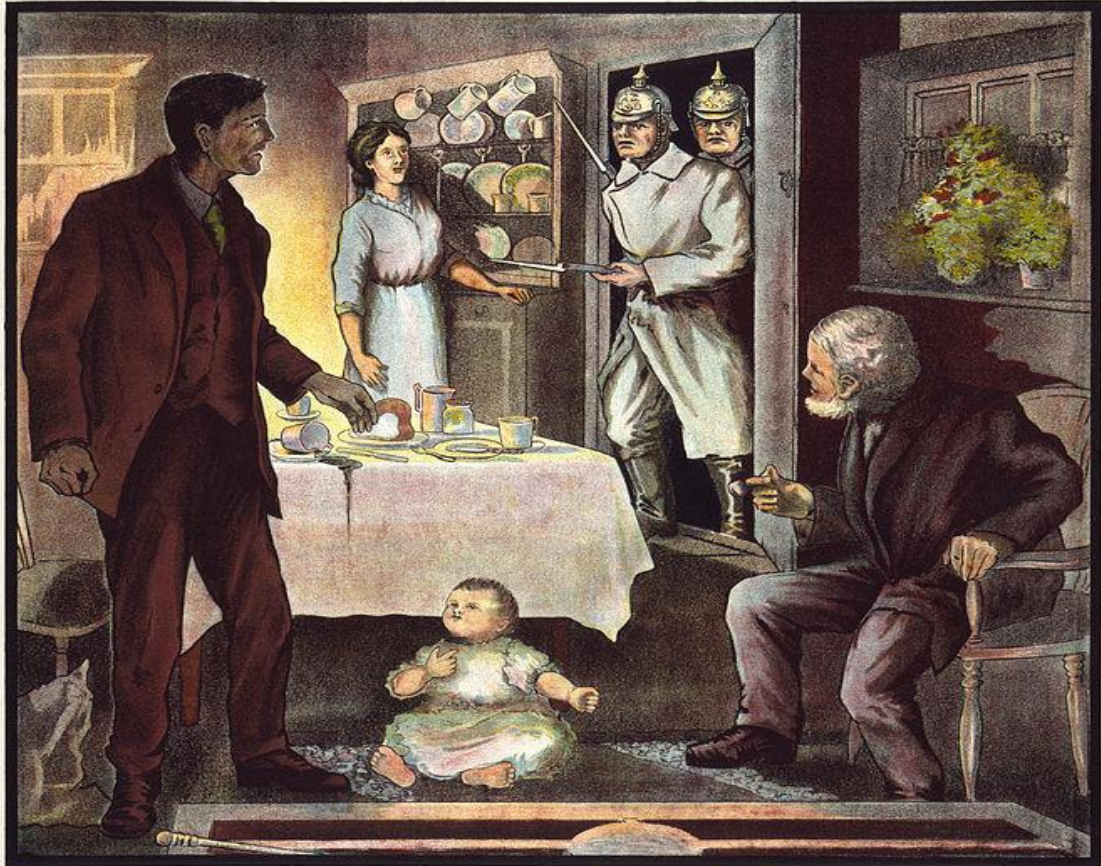
This is the word that year by year,  
 While in her place the School is set,  
 Every one of her sons must hear,  
 And none that hears it dare forget.  
 This they all with a joyful mind  
 Bear through life like a torch in flame,  
 And falling fling to the host behind --  
 'Play up! play up! And play the game!'

1892



## Appendix E – 1915 recruitment poster

# IS YOUR HOME WORTH FIGHTING FOR?



**IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO FIGHT  
WHEN THE ENEMY IS AT YOUR DOOR**

**so JOIN TO-DAY**

HELY'S LIMITED, LITHO: DUBLIN, 1915.

Produced in early 1915 by an unknown artist and printed in Dublin. The original is 752mm x 500 mm. Note the multi-generational 'family', the accoutrements of a peaceful domestic scene (the fireside, the meal) juxtaposed against the fear engendered by the forced entry of armed, hostile German soldiers.

**Appendix F – The ubiquitous Kitchener recruitment poster**

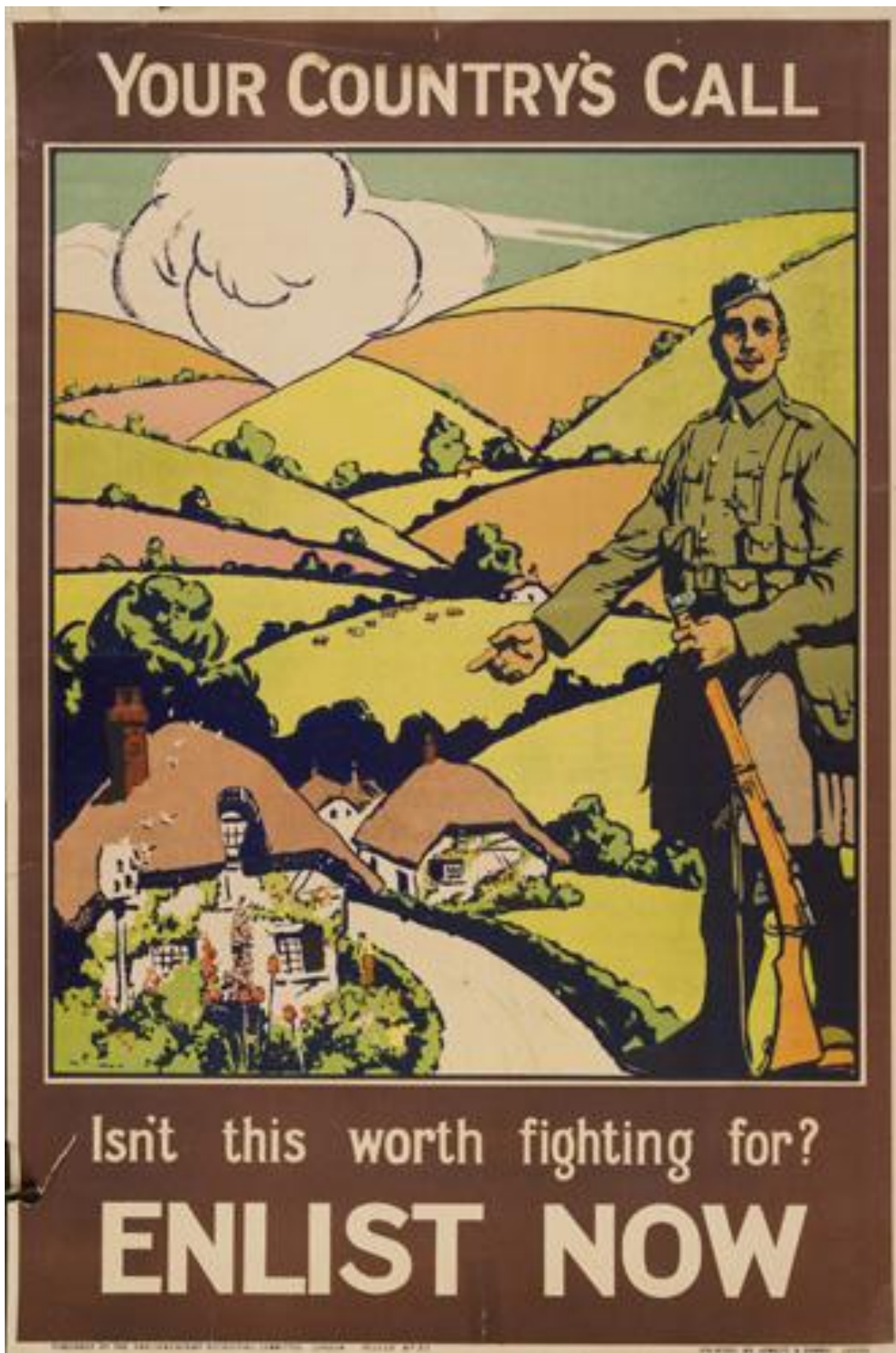
This famous poster, designed by Alfred Leete, was one of several versions featuring Lord Kitchener and his big finger. It first appeared on 5 September 1914 and was soon to be found on hoardings, in windows, in buses, tramcars and vans. It was also widely reproduced as a postcard.

Poster reproduction per:

<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/forces/armycampaigns/africancampaigns/boerwar/kitchenerposter.htm> [accessed Dec 11th 2012] \*



## Appendix G – Bucolic recruitment poster\*



\* 1915 Poster retrieved from [http://www.postersofwar.co.uk/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=697](http://www.postersofwar.co.uk/product_info.php?products_id=697) [accessed 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2013] The artist is unknown.

Appendix H – *Punch* atrocity cartoons\*

Both *Punch Magazine* cartoons are by Bernard Partridge. 'God (and the women) our shield' was published on 5 September 1914. The cartoon below, 'The Triumph of Culture' was published on 26 August 1914.



\* Retrieved from [http://www.punchcartoons.com/Wars-&-Conflicts-Cartoons-World-War-1/c52\\_127/p432/Triumph-of-Culture-German-soldier/product\\_info.html](http://www.punchcartoons.com/Wars-&-Conflicts-Cartoons-World-War-1/c52_127/p432/Triumph-of-Culture-German-soldier/product_info.html) [accessed Feb 1st, 2013].

**Appendix I – *The Times* - selected early war articles.**

**Article 1: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1914 (487 words)**

**Belgians' Address to the King  
Gratitude to England**

**The Belgian Case**

At Buckingham Palace, where the members of the Mission were introduced to the King by the Belgian Minister, the following address to his Majesty was read to the King:-

Sire – Belgium having had to choose between the sacrifice of her honour and the perils of war did not hesitate. She opposed the brutal aggression committed by a Power which was one of the guarantors of her neutrality. In this critical situation it was for our country an inestimable tower of strength coming forth the resolute and immediate intervention of great and powerful England.

Commissioned by his Majesty the King of the Belgians with a mission to the President of the United States, we have considered to be our duty to make a stay in the capital of the British Empire to convey to your Majesty the respectful and ardent expression of gratitude of the Belgian nation. We have never forgotten that England presided at the birth of Belgian independence. She has had confidence in the wisdom and loyalty of our country. We have tried to justify this confidence by remaining strictly true to the *role*, which has been assigned to us by international politics.

In 1870 the Government of Queen Victoria of illustrious memory intervened spontaneously between the belligerent Powers to ensure the neutrality and integrity of Belgium. Today the personal messages addressed by your Majesty to our Sovereign, the solemn and impressive declarations by your Government, the noble speeches of representatives of all parties in your Parliament, the courageous cooperation of the British land and sea forces, have revived the gratitude and fortified still further the will of the Belgian nation to defend her right.

Forced to go to war for the protection of her institutions and her hearths in this resistance Belgium wanted to bring to bear the care which is imposed on each civilized nation by international Conventions and the human conscience. Our adversary, after invading our territory, has decimated the civilian population, massacred women and children, carried into captivity inoffensive peasants, put to death wounded, destroyed undefended towns, burned churches, historical monuments and the famous library of the University of Louvain. All those facts are established by authenticated documents, which we shall have the honour to submit to the Government of your Majesty.

In spite of all our suffering, Belgium, which has been made the personification of outraged right, is resolute in fulfilling to the utmost her duties towards Europe. Whatever may happen she must defend her existence, honour, and her liberty.

**The King's Reply**

The King made a brief reply in which, in cordial terms, he paid a tribute to the courage and heroism of the King of the Belgians, his army, and people, and expressed the sympathy of the British people. The King is also stated to have said that he was very shocked at the reports of German brutality.

**Article 2: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 1914 (810 words)****Courage**

A correspondent in a letter published in *The Times* on Thursday attempted to analyse the nature of true courage. He affirmed that it is rooted in self-sacrifice, rather than in feelings of pugnacity, emulation, ecstasy, or cruelty. The writer might have drawn attention to the spirit animating the combatants in the present war and demonstrated the truth of his analysis. On both sides we see vast masses of men rivalling each other in deeds of daring with an equal scorn of danger and death. If the Allies appear more steady and self-restrained than the Germans who oppose them, it is because they are not stung to desperation by the fear that lust of war may after all prove their own undoing. The series of battles in Belgium and Northern France show in impressive contrast the difference between bravery and ferocity, between the courage of self-sacrifice and the recklessness of self-aggrandisement. True courage can only be found in a good cause. The hero is really heroic only when he is employed in a contest which has the approval of his conscience, even though the issue may be uncertain. Men may be ready to risk everything for lust of power or wealth, or under the influence of some mighty passion; but this is not courage. It is recklessness or boastful confidence in superior strength. Courage scorns the desire to inflict injury for its own sake. It is never cruel. Even if it cannot respect its foe it will respect itself. The true knight, because his courage is founded in self-sacrifice, would rather endure injury than inflict it on broken men and defenceless women and children. He finds no satisfaction in causing misery to others. If he must needs engage in battle it is not for revenge, but for liberty; not that he may cause loss but that he may secure that men shall be free from it.

Courage not infrequently exists with much which might seem to destroy it. The bravest soldiers and sailors acknowledge that on the very eve of battle they have known a shrinking from danger and a fear of pain. Imagination may play strange tricks at a critical moment, and seek to filch from men's hearts the courage which has its true throne there. Thus the unimaginative man may sometimes appear to have the advantage in a time of danger, but this is not really the case. The soldier who knows the peril which confronts him, and yet retains before his eyes the vision of what depends upon his efforts, will be the more prepared to go forward, 'to climb the imminent deadly breach' than the man with no other impulse but a determination to inflict as much suffering as possible on his enemies. Courage is often at its best because it has overcome fear, which is the enemy within, before it turns to battle with dangers without. Having passed through that silent and secret conflict, it has acquired a consciousness of strength which endows it with invincibility of spirit. It has thus those sanctions which lend to human life its highest dignity, and for which its best rewards are reserved. It is found at its highest when it is combined, as a great soldier declared it was combined in Gordon, as the courage of instinct, of religion, and contempt of life.

Courage, however, has other spheres than the field of battle. The present crisis and all that has led up to it has shown that statesmen and leaders of public opinion, and all who are called to give it expression, require it not less than the combatants in the field. To these the source of courage is the conviction that their cause is the right and honourable one. We are profoundly convinced that this spirit is animating our Empire and our Allies. It will keep us all undismayed in times of failure and suspense. The long list of casualties which are now being published will bring to thousands of homes the dark cloud of bereavement, and rob them of that which give to life much of its zest and pride. The courage of quiet endurance is



perhaps as high a virtue as man can reach in his life, and it is needed more widely than any other gift at such times as these. It can seek no distraction in the press of continued conflict; it dares not cheat itself by the frivolous pursuit of pleasure; it must with patience endure all and be of good heart. The patriot may reflect that in such a sacrifice, he contributes to the enduring riches of his country, and inspires it with the fortitude which ages hence shall rescue it from defeat in times, perhaps, more dangerous than the present. The Christian may add to this consolation his faith that life's best for man is neither here nor now.

**Article 3: THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 1914 (529 words)**

**The Empire's Call**

**King's Message to the Dominions**

**Issues of the World Struggle. Defence of the Liberties of Mankind**

'Had I stood aside ... I should have sacrificed my honour and given to destruction the liberties of My Empire and of mankind.'

The King has addressed the following message to the Governments and peoples of his self-governing Dominions:-

During the past few weeks the peoples of My whole Empire at Home and Overseas have moves with one mind and purpose to confront and overthrow an unparalleled assault upon the continuity of civilization and the peace of mankind.

The calamitous conflict is not of My seeking. My voice has been cast throughout on the side of peace. My Ministers earnestly strove to allay the causes of strife and to appease differences with which My Empire was not concerned. Had I stood aside when, in defiance of pledges to which My Kingdom was a party, the soil of Belgium was violated and her cities laid desolate, when the very life of the French nation was threatened with extinction, I should have sacrificed My honour and given to destruction the liberties of My Empire and of mankind. I rejoice that every part of the Empire is with me in this decision.

Paramount regard for treaty faith and the pledged word of rulers and peoples is the common heritage of Great Britain and of the Empire.

My people in the Self-Governing Dominions have shown beyond all doubt that they wholeheartedly endorse the grave decision which it was necessary to take.

My personal knowledge of the loyalty and devotion of My Overseas Dominions had led me to expect that they would cheerfully make the great efforts and bear the great sacrifices which the present conflict entails. The full measure in which they have placed their services and resources at My disposal fills me with gratitude and I am proud to be able to show to the world that My Peoples Overseas are as determined as the People of the United Kingdom to prosecute a just cause to a successful end.

The Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, and the Dominion of New Zealand have placed at My disposal their naval forces, which have already rendered good service for the Empire. Strong Expeditionary forces are being prepared in Canada, in Australia, and in New Zealand for service at the front, and the Union of South Africa has released all British Troops and has undertaken important military responsibilities the discharge of which will be of the utmost importance to the Empire. Newfoundland has doubled the numbers of its branch of the Royal Naval Reserve and is sending a body of men to take part in the operations at the Front. From the Dominion and Provincial Governments of Canada large and welcome gifts of supplies are on their way for the use both of My Naval and Military Forces and for the relief of the distress in the United Kingdom which must

inevitably follow in the wake of war. All parts of My Overseas Dominions have thus demonstrated in the most unmistakeable manner the fundamental unity of the Empire amidst all its diversity of situation and circumstance.

**Article 4: MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 1914 (614 words)**

**A Great Speech**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered on Saturday, to an audience composed chiefly of his Welsh fellow-countrymen, the greatest speech of his public career. Some speeches are deeds, and this is such a one. Such too was Mr. Redmond's historic utterance in the House of Commons; such were Sir Edward Grey's vindication of British policy and the Prime Minister's declaration at the Guildhall. Not since his Mansion House speech of 1911, after the German cruiser Panther had been sent on its provocative voyage to Agadir, has the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoken so clearly for us all. We have often had occasion to criticise his oratorical methods. We have not infrequently found ourselves at variance with his political views. But we have never questioned his great gifts or the purity of his patriotism. Never have those gifts been put to a nobler purpose than on Saturday; and never has the statesman in him stood forth in a truer light. Inspired by the occasion, and deeply moved by the example of Lord Plymouth, who after having given, in Mr Lloyd George's words, 'more than his own life' opened the meeting with Mr Rudyard Kipling's line 'who dies if England lives?' the Chancellor of the Exchequer attained a height of eloquence that will scarcely be surpassed in public references to the war. Yet he was not merely eloquent. His speech was closely reasoned, and nourished with historical fact. He dwelt on our constant defence of Belgian neutrality and dealt scornfully with the 'scrap of paper' theory of Treaties. 'Have you any banknotes?' he asked. 'If you have, burn them; they are only scraps of paper. What are they made of? – Rags. What are they worth? – The whole credit of the British Empire'. And he clinched his argument with a telling phrase: 'Treaties are the currency of international statesmanship'.

Mr Lloyd George truly claimed that the whole machinery of civilization will break down if the German doctrine wins in this war. He brushed aside the plea that German vandalism and cruelty are justified by Belgian resistance to the Kaiser's troops, by asking what business had German soldiers to be there at all. Equally telling was his vindication of Serbia. An able pamphlet by Mr G M Trevelyan, published today by the Victoria League, states the Serbian case in simple and objective terms. Mr Lloyd George defined it more pungently, and exposed the heart of the perfidious Austrian plan to remove at will every capable officer from the Serbian army. 'It was not guilt Austria was after, but capacity.' Not less striking was his vindication of Russian support of Serbia. Russia was bound to stand by her 'little brother' as she had stood by Bulgaria. Russians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, he declared, have died for the freedom of little countries; but when and where has the modern Prussian sacrificed a single life for the freedom of any country in the world? The explanation of Prussian inability to understand the action of Great Britain is that Prussia cannot conceive of self-sacrifice in a righteous cause. Yet self-sacrifice is the essence of the Christian ethic on which our civilization is founded. Our struggle, as Mr Lloyd George finely said, involves great sacrifices but it has its reward. It has 'scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for nations – the great peaks of honour we had forgotten: Duty, Patriotism, and the pinnacle of Sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven.' These are noble words and true; they do but explain the immortal question, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'



**Article 5: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1915 (903 words)****Mgr. Mercier Arrested – Drastic German Action****A Candid Pastoral**

*Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, has been arrested and made prisoner in his Palace by the Germans, who take exception to his Pastoral Letter, and have spare no efforts to suppress it. The pastoral, a summary of which is printed below, is an eloquent exposition of the civic and national rights of the Belgians.*

Cardinal Mercier has been arrested and imprisoned in the Archiepiscopal Palace at Malines on account of the patriotic sentiments expressed in the pastoral letter which he had written and ordered to be read in the churches on Sunday.

...

**The Pastoral Letter – ‘Patriotism and Endurance’**

We have received a copy of the pastoral letter by Cardinal Mercier. It is addressed to ‘My very dear brothers’ and dated Malines, Christmas, 1914 with ‘Patriotism and Endurance’ as its text.

Cardinal Mercier begins his pastoral letter with an eloquent description of the sorrows of Belgium. ‘She bleeds, her children fall by thousands in our forts, on our battlefields, to defend her rights and the integrity of her territory. Soon there will be no longer on the soil of Belgium one single family who will not be in mourning. Why, O God, all these sorrows! Lord! Lord! Hast thou forsaken us?’.

The Archbishop then passes to a description of the devastation caused by the German invasion.

‘I have gone through most of the places in my diocese which have been most wasted ... What I have seen of the ruins and the ashes passes everything that, in spite of my most acute fears, I could ever have imagined. ... Churches, schools, charitable institutions, hospitals, convents, to a considerable number are unfit for use or in ruins. Whole villages have almost disappeared.’

What, he asks, will be the effect of this war upon Belgium?

‘God will save Belgium, my brothers, we cannot doubt it. Let us say, rather, He is saving her. ... Is there a single patriot who does not feel that glory has come to Belgium? Which of us would have the courage to tear out the last page of our history? Which of us can look without pride on the splendour of the glory that our murdered country has won?’

Patriotism, in short, is no secular thing. ‘The religion of Christ exalts patriotism into a law. There is no perfect Christian who is not a complete patriot’.

‘It is not true that the state is a God/Moloch on whose altars all lives are a legitimate sacrifice. The brutality of Pagan customs and the despotism of the Caesars gave rise to the erroneous idea – which modern militarism tends to revive – that the state is omnipotent and that civil right is the creation of the absolute power.’.

‘No! replies Christian doctrine. Civil right is Peace, that is to say, the ordered life of the nation based on Justice. Indeed, Justice itself is only absolute because it is the expression of the essential concord of men with God and among themselves’.

‘Thus, war for war’s sake is a crime. War can only justify itself as a necessary means of consolidating peace.’

The Archbishop begins the second part of his Pastoral with a vindication of the fame which Belgium, by her resistance to German invasion, has won among all nations.

‘Belgium was bound in honour to defend her independence. She has kept her word. The other Powers were bound to respect and to protect Belgian neutrality. Germany has broken her oath; Great Britain has been faithful to hers. Those are the facts. It remains for Belgium to endure till the end.’

‘The humble people set us the example. Citizens of all classes have given their children with splendid generosity to their country. But the humble people, above all suffer privation, cold, perhaps hunger.’

### **Belgians and the Invaders**

The Archbishop then defends the attitude which it seems to him proper for the people who remain in Belgium to adopt towards the German invader:-

‘This Power has no legitimate authority. Consequently, in your own hearts, you owe it neither esteem, nor affection, nor obedience. The sole legitimate Power in Belgium is that of our King, of our Government, of the representatives of the nation. These alone represent authority for us. These alone have the right to our affection and submission. ... Nevertheless, the occupied part of our country is placed in a position to which it should loyally submit. Most of our towns have surrendered to the enemy. They are bound to respect the conditions of that surrender. ... Our Army alone, fighting beside the valiant troops of our Allies, has our honour under its protection, and is charged with our national defence. Let us know how to wait for our final deliverance at its hands.’

‘Towards those who rule our country by military force, and who, deep down in their consciences, are compelled to admire the chivalrous resolution with which we have defended and defend our independence, let us behave ourselves as the public interest demands. Many of them declare that they are willing today to the best of their ability to lessen our trials and to help us to recover at least a portion of our normal public life. Let us respect the rules which they impose, so long as they do not transgress the liberty of our Christian consciences or our national dignity. Let us not behave as though bravado was courage or tumult gallantry.’

**Appendix J**

**David Lloyd George MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer**

**Address delivered in the Queen's Hall, London – September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1914**

**HONOUR AND DISHONOUR**

11 page booklet reproduction retrieved from:  
<http://archive.org/details/honourdishonours00lloy> [accessed 12 Dec 2012].

# HONOUR AND DISHONOUR

A SPEECH

BY

THE RIGHT HON.

**D. LLOYD GEORGE, M.P.**

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

AT THE QUEEN'S HALL  
LONDON

SEPT. 19 1914

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## HONOUR AND DISHONOUR

A Speech by the Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George,  
at Queen's Hall, London

I HAVE come here this afternoon to talk to my fellow countrymen about this great war and the part we ought to take in it. I feel my task is easier after we have been listening to the greatest battle song in the world.\*

There is no man in this room who has always regarded the prospects of engaging in a great war with greater reluctance, with greater repugnance, than I have done throughout the whole of my political life. There is no man, either inside or outside of this room, more convinced that we could not have avoided it without national dishonour. I am fully alive to the fact that whenever a nation has been engaged in any war she has always invoked the sacred name of honour. Many a crime has been committed in its name; there are some crimes being committed now. But, all the same, national honour is a reality, and any nation that disregards it is doomed.

Why is our honour as a country involved in this war? Because, in the first place, we are bound in an honourable obligation to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbour that has lived peaceably, but she could not have compelled us, because she was weak. The man who declines to discharge his debt because his creditor is too poor to enforce it is a blackguard. We entered into this treaty, a solemn treaty, a full treaty, to defend Belgium and her integrity. Our signatures are attached to the document. Our signatures do not stand alone there. This was not the only country to defend the integrity of Belgium, Russia, France, Austria, and Prussia—they are all there. Why did they not perform the obligation? It is suggested that if we quote this treaty it is purely an excuse on our part. It is our low craft and cunning, just to cloak our jealousy of a superior civilisation we are attempting to destroy. Our answer is the action we took in 1870. What was that? Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister. Lord Granville, I think, was then

\* "The Men of Harlech."



Foreign Secretary. I have never heard it laid to their charge that they were ever jingo.

What did they do in 1870? That Treaty Bond was this: we called upon the belligerent Powers to respect that treaty. We called upon France; we called upon Germany. At that time, bear in mind, the greatest danger to Belgium came from France and not from Germany. We intervened to protect Belgium against France exactly as we are doing now to protect her against Germany. We are proceeding exactly in the same way. We invited both the belligerent Powers to state that they had no intention of violating Belgian territory. What was the answer given by Bismarck? He said it was superfluous to ask Prussia such a question in view of the treaties in force. France gave a similar answer. We received the thanks at that time from the Belgian people for our intervention in a very remarkable document. This is the document addressed by the municipality of Brussels to Queen Victoria after that intervention:

"The great and noble people over whose destinies you preside have just given a further proof of its benevolent sentiments towards this country. The voice of the English nation has been heard above the din of arms. It has asserted the principles of justice and right. Next to the unalterable attachment of the Belgian people to their independence, the strongest sentiment which fills their hearts is that of an imperishable gratitude to the people of Great Britain."

That was in 1870. Mark what follows.

Three or four days after that document of thanks the French Army was wedged up against the Belgian frontier. Every means of escape was shut up by a ring of flame from Prussian cannon. There was one way of escape. What was that? By violating the neutrality of Belgium. What did they do? The French on that occasion preferred ruin, humiliation, to the breaking of their bond. The French Emperor, French Marshals, 100,000 gallant Frenchmen in arms preferred to be carried captive to the strange land of their enemy rather than dishonour the name of their country. It was the last French Army defeat. Had they violated Belgian neutrality the whole history of that war would have been changed. And yet it was the interest of France to break the treaty. She did not do it.

It is now the interest of Prussia to break the treaty, and she has done it. Well, why? She avowed it with cynical contempt for every principle of justice. She says treaties only bind you when it is to your interest to keep them. "What is a treaty?" says the German Chancellor. "A scrap of paper." Have you any £5 notes about you? I am not calling for them. Have you any of those neat little Treasury £1 notes? If you have, burn them; they are only "scraps of paper." What are they made of? Rags. What are they worth? The whole credit



of the British Empire. "Scraps of paper." I have been dealing with scraps of paper within the last month. It is suddenly found the commerce of the world is coming to a standstill. The machine had stopped. Why? I will tell you. We discovered, many of us for the first time—I do not pretend to say that I do not know much more about the machinery of commerce to-day than I did six weeks ago, and there are a good many men like me—we discovered the machinery of commerce was moved by bills of exchange. I have seen some of them—wretched, crinkled, scrawled over, blotched, frowsy, and yet these wretched little scraps of paper moved great ships, laden with thousands of tons of precious cargo, from one end of the world to the other. What was the motive power behind them? The honour of commercial men.

Treaties are the currency of international statesmanship. Let us be fair. German merchants, German traders had the reputation of being as upright and straightforward as any traders in the world. But if the currency of German commerce is to be debased to the level of her statesmanship, no trader from Shanghai to Valparaiso will ever look at a German signature again. This doctrine of the scrap of paper, this doctrine which is superscribed by Bernhardt as treaties which serve only as long as it is to its interest, goes to the root of public law. It is the straight road to barbarism, just as if you removed the magnetic pole whenever it was in the way of a German cruiser, the whole navigation of the seas would become dangerous, difficult, impossible, and the whole machinery of civilisation will break down if this doctrine wins in this war.

We are fighting against barbarism. But there is only one way of putting it right. If there are nations that say they will only respect treaties when it is to their interest to do so, we must make it to their interest to do so for the future. What is their defence? Just look at the interview which took place between our Ambassador and great German officials when their attention was called to this treaty to which they were partners. They said: "We cannot help that." Rapidity of action was the great German asset. There is a greater asset for a nation than rapidity of action, and that is—honest dealing.

What are her excuses? She said Belgium was plotting against her, that Belgium was engaged in a great conspiracy with Britain and with France to attack her. Not merely is that not true, but Germany knows it is not true. What is her other excuse? France meant to invade Germany through Belgium. Absolutely untrue. France offered Belgium five army corps to defend her if she was attacked. Belgium said: "I don't require them. I have got the word of the Kaiser. Shall Cæsar send a lie?" All these tales about conspiracy have been fanned up since. The great nation ought to be ashamed, ought to be ashamed to behave



like a fraudulent bankrupt perjuring its way with its complications. She has deliberately broken this treaty, and we were in honour bound to stand by it.

Belgium has been treated brutally, how brutally we shall not yet know. We know already too much. What has she done? Did she send an ultimatum to Germany? Did she challenge Germany? Was she preparing to make war on Germany? Had she ever inflicted any wrongs upon Germany which the Kaiser was bound to redress? She was one of the most unoffending little countries in Europe. She was peaceable, industrious, thrifty, hard-working, giving offence to no one; and her cornfields have been trampled down, her villages have been burned to the ground, her art treasures have been destroyed, her men have been slaughtered, yea, and her women and children, too. What had she done? Hundreds of thousands of her people have had their quiet, comfortable little homes burned to the dust, and are wandering homeless in their own land. What is their crime? Their crime was that they trusted to the word of a Prussian King. I don't know what the Kaiser hopes to achieve by this war. I have a shrewd idea of what he will get, but one thing is made certain, that no nation in future will ever commit that crime again.

I am not going to enter into these tales. Many of them are untrue; war is a grim, ghastly business at best, and I am not going to say that all that has been said in the way of tales of outrage is true. I will go beyond that and say that if you turn two millions of men forced, conscripted, and compelled and driven into the field, you will certainly get among them a certain number of men who will do things that the nation itself will be ashamed of. I am not depending on them. It is enough for me to have the story which the Germans themselves avow, admit, defend, proclaim. The burning and massacring, the shooting down of harmless people—why? Because, according to the Germans, they fired on German soldiers. What business had German soldiers there at all? Belgium was acting in pursuance of a most sacred right, the right to defend your own home.

But they were not in uniform when they shot. If a burglar broke into the Kaiser's Palace at Potsdam, destroyed his furniture, shot down his servants, ruined his art treasures, especially those he made himself, burned his precious manuscripts, do you think he would wait until he got into uniform before he shot him down? They were dealing with those who had broken into their households, but their perfidy has already failed. They entered Belgium to save time. The time has gone. They have not gained time, but they have lost their good name.

But Belgium was not the only little nation that has been attacked in this war, and I make no excuse for referring to the case of the other little nation—the case of Servia. The history



of Serbia is not unblotted. What history in the category of nations is unblotted? The first nation that is without sin, let her cast a stone at Serbia. A nation trained in a horrible school, but she won her freedom with her tenacious valour, and she has maintained it by the same courage. If any Servians were mixed up in the assassination of the Grand Duke they ought to be punished. Serbia admits that; the Servian Government had nothing to do with it. Not even Austria claimed that. The Servian Prime Minister is one of the most capable and honoured men in Europe. Serbia was willing to punish any one of her subjects who had been proved to have any complicity in that assassination. What more could you expect? What were the Austrian demands? Serbia sympathised with her fellow-countrymen in Bosnia. That was one of her crimes. She must do so no more. Her newspapers were saying nasty things about Austria. They must do so no longer. That is the Austrian spirit. You had it in Zabern. How dare you criticise a Customs official, and if you laugh it is a capital offence. The Colonel threatened to shoot them if they repeated it.

Servian newspapers must not criticise Austria. I wonder what would have happened had we taken the same line about German newspapers. Serbia said: "Very well, we will give orders to the newspapers that they must not criticise Austria in future, neither Austria, nor Hungary, nor anything that is theirs." Who can doubt the valour of Serbia, when she undertook to tackle her newspaper editors? She promised not to sympathise with Bosnia, promised to write no critical articles about Austria. She would have no public meetings at which anything unkind was said about Austria.

That was not enough. She must dismiss from her army officers whom Austria should subsequently name. But these officers had just emerged from a war where they were adding lustre to the Servian arms—gallant, brave, efficient. I wonder whether it was their guilt or their efficiency that prompted Austria's action. But, mark, the officers were not named. Serbia was to undertake in advance to dismiss them from the army; the names to be sent on subsequently. Can you name a country in the world that would have stood that?

Supposing Austria or Germany had issued an ultimatum of that kind to this country. "You must dismiss from your Army and from your Navy all those officers whom we shall subsequently name!" Well, I think I could name them now. Lord Kitchener would go; Sir John French would be sent about his business; General Smith-Dorrien would be no more; and I am sure that Sir John Jellicoe would go. And there was another gallant old warrior that would go—Lord Roberts.

It was a difficult situation. Here was a demand made upon her by a great military Power who could put five or six men in



the field for every one she could ; and that Power supported by the greatest military Power in the world. How did Serbia behave ? It is not what happens to you in life that matters ; it is the way in which you face it. And Serbia faced the situation with dignity. She said to Austria, " If any officers of mine have been guilty and are proved to be guilty, I will dismiss them." Austria said, " That is not good enough for me." It was not guilt she was after, but capacity.

Then came Russia's turn. Russia has a special regard for Serbia. She has a special interest in Serbia. Russians have shed their blood for Servian independence many a time. Serbia is a member of her family, and she cannot see Serbia maltreated. Austria knew that. Germany knew that, and Germany turned round to Russia and said, " Here, I insist that you shall stand by with your arms folded whilst Austria is strangling to death your little brother." What answer did the Russian Slav give ? He gave the only answer that becomes a man. He turned to Austria and said, " You lay hands on that little fellow and I will tear your ramshackle empire limb from limb." And he is doing it.

That is the story of the little nations. The world owes much to little nations—and to little men. This theory of bigness—you must have a big empire and a big nation, and a big man—well, long legs have their advantage in a retreat. Frederick the Great chose his warriors for their height, and that tradition has become a policy in Germany. Germany applies that ideal to nations ; she will only allow six-feet-two nations to stand in the ranks. But all the world owes much to the little five feet high nations. The greatest art of the world was the work of little nations. The most enduring literature of the world came from little nations. The greatest literature of England came from her when she was a nation of the size of Belgium fighting a great Empire. The heroic deeds that thrill humanity through generations were the deeds of little nations fighting for their freedom. Ah, yes, and the salvation of mankind came through a little nation. God has chosen little nations as the vessels by which he carries the choicest wines to the lips of humanity, to rejoice their hearts, to exalt their vision, to stimulate and to strengthen their faith ; and if we had stood by when two little nations were being crushed and broken by the brutal hands of barbarism our shame would have rung down the everlasting ages.

But Germany insists that this is an attack by a low civilisation upon a higher. Well, as a matter of fact, the attack was begun by the civilisation which calls itself the higher one. Now, I am no apologist for Russia. She has perpetrated deeds of which I have no doubt her best sons are ashamed. But what Empire has not ? And Germany is the last Empire to point the finger of reproach at Russia ? But Russia has made sacrifices for freedom—great sacrifices. You remember the cry of Bulgaria when she



was torn by the most insensate tyranny that Europe has ever seen. Who listened to the cry? The only answer of the higher civilisation was that the liberty of Bulgarian peasants was not worth the life of a single Pomeranian soldier. But the rude barbarians of the North—they sent their sons by the thousands to die for Bulgarian freedom.

What about England? You go to Greece, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and France, and all these lands, gentlemen, could point out to you places where the sons of Britain have died for the freedom of these countries. France has made sacrifices for the freedom of other lands than her own. Can you name a single country in the world for the freedom of which the modern Prussian has ever sacrificed a single life? The test of our faith, the highest standard of civilisation is the readiness to sacrifice for others.

I would not say a word about the German people to disparage them. They are a great people; they have great qualities of head, of hand, and of heart. I believe, in spite of recent events, there is as great a store of kindness in the German peasant as in any peasant in the world. But he has been drilled into a false idea of civilisation, efficiency, capability. It is a hard civilisation; it is a selfish civilisation; it is a material civilisation. They could not comprehend the action of Britain at the present moment. They say so. "France," they say, "we can understand. She is out for vengeance, she is out for territory—Alsace Lorraine. Russia, she is fighting for mastery, she wants Galicia." They can understand vengeance, they can understand you fighting for mastery, they can understand you fighting for greed of territory; they cannot understand a great Empire pledging its resources, pledging its might, pledging the lives of its children, pledging its very existence, to protect a little nation that seeks for its defence. God made man in his own image—high of purpose, in the region of the spirit. German civilisation would re-create him in the image of a Diesler machine—precise, accurate, powerful, with no room for the soul to operate. That is the "higher" civilisation.

What is their demand? Have you read the Kaiser's speeches? If you have not a copy, I advise you to buy it; they will soon be out of print, and you won't have any more of the same sort again. They are full of the clatter and bluster of German militarists—the mailed fist, the shining armour. Poor old mailed fist—its knuckles are getting a little bruised. Poor shining armour—the shine is being knocked out of it. But there is the same swagger and boastfulness running through the whole of the speeches. You saw that remarkable speech which appeared in the "British Weekly" this week. It is a very remarkable product, as an illustration of the spirit we have got to fight. It is his speech to his soldiers on the way to the front:—



Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, on me as German Emperor, the Spirit of God has descended. I am His weapon, His sword and His vizard. Woe to the disobedient! Death to cowards and unbelievers!

There has been nothing like it since the days of Mahomet.

Lunacy is always distressing, but sometimes it is dangerous, and when you get it manifested in the head of the State, and it has become the policy of a great Empire, it is about time when that should be ruthlessly put away. I do not believe he meant all these speeches. It was simply the martial straddle which he had acquired; but there were men around him who meant every word of it. This was their religion. Treaties? They tangled the feet of Germany in her advance. Cut them with the sword. Little nations? They hinder the advance of Germany. Trample them in the mire under the German heel. The Russian Slav? He challenges the supremacy of Germany and Europe. Hurl your legions at him and massacre him. Britain? She is a constant menace to the predominancy of Germany in the world. Wrest the trident out of her hands. Ah! more than that. The new philosophy of Germany is to destroy Christianity. Sickly sentimentalism about sacrifice for others—poor pap for German digestion. We will have a new diet. We will force it on the world. It will be made in Germany. A diet of blood and iron. What remains? Treaties have gone; the honour of nations gone; liberty gone. What is left? Germany—Germany is left—Deutschland über Alles. That is all that is left.

That is what we are fighting, that claim to predominancy of a civilisation, a material one, a hard one, a civilisation which if once it rules and sways the world, liberty goes, democracy vanishes, and unless Britain comes to the rescue, and her sons, it will be a dark day for humanity. We are not fighting the German people. The German people are just as much under the heel of this Prussian military caste, and more so, thank God, than any other nation in Europe. It will be a day of rejoicing for the German peasant and artisan and trader when the military caste is broken. You know his pretensions. He gives himself the airs of a demi-god. Walking the pavements—civilians and their wives swept into the gutter; they have no right to stand in the way of the great Prussian junker. Men, women, nations—they have all got to go. He thinks all he has got to say is, "We are in a hurry." That is the answer he gave to Belgium. "Rapidly of action is Germany's greatest asset," which means "I am in a hurry. Clear out of my way."

You know the type of motorist, the terror of the roads, with a 60-horse power car. He thinks the roads are made for him, and anybody who impedes the action of his car by a single mile is knocked down. The Prussian junker is the road-hog of Europe.



Small nationalities in his way hurled to the roadside, bleeding and broken; women and children crushed under the wheels of his cruel car. Britain ordered out of his road. All I can say is this: If the old British spirit is alive in British hearts, that bully will be torn from his seat. Were he to win it would be the greatest catastrophe that has befallen democracy since the days of the Holy Alliance and its ascendancy. They think we cannot beat them. It will not be easy. It will be a long job. It will be a terrible war. But in the end we shall march through terror to triumph. We shall need all our qualities, every quality that Britain and its people possess. Prudence in council, daring in action, tenacity in purpose, courage in defeat, moderation in victory, in all things faith, and we shall win.

It has pleased them to believe and to preach the belief that we are a decadent nation. They proclaim it to the world, through their professors, that we are an unheroic nation skulking behind our mahogany counters, whilst we are egging on more gallant races to their destruction. This is a description given to us in Germany—"a timorous, craven nation, trusting to its fleet." I think they are beginning to find their mistake out already. And there are half a million of young men of Britain who have already registered their vow to their King that they will cross the seas and hurl that insult against British courage against its perpetrators on the battlefields of France and of Germany. And we want half a million more. And we shall get them.\*

But Wales must continue doing her duty. That was a great telegram that you, my Lord (the Chairman), read from Glamorgan. I should like to see a Welsh army in the field. I should like to see what the race who faced the Normans for hundreds of years in their struggle for freedom, the race that helped to win the battle of Crecy, the race that fought for a generation under Glendower, against the greatest captain in Europe—I should like to see that race give a good taste of its quality in this struggle in Europe; and they are going to do it.

I envy you young people your youth. They have put up the age limit for the army, but I march, I am sorry to say, a good many years even beyond that. But still our turn will come. It is a great opportunity. It only comes once in many centuries to the children of men. For most generations sacrifice comes in drab weariness of spirit to men. It has come to-day to you; it has come to-day to us all, in the form of the glow and thrill of a great movement for liberty, that impels millions throughout Europe to the same end. It is a great war for the emancipation of Europe from the thralldom of a military caste, which has cast its shadow upon two generations of men, and which has now plunged the world into a welter of bloodshed. Some have already

\* "Glamorgan has raised 20,000 men."



given their lives. There are some who have given more than their own lives. They have given the lives of those who are dear to them. I honour their courage, and may God be their comfort and their strength.

But their reward is at hand. Those who have fallen have consecrated deaths. They have taken their part in the making of a new Europe, a new world. I can see signs of its coming in the glare of the battlefield. The people will gain more by this struggle in all lands than they comprehend at the present moment. It is true they will be rid of the menace to their freedom. But that is not all. There is something infinitely greater and more enduring which is emerging already out of this great conflict; a new patriotism, richer, nobler, more exalted than the old. I see a new recognition amongst all classes, high and low, shedding themselves of selfishness; a new recognition that the honour of a country does not depend merely on the maintenance of its glory in the stricken field, but in protecting its homes from distress as well. It is a new patriotism, it is bringing a new outlook for all classes. A great flood of luxury and of sloth which had submerged the land is receding, and a new Britain is appearing. We can see for the first time the fundamental things that matter in life and that have been obscured from our vision by the tropical growth of prosperity.

May I tell you, in a simple parable, what I think this war is doing for us? I know a valley in North Wales, between the mountains and the sea—a beautiful valley, snug, comfortable, sheltered by the mountains from all the bitter blasts. It was very enervating, and I remember how the boys were in the habit of climbing the hills above the village to have a glimpse of the great mountains in the distance and to be stimulated and freshened by the breezes which came from the hilltops, and by the great spectacle of that great valley.

We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable, too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish. And the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation; the great peaks of honour we had forgotten—duty and patriotism, clad in glittering white; the great pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven. We shall descend into the valleys again, but as long as the men and women of this generation last they will carry in their hearts the image of these great mountain peaks, whose foundations are unshaken though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war.

## Appendix K – concordance analyses – published recruiting texts

CONCEPT	Word/root* Occurrences	<i>Times</i> * articles (c.3340)	Lloyd George (c.5100)	<i>Bloxhamist</i> * (1895–1915) (>c.300000)
<b>Honour/duty</b>	Honour	9	12	273
	Duty	3	2	198
	Credit	1	1	219
	Right/righteous	9	4	22
	Loyalty	3	0	75
		<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>787</b>
<b>Sacrifice</b>	Sacrifice	14	8	39
	Endurance	7	2	30
	Noble	3	2	45
		<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Courage/ Heroism</b>	Courage	18	4	30
	Heroism	3	2	35
	Bravery	3	1	33
	Spirit	3	6	61
	Heart	4	5	125
	Gallantry/chivalry	2	4	20
		<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>304</b>
<b>Freedom</b>	Liberty	6	5	13
	Freedom	3	9	19
	Independence	3	3	16
	Justice	3	2	54
		<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Nationhood</b>	Patriot(ic)	10	4	32
	Nation	11	11	104
	England	5	3	289
	Britain	9	15	140
	Empire	13	8	35
		<b>48</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Religion	2	1	125
	God	4	7	394
	Christian	7	1	69
	Faith	3	3	49
		<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>637</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>161</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>2544</b>

\***Derivatives:** All occurrences reflect the actual word used, together with its derivatives – for example ‘honour’ embraces also ‘honourable, honours, dishonourable’ etc.

\***Times articles:** See Appendix I for transcripts. The five selected early war *Times* articles are: **Article 1:** ‘Belgian’s Address to the King’, *The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914 (487 words); **Article 2:** ‘Courage’, *The Times*, September 6<sup>th</sup> 1914 (810 words); **Article 3:** ‘The Empire’s Call - King’s Message to Dominions’, *The Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914 (529 words); **Article 4:** ‘A Great Speech’, *The Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> September 1914 (comment on the Lloyd George address) (614 words); **Article 5:** ‘Drastic German Action - A Candid Pastoral’, *The Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1915 (a report on the German arrest of Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, Antwerp) (903 words).

\***Bloxhamist:** Estimated 20-year wordcount for *Bloxhamist* editorial, opinion, and chapel reportage after eliminating sports scores, alumni and school news, notices, concert and special interest club reports etc.



Appendix L – Attack on Parliament Square as depicted on the front page of *The Boys' Friend*, March 1900<sup>15</sup>

SPECIAL NUMBER! War Picture Puzzles.

£26  
FOR  
SOLVING  
24  
WAR  
PICTURE  
PUZZLES.

**THE BOYS' FRIEND** 1<sup>D.</sup>  
2

No. 270, Vol. VII. ONE HALFPENNY. [EVERY WEDNESDAY.]

**Bombardment of London. The French at our doors.**

Indeed, that would stamp our great hour of war, when French shot and shell fell in a horrible rain along the fair streets of the Empire's City. One shot, for instance, would strike the Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament, bringing it down in a fall of destruction. (See "Britain Struck.")

<sup>15</sup> Adam Riches et al, *When the Comics went to War* (Edinburgh, 2009), p.65.



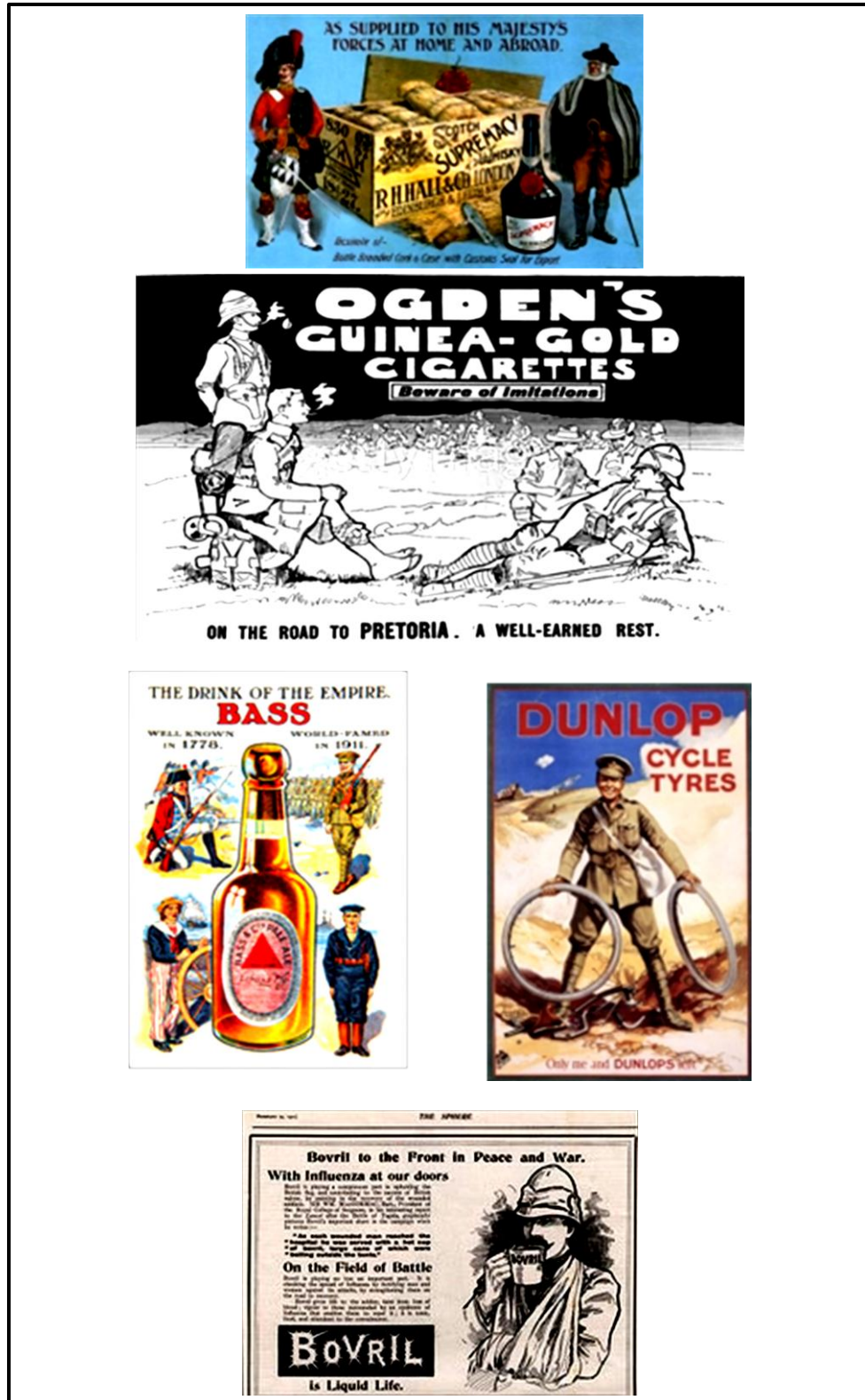
Appendix M – *Punch* cartoon depicting the pride in uniform of the newly-enlisted subaltern during the early days of the war\*



**‘GIRLS! GIRLS! YOU REALLY MUSN’T CROWD ROUND ME LIKE THIS. I’VE  
MISSED TWO SALUTES ALREADY’**

\* Cartoon by T H Townsend, *Punch*, 30 September 1914, p.283.

## Appendix N – Edwardian-era advertisements depicting soldiers



\* Advertisement illustrations per Getty Images collection (Ogden's Guinea Gold) and [http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/?service=search&action=do\\_quick\\_search&language=en&mode=&q=soldier&qw=&md\\_1=UK&md\\_2=1910s&grid\\_layout=4](http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/?service=search&action=do_quick_search&language=en&mode=&q=soldier&qw=&md_1=UK&md_2=1910s&grid_layout=4) [acc. Aug 7<sup>th</sup> 2012].



Appendix O – Pupil Poem 'Oh England, Mighty England' from *The Malvernian*  
1909

OH ENGLAND, MIGHTY ENGLAND.



Oh England, mighty England, thou mistress  
of the sea,

Rise up, accept the homage all nations offer thee.  
Proud bearer of that banner which mighty sons  
unfurl'd.

Proclaim thy vast dominion to all the sensual world.

Not only in the battle were deeds of valour done,  
Not only in the midst of strife have victories been  
won ;

But writ in golden letters upon the scroll of fame,  
Is found in peace and war alike thy proud undying  
name.

A glorious name that thousands have lived indeed  
to bless,

Once sunk in deepest shades of night, in dark and  
drear distress ;

Unfurl the flaming banner, and fling it far and wide,  
The emblem of our heritage, the ensign of our pride.

Afar beneath the tropic sun the slave where'er he  
cowers,

Still feels that strengthening influence won by thy  
wooden towers ;

And dusky heathen kings, in fear, turn from their  
godless way,

And kneel in all humility acknowledging thy sway.

And great and mighty nations in haste their homage  
bring,

And lay it trembling at thy feet, while bards and  
minstrels sing

How God, in all His mercy, with honour gave to thee  
A great and glorious sovereignty, the kingdom of  
the sea.

P.

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