

**The Social Impact of
the First World War
In Pembrokeshire**

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This thesis is submitted to the School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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The 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 it submitted concurrently in candidature for any other degree or other award.

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I trust this thesis will offer a meaningful insight into the lives of the civilian population of Pembrokeshire during the First World War and encourage others to undertake similar localised studies of the conflict to aid our understanding of the conflict at grass roots level.

ABSTRACT

The Social Impact of the First World War in Pembrokeshire

This thesis explores the economic, social and political changes in society of the largely rural Welsh county of Pembrokeshire during the First World War to establish to what extent war conditions were a major agency of change and whether that change was of short duration or long lasting. Regional and local studies of particular counties and towns provide for a micro-historical test of national hypotheses. The methodology of this thesis has been to extensively engage with all existing primary sources, for evidence of social change. The potency of a conservative reaction seeing custom, tradition and hankering after pre-war certainties has been identified as a factor successful in limiting the scope of social change. The introduction places the thesis in its historiographical frame and presents the national debate of continuity verses war-generated change. Chapter one investigates state expansion and regulation of everyday life through the Defence of the Realm Act. Chapter two discusses changes to the Pembrokeshire economy and the implications of wartime price rises. Chapter three discusses voluntary military enlistment, the operation of conscription at the local level through Military Service Tribunals, conscientious objection and female paramilitary military service and the gender implications which it raised. Chapter four considers the changing identities of individuals and the rich diversity of expression of patriotic wartime forms. Religious and cultural changes are analysed in chapter five with the effects of carefully choreographed propaganda expressed in public events. The vicarious experiences of war on a distant rural population, including spy and war scares, expressions of the psychology of wartime, are reviewed in chapter six in the

context of Pembrokeshire being a coastal county. The thesis concludes with an assessment which detects limited social change and greater long-term continuity than war exceptionalism as the Pembrokeshire experience.

ABBREVIATIONS

AgHR	<i>Agricultural History Review</i>
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
CE	<i>County Echo</i>
EcHR	<i>Economic History Review</i>
EHR	<i>English History Review</i>
H&MHT	<i>Haverfordwest & Milford Haven Telegraph</i>
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HR	<i>Historical Research</i>
I&M	<i>Immigrants & Minorities</i>
IHR	<i>International History Review</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JCH	<i>Journal of Contemporary History</i>
JPHS	<i>Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society</i>
JSH	<i>Journal of Social History</i>
NM	Narberth Museum
P&P	<i>Past & Present</i>
PCG	<i>Pembroke County Guardian</i>
PH	<i>Pembrokeshire Herald</i>
PP	<i>Parliamentary Papers</i>
PRO	Pembrokeshire Record Office (Archives)
PT	<i>Pembrokeshire Telegraph</i>
SWDN	<i>South Wales Daily News</i>
TMAG	<i>Tenby Museum and Art Gallery</i>
TNA	The National Archives
TO	<i>Tenby Observer</i>
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
TT	<i>The Times</i>
WHR	<i>Welsh Historical Review</i>

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Introduction

On Saturday 2 September 1921 an immense crowd, numbering many thousands, gathered at Salutation Square, Haverfordwest, the county town of Pembrokeshire, to witness the unveiling of the county war memorial. (Illustration 1), comprising a simple yet striking design, the monument consisted of an obelisk surmounted by a Welsh dragon. It bore four large bronze panels, three of which were inscribed with the names of the fallen whilst the fourth had a simple yet dignified dedication:

1914-1918. In remembrance of the men of the County of Pembroke who at the call of King and country left all that was most dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger and finally passed out of the sight of men in the path of duty and self sacrifice; giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom. Let those who come after see to it that their names be not forgotten.¹

The memorial, which commanded the principal thoroughfare in town, listed the names of 1,200 local men who died during the conflict.² During the following decade, many dozens of smaller memorials were erected across the county as each town, village and hamlet (the Narberth one in Illustration 2 is typical of such ceremonies during the 1920s) sought to remember their dead. Churches and chapels, too, were repositories of community, as well as spiritual association, and they expressed their solidarity with the fallen and all who served, often in the form of a brass plaque, commemorative windows, memorial parks and halls or illuminated scrolls or rolls of honour.

¹ *PH*, 7 September 1921.

² Lester Mason discusses the differing views as to what the memorial should consist of, 'The anatomy of a war memorial: the story behind the Pembrokeshire county Great War memorial at Haverfordwest' *Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society*, 22 (2013), 51-60. Memorials were very much a cultural legacy of the war as discussed by Ross Wilson in *Cultural Heritage of the Great War* (Farnham, 2013).

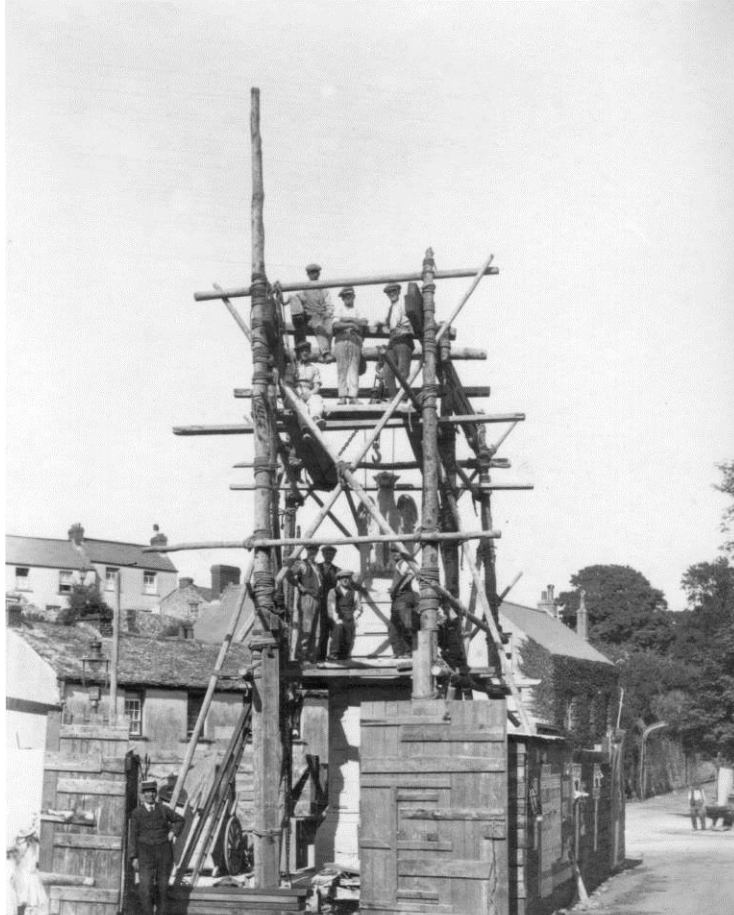


Illustration: 1 Installing the Pembrokeshire War Memorial at Salutation Square, Haverfordwest in August 1921.

Using Gregory's multiplier of an average of six close relatives to each fatality would lead to an estimated 5,000 Pembrokeshire residents who had experienced personal bereavement.³ The war was more aggressively memorialized and commemorated than any war before or since.⁴ The rich symbolism of the memorials and the unveiling ceremonies were an emotional catharsis which reflected the scale of sacrifice and offered the opportunity to the families to move on with their lives. Nor were monuments composed merely of lifeless stone or marble. Village memorial halls and

³ Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War. British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008), 253; around 1,200 names appear on the panels although the exact number may never be known. Viscount St David's told the County War Fund committee in June 1919 how there had been 880 known fatalities with the number perhaps reaching 1,000 together with 136 local prisoners of war, *H&MHT*, 11 June 1919.

⁴ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke, 2002), 208.

hospitals were built and endowed in the name of remembrance, a utilitarian and egalitarian movement.⁵ This was typified by the opening of the 38-bed County War Memorial Hospital at Haverfordwest on 24 May 1923 which cost £25,000 to build.⁶



Illustration : 2 Unveiling the Narberth War Memorial on 14 March 1924 (Narberth Museum NARBM 215).

The people of Pembrokeshire commemorated their dead of the first ‘total’ war between alliances of industrialized nation states; a conflict waged with unprecedented intensity and prodigious in the wastage both of human lives and economic resources. The need to memorialise the First World War raises important questions about its impact on society, politics and culture. The impact of the war on the combatants through direct military experience was real enough, but one of the contentious debates of twentieth-century historiography rests upon the consequences of the war for the

⁵ J.M. Winter, ‘British National Identity and the First World War’, in S.J. Green and R.C. Whiting (eds), *The Boundaries of the State in Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1996), 269.

⁶ *PT*, 30 May 1923.

civilian population: whether these changes were permanent or of a transient, short-term nature; whether they were directly due to the war or were the result of longer-term trends. If people in Pembrokeshire remembered the conflict, what were they remembering and how much had the experiences of war changed the milieu in which they worked and lived afterwards? These broad questions are at the centre of this thesis. The centenary of the outbreak of the war has generated enormous interest in the conflict and swelled the already prodigious literature on the war. Before considering the merits of a county-wide analysis of Pembrokeshire it is necessary to contextualise this study in the debate on the nature and causes of social change and the First World War. This thesis will be a micro-historical ‘test’ of how the war impacted on a Welsh county with clear reference to period-specific and generic issues. As such this study seeks to make an important evidenced-based micro-historical contribution.

Context: change versus continuity

The use of the noun ‘watershed’ is commonplace to describe the events of 1914-18, but historians are deeply divided on the long-term impact of that war on society.⁷ The nature of this debate began in earnest in the 1960s when social history, the lives and living conditions and relationships of ordinary people, was recognized as a comparatively neglected field of historical study. One of these early enquiries was Arthur Marwick’s ‘British Life and Leisure and the First World War’ (1965).⁸ This was a precursor to his voluminous study of British life between 1914 and 1919 in *The Deluge. British Society and the First World War*, published later that year. One group

⁷ Jon Lawrence, ‘The First World War and its Aftermath’, in Paul Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (London, 1994), 164.

⁸ Daniel Snowman, *Past Masters. The Best of History Today* (Stroud, 2001), 219-229.

of historians, including Marwick, Gilbert and Turner claimed that the war was a fundamental discontinuity in European history, while others argued that it accelerated existing trends which were apparent before 1914. Great social and cultural shifts and realignments have been claimed on account of the war. Constantine *et al.* extend this argument by explaining how the war shattered the Liberal interpretation of history as a move from barbarism to enlightenment,⁹ For Mackenzie the conflict killed off popular imperialism.¹⁰ As Berghoff and von Friedeburg contend, interpretations vary widely but are highly dependent on the criteria employed and the time scale adopted.¹¹ Any set of arguments can be marshalled to develop an historical premise for or against the idea of social change. Further, the First World War has been associated with the dissolution of religious certainty, providing a political framework for totalitarianism.¹² Mari Williams has argued that the conflict distinctly changed the dynamism and self-confidence of Edwardian Wales.¹³

The tensions between the two interpretations are aptly described by Jose Harris as the choice between a time bomb of total change or a more humble pressure cooker of gradualist evolution.¹⁴ Arthur Marwick was the leading proponent of the former view, whose aforementioned landmark study did much to focus historical attention on the societal aspects of the war rather than the purely military events. His was the first popular and comprehensive account of British wartime experience. He made a plea

⁹ Stephen Constantine, Maurice W. Kirby and Mary B. Rose (eds), 'Introduction', *The First World War in British History* (London, 1995), 1.

¹⁰ John B. Mackenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1986), 1.

¹¹ Hartmut Berghoff and Robert von Friedeburg (eds), 'Introduction', *Change and Inertia. Britain under the impact of the Great War* (Bodenheim, 1998), 13.

¹² Mario Caciagli, 'Critics of totalitarianism', in Terence Ball and Richard Bellamy (eds), *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2003), 183.

¹³ Mari A. Williams, 'In the Wars: Wales 1914-1945', in Gareth Elwyn Jones and Dai Smith (eds), *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), 1. Substantial recent scholarship has qualified many of the long-held assumptions of the Welsh war experience. For example, Robin Barlow 'So Wales supported the War?' in H.V. Bowen (ed.) *A New History of Wales: Myths and Realities in Welsh History* (Llandysul, 2011), 150-58.

¹⁴ Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit. A Social History of Britain 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1993), 1.

against viewing the war and social change as two distinct variables; postulating that war cannot be separated from society, nor even acts as a catalyst. Rather for Marwick it springs out of society.¹⁵ Thus ‘societies at war’ describe the interaction and processes which result in catastrophic destruction, the testing of institutions, participation by under-privileged groups and the psychological trauma of war.¹⁶ Marwick viewed the war as ushering in highly significant social change and loosening hitherto rigid class boundaries.

A number of historians share Marwick’s view that the war ushered in fundamental and lasting change. Frazer points to the chasm separating the societies of 1914 and 1918 which, in his opinion, ‘swept away the old and created a whole new world.’¹⁷ Gaffney asserted that there is an unusual degree of consensus among Welsh historians in viewing the conflict as a true watershed although more recent research notes many post-war continuities than previously believed.¹⁸ The social changes inferred in chapter headings as ‘an end of the old world’ seemingly invoke millenarian or apocalyptic waves of discontinuity and change.¹⁹ The need to establish a direct causal link between the war and social changes is perhaps a reflection of the desire by historians to provide a set of answers to this challenging question. Stevenson detects limited social change in Britain when compared to the other belligerent states, but he reiterates the caveat that there is huge difficulty in disentangling the impact of the war from longer-term trends apparent before 1914.²⁰

Another interpretation views the war as the supreme accelerant of difference. One

¹⁵ Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge. British Society and the First World War* (Basingstoke, 1991 ed.), 16.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 17-18.

¹⁷ Derek Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State* (Basingstoke, 1991), 177.

¹⁸ Angela Gaffney, *Aftermath: Remembering the Great War in Wales* (Cardiff 1998), 9. Lisa Snook notes continuity in women’s social position rather than revolutionary change, ‘Out of the Cage?’ *Women and the First World War in Pontypridd*, *Llafur*, 8:2 (2001), 75-87.

¹⁹ Peter G. Cooksley, *The Home Front* (Stroud, 2006), 117.

²⁰ John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-1945* (Harmondsworth, 1990), 46.

body of opinion inclines towards the view that the war was the principal agency of social change although another poses the question whether it is really possible to isolate the effects of war from inherently existing trends in society.²¹ For Robb, no events occur in isolation and many of the much-heralded changes could be discerned in the long Edwardian decade (1902-14). Social forces could have more deep-seated causes and for Robb 'healthy scepticism' about the causal relationship between war and social change is required.²² De Groot detects changes in society as being of limited duration.²³ Further, although war changed work patterns, diet, health, entertainment and the availability of goods and services, De Groot suggests that it is reckless to postulate an all-embracing theory of war being directly responsible. In his opinion the forces of conservatism and tradition were fully equal to the task of circumscribing change.²⁴ Jay Winter detects strong continuities in occupational and demographic trends and argues robustly that the war actually raised the standard of health of the civilian population.²⁵ There was no linear march of change, whether wrought by war or not, and if, as Trotsky claimed, war was the locomotive of history, the rolling stock of change could be 'slow, outmoded and prone to delay and cancellation'.²⁶ Amidst the carnage and uncertainty, Gilbert argues that the First World War could just as easily reinforce the forces of conservatism, as civilians desired to reconstruct institutions and practices according to familiar cherished patterns and pre-war norms and practices, his response to Marwick's social Marxist history.²⁷

²¹ Bernard Waites, *A Class Society at War. England 1914-1918* (Leamington Spa, 1987), 376.

²² Robb, *British Culture*, 3.

²³ Gerard De Groot, *British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London, 1996).

²⁴ Gerard De Groot 'The First World War as Total War', in Martin Pugh (ed.) *A Companion to Modern European History 1871-1945* (Oxford, 1997), 278-279.

²⁵ J. M. Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London, 1985), 2.

²⁶ Robb, *British Culture*, 3.

²⁷ Bentley B. Gilbert, *British Social Policy 1914-1939* (London, 1970), 1.

The situation is further complicated by the definition of social change which historians have put forward. There is also the problem of how to evaluate individual perceptions and experiences along with the main themes usually taken to categorize general social change; social cohesion, welfare, artistic, cultural life, family, role and status of women and political values.²⁸ Amidst the claim and counter-claim over the scale and primacy of the social impact of the First World War, the need for a more balanced approach is an alluring one, coupled with the realisation that intensive historical research in this field has provided a rich ‘variety of new assessments as well as debunking older myths’.²⁹ If it is true, as Stanislaw Andreski claims, that war is a searchlight, it is one which illuminates society and the purpose of the historical researcher is to, *inter alia*, discern the illumination in the lives of ordinary people.³⁰

Pembrokeshire and the importance of regional studies

The central hypothesis of this thesis is that social change occurred in Pembrokeshire as a result of the Great War although this was uneven and largely of limited duration and that the forces of tradition and conservatism resisted the capacity for more dramatic or longer-lasting change. With regard to the emergence of the Labour party, agricultural trade unions and the dissolution of Pembrokeshire landed estates, the changes were long term. The project has two blocks, each consisting of three chapters. The first focuses on the growing interventionist tendencies by the state directing the lives of the citizens in the quest for maximum exploitation of national resources. The second block explores changing identities, cultural, ethnic, gender and civilian

²⁸ Ian F.W. Beckett, *The Great War 1914-1918* (Harlow, 2001), 243.

²⁹ Heather Jones, Jennifer O’Brien and Christoph Schmidt-Supprian, *Untold War. New Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden, 2008), 1.

³⁰ Jay Winter and Antoine Proust, *The Great War in History. Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge, 2005), 157.

experiences of war. The county illustrates the impact of the war in the centre versus periphery debate.

The hard grind of work, worry over a loved one serving in harm's way, shortages, inflation and changes to established habits and customs can be gleaned though not always comprehensively, from a detailed, in-depth analysis of the impact on specific, localised areas. This serves as a model of those regional and local studies which have usefully informed the general assumptions of national history by focusing on the local and particular.

An in-depth local or regional analysis of civilian experiences during the First World War offers an invaluable insight into the totality of experience and greater intimacy with primary sources which national descriptions cannot match. Put simply, local or regional studies of the experience of social change during 1914-18 bring more flavour, texture and reality to the study of lives of the civilian population. Black asserts how micro-history is the only dimension in which depth can be discovered by acknowledging the existence of regional differences.³¹ Societies represent complex interactions of people in a multitude of communal patterns. We cannot generalise on the impact of the war given the diverse spatial nature of economic, demographic and cultural factors at play. Nor should we underestimate the convolution or multiplicity of the apparently innocuous term of 'community.' While a nation can be an imagined construct, community can mean a social and geographical entity around which ordinary people construct their daily lives.³² As Davies explains, they are not merely

³¹ Jeremy Black and Donald M. Macrauld, *Studying History* (Basingstoke, 2007), 96.

³² Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert (eds), *Capital Cities at war. Paris, London and Berlin 1914-1919* (Cambridge, 1997), 4. Gamble stresses the anthropological perspective and how social life is at the heart of the historical process with the 'social brain' working well in both shallow and deep history. Clive Gamble, 'The anthropology of deep history,' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 26:1 (2015), 147.

geographical expressions but represent 'shared interests, occupational or ethnic groupings, reflected in social networks which may be localized but not necessarily so.'³³ Further, the utility of the concept of community is demonstrated by its ideological as well as geographic connotations with 'its polyvalence, appropriability and capacity for synonym'.³⁴ Regional studies of the war can demonstrate how the conflict impacted from area to area and also how the influence and effect could quite likely contain tendencies, counter-tendencies, continuity yet sectoral unevenness as the conflict intensified.³⁵ This study will attempt to follow a pattern of enquiry for micro-history, a person-centred analysis rather than macro-political or religious structures.

This methodology appropriately captures the nature of pre-First World War societies where localism predominated. In his masterly analysis of the impact of the war upon farm workers of rural England, Mansfield alludes to the importance of locality as a determinant of response to the war and a decisive influence on how people behaved.³⁶ He makes the point that the mass of literature on the First World War has rather tended to overlook how localities, communities and regions were induced to participate and support the war effort. Instead, researchers have concentrated on the larger, strategic domestic or military issues and especially the minutiae of the war without connecting these to the reactions of localities. The manifestation of 'belonging' to a locality often revealed itself in prejudices or confined humanitarianism.³⁷ Reactions and behaviours varied from individual to individual

³³ Charlotte Aull Davies, 'Conceptualizing Community', in Charlotte Aull Davies and Stephanie Jones (eds), *Welsh Communities. New Ethnological Perspectives* (Cardiff, 2003), 3.

³⁴ Bernard Deacon and Moira Donald, 'In search of community history', *Family and Community History*, 7:1 (2004), 14.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 227.

³⁶ Nicholas Mansfield, *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism 1900-1930* (Aldershot, 2001).

³⁷ K.D.M. Snell *Parish and Belonging. Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700-1950* (Cambridge, 2006), 3.

and above all, the war was a grass roots experience. Every national legislative measure and government directive found a translation and mediation into the regional or parochial in a variety of ways.

No county level research or discussion has been undertaken for Pembrokeshire in south-west Wales although Barlow's recent study is a welcome addition for Wales as is that of Carradice for Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and Lewis for Swansea³⁸. The corpus of Welsh material is far from overwhelming.³⁹ For Pembrokeshire perhaps this neglect can be explained by the geographical location, a peninsula on the western tip of the Principality, bounded by the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel to the west, and the rural counties of Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire to the east. The county might appear a world removed from the mud of Flanders or northern France and well beyond the operational capabilities of Zeppelins or Gotha bombers. Nevertheless the county's wartime experience, influenced by the U-boat campaign around its coastline from 1915, represents a fascinating challenge, where a varied set of economic, geographic, social and cultural factors created communities full of rich contrasts and diversity. The 'front' was no static geo-military expression but a more amorphous and flexible concept expressing the protean ways in which civilians interacted with the military conflict.

³⁸ Robin Barlow, *Wales and the First World War* (Llandysul, 2014); Phil Carradice, *Cardiff & The Vale in the First World War* (Stroud, 2014); Bernard Lewis, *Swansea in the Great War* (Barnsley, 2014).

³⁹ For the place of women during the war and post-war Wales see Deirdre Beddoe, 'Munitionettes, Maids and Mams: Women in Wales 1914-1939', in Angela V. John (ed.) *Our Mothers' Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939* (Cardiff, 1991); for political changes David A. Pretty, *The Rural Revolt that Failed. Farm Workers Trade Unions in Wales 1889-1950* (Cardiff, 1989); Cyril Parry, 'Gwynedd and the Great War, 1914-1918', *WHR*, 14 (1988); Chris Williams, *Democratic Rhondda. Politics and Society 1885-1951* (Cardiff, 1996); For Labour party history Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams, Deian Hopkin (eds), *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000); Military recruitment is addressed in Clive Hughes, 'The New Armies', in I.F.W. Beckett and Keith Simpson (eds), *A Nation in Arms. A Social Study of the First World War* (Manchester, 1985); Neil Evans 'Loyalties: state, nation, community and military recruiting in Wales 1840-1918,' in Matthew Caragoe and Chris Williams (eds), *Wales and War* (Cardiff, 2007).

Every agency, board or public body operated at the level of high politics but also in a provincial interpretation. Thus the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee and later department for National Service found echoes in recruiting meetings or dreary door-to-door canvassing. The method by which conscription was ultimately delivered, the Military Service Tribunals, were a local phenomenon with around 2,000 in every urban and rural council area.⁴⁰ Gregory sees the tribunals as the ultimate expression of civil society in action.⁴¹ In reviewing Gregory's *The Last Great War: British Society and the Last Great War*, Catriona Pennell commends his methodology of micro-analysis which demonstrates there was no single experience of war while maintaining a national perspective.⁴² Similarly, Janet S.K. Watson's *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory and the First World War* (2004) is hampered by the absence of regional-difference studies.⁴³ Pennell makes a plea for the best way to penetrate the 'illusory veil of a unitary national experience' being to describe the character of community life in wartime.⁴⁴ Thus, future research into British society in wartime ought to be conducted at community level, which allows for differences, contrasts and pluralities to be appreciated. For Pennell: 'It is only by giving authority to the myriad faces of those who experienced the First World War as it happened, when it happened, that the layers of retrospective mythology can be dismantled.'⁴⁵ An anthropological framework of the kind evolved by Geertz will seek to examine constructs of meaning and identity inherent in his 'thick description' of language and symbolic forms in life. There can be much originality here. As Gaffney asserts, 'the

⁴⁰ K.R. Grieves, 'Military Tribunal Papers: The case of Leek Local Tribunal in the First World War', *British Records Association* 16:70 (1983), 145.

⁴¹ Adrian Gregory, 'Military Service Tribunals in action, 1916-1918', in Jose Harris (ed.), *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions* (Oxford, 2003), 177-90.

⁴² Catriona Pennell, 'British Society and the First World War', *War in History*, 16:4 (2009), 509.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 512.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 515.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 518.

human experience of the Great War in Wales remains to be told'.⁴⁶

A number of regional and community studies have been undertaken illustrating the value of this approach. Lowther demonstrates the rural patrimonial influences on voluntary recruitment in Sussex, where the expectation was that the deferential labourers would follow 'their betters' into battle.⁴⁷ Other studies allude to the wider social and economic factors which prompted people to change political allegiance. In the context of Wales, we have Cyril Parry's research on Gwynedd where he detects the long-term effects of the war as readily discernible upon the traditional pattern of institutions, class relationships and economic fortunes.⁴⁸ Parry views the conflict as the catalyst for new ideas, values and attitudes signifying an historic watershed and the beginning of a new and turbulent period. Much of the Welsh local studies consider attitudes to recruiting, as seen for example, in Clive Hughes's study of Gwynedd in 1914-16,⁴⁹ a subject which is treated in the broadest sense by John Richards in his study of *Wales and the Western Front* (1994). Significant work includes studies into conscientious objection to war service by David Cleaver⁵⁰ and Anthony Mor-O'Brien.⁵¹ All have found places in the canon of Welsh First World War studies together with Robin Barlow's examination of several aspects of Carmarthenshire life between 1914 and 1919.⁵² For other areas of Wales, Hicks examines the impact on Barry in his 324-page study.⁵³ Bernard Lewis has recently contributed a major study

⁴⁶ Gaffney, *Aftermath. Remembering the Great War in Wales*, 3.

⁴⁷ Keith Grieves, 'Lowther's Lambs: Rural paternalism and Voluntary Recruitment in the First World War', *Rural History* 4:1 (1993), 55.

⁴⁸ Cyril Parry, 'Gwynedd and the Great War,' *WHR*, 14, (1988), 117.

⁴⁹ Clive Hughes, 'The New Armies', in Ian Beckett and Keith Simpson (eds), *A Nation in Arms* (Manchester, 1985), 99-126.

⁵⁰ David Cleaver, 'Conscientious objection in the Swansea area', *Morgannwg*, 28 (1984), 48-54.

⁵¹ Anthony Mor-O'Brien, 'Conchie: Emrys Hughes and the First World War', *WHR*, 13 (1987), 328-352.

⁵² Robin Barlow, 'Some Aspects of the experience of Carmarthenshire in the First World War' University of Wales PhD (2001).

⁵³ Jonathan Philip Hicks, *Barry and the Great War* (Barry, 2007).

on Swansea, especially recruiting, the role of women, charitable work and the reception accorded to Belgian refugees.⁵⁴ Some Welsh studies concentrate on specific aspects of social, economic or occupational experience. Griffiths takes the coalminers of Denbighshire as examples of a more assertive labour force.⁵⁵ Gaffney describes the meaning and symbolism of commemoration in her study of First World War monuments in Ceredigion.⁵⁶

A tapestry of urban, rural, cosmopolitan, parochial, English-and-Welsh-speaking communities presented very real contrasts. This PhD will contextualise the wider debate of dramatic or longer-term transformation by looking at Pembrokeshire. The fundamental question at the heart of this research will be to analyse and examine the influence of the First World War as an engine of economic, social and political change and provide a really valuable insight from viewing the totality of the Pembrokeshire experience which wider, national discussions cannot capture.

Hardly any published research exists for Pembrokeshire during the First World War. The only text to date is Vernon Scott's *When the Poppies Bloom Again: Pembrokeshire and the Great War* (1998). The work is based almost entirely upon one primary source, the *Pembroke County Guardian*, together with brief quoted extracts from a girl, Milly Dony, who was growing up in Pembroke Dock. There is no synthesis of narrative, analysis or comparison, merely bald newspaper extracts with no attempt to plant them in the historiographical wider context. There is no analytical framework other than a month-by-month chronology of newspaper extracts. However a huge variety of primary sources exist for this period. These include five provincial

⁵⁴ Bernard Lewis, *Swansea in the Great War* (Barnsley, 2014).

⁵⁵ Eric Griffiths, 'Denbighshire Coalminers and their agent during the Great War 1914-18', *Transactions of the Denbighshire Historical Society*, 50 (2001), 116-161.

⁵⁶ Angela Gaffney, 'The Great War in Wales: Memory and Monuments in Ceredigion', *Journal of the Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society*, 14 1 (2001), 137.

newspapers, school logbooks, church and chapel minutes, commercial papers like those of the Milford Docks Company, parish and urban council minute books, the bureaucracy of Pembrokeshire County Council and court files. The principal objective will be to evaluate these for the fundamental questions whether there is evidence of social change and the extent to which war was the agency of difference and whether post-war developments made for pre-war norms. This whole society examination will focus on important aspects of economic, social, political, educational and cultural experiences. The six chapters of this thesis will examine changes to local bureaucratic structures, living conditions, military recruitment, patriotism and personal identities and cultural changes.

Pembrokeshire Before 1914

It is important to contextualise Pembrokeshire before the First World War so as to provide a base from which to measure subsequent changes. The confluence of important maritime traffic routes to Ireland and the west of England was one of the reasons for the prominence of Pembrokeshire in the economy of south Wales, a prominence which was not entirely diminished after the penetration of the railways into the county from the mid-nineteenth century. A ferry route was operated by the Great Western Railway Company from Fishguard and Goodwick on the northern coast to Rosslare in southern Ireland from 1906, and Fishguard became an important regional hub for the northern half of the county. Tenby, a popular seaside resort since the eighteenth century, had important maritime links with Ilfracombe and the North Devon coast. The population of Pembrokeshire was static but subject to absolute decline between 1861 and 1901 largely because of out-migration to the south Wales coalfield further east which was critically facilitated by the railway. The county

covered an area of 393,093 statute acres and was overwhelmingly rural with a necklace of villages around the coast and major waterways.⁵⁷ In 1911, the population, which recovered slightly before the war, stood at 89,960 (43,462 males and 46,498 females), a modest 2.4 per cent increase on the previous decennial census. The rurality was amply demonstrated by the low population density of 146 people per square mile, rather less than that of Carmarthenshire (where the figure stood at 174) but more than Cardiganshire (with 86 persons to the square mile).⁵⁸ Gradual local population growth occurred rather than the alternative method of increase, in-migration. In 1911 there were 2,019 births and 1,246 deaths.⁵⁹ Although use of the term ‘urban’ is strongly qualified by the small absolute size of the municipal boroughs (there were three, Haverfordwest, Pembroke and Tenby) and urban districts (Fishguard, Milford Haven, Neyland and Narberth), the population was a gradually urbanizing one. Between 1901 and 1911 there was a 4.8 per cent increase in those living in urban areas.⁶⁰ Even so, on the eve of the war the *habitué* of most county residents was still rural. The county of Pembrokeshire was a much more rural one than many Welsh and nearly every English county.

On account of the long history of Anglo-Norman colonization in south Pembrokeshire a fascinating linguistic divide made the county unique for the spatial preponderance of Welsh speakers roughly aligning to historical geography. The so-called ‘Landsker Line’ was an invisible yet discernible division stretching from Roch on St. Bride’s Bay across the county through Haverfordwest and towards the market town of

⁵⁷ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.6258) *Census of England and Wales, 1911 (10 Edward 7 and 1 George 5; Ch.27) Area, families or separate occupiers and population. Volume 1. Administrative areas, counties and urban and rural districts.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.6191). *General abstract of marriages, births and deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1911.*

⁶⁰ PP. 1912-13 (Cd. 6258) *Census of England and Wales, 1911 Volume 1.*

Narberth. Welsh place names and first-language Welsh speaking predominated to the north with English enjoying a similar pre-eminence to the south. Overall, 7.7 per cent of the population in 1911 were monoglot Welsh speakers, while overall, 25.1 per cent were conversant in both tongues.⁶¹ The increasing proportion of Welsh speakers increased markedly in northern communities. These linguistic differences ensured that the vocabulary and discourse employed through chapel services, newspapers, recruiting meetings and cultural norms reflected English and Welsh appeals to patriotism and support for the war. Methods in communicating messages and sustaining civilian morale made the language dimension an important one.

Agriculture remained the largest sector of employment of labour, with the land being owned by a large number of landed proprietors who largely monopolized social, judicial and local government offices, even after the nascent signs of local democracy after 1888 and the local government acts. At least one third of the rated property of the county was owned by just 27 people, headed by Earl Cawdor, whose Welsh estates amounted to 51,538 acres.⁶² Mixed farming provided the model for most Pembrokeshire farms; a combination of dairy, corn growing, cattle rearing, horses, pigs and poultry. The county had a total cultivated area of 306,900 acres in 1912-14 of which 29.5 per cent was under arable.⁶³ Wage rates for agricultural workers matched the Welsh norm. In 1907 average weekly cash wages were 12s. 9d. a week.⁶⁴ In 1901 the agricultural workforce (both male and female) was 5,684.⁶⁵ Changes that

⁶¹ Alan R. Thomas, 'The Linguistic Background', in Peter S. Harper and Eric Sunderland (eds), *Genetic and Population Studies in Wales* (Cardiff, 1986), 54.

⁶² Muriel Bowen Evans, 'The Land and its People, 1815-1974', in David W. Howell (ed.) *Pembrokeshire County History*, Volume IV, 1815-1974, (Haverfordwest, 1993), 15.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁶⁴ PP. 1912-13 (Cd. 6228) *Abstract of Labour statistics: Board of Trade (Department) Fifteenth abstract of labour statistics of the United Kingdom.*

⁶⁵ David W. Howell, 'Farming in Pembrokeshire 1815-1974', in David W. Howell (ed.), *Pembrokeshire County History Volume IV. Modern Pembrokeshire 1815-1974* (Haverfordwest, 1993), 106.

occurred within the agricultural sector during the war will thus warrant careful discussion and analysis.

The different functionality and diversity of urban communities in the county provided a compelling reason to evaluate their wartime experiences. The county town, administrative, judicial and retail centre was Haverfordwest, which had a population of 5,919 in 1911.⁶⁶ A very rich and diverse variety of commercial enterprises ensured that the borough represented the main retail centre as well as the trappings of an ancient borough which was established by Norman-Flemish settlers, *circa* 1110. The town of Milford Haven, with a population of 6399 in 1911, was one of the nation's important fishing ports. In 1908, there were 323 fishing vessels trading to port and 44,283 tons of fish were landed there.⁶⁷ Allied maritime industries made the community vital to the economic well-being of west Wales and ensured the port suffered the brunt of the U-boat campaign which commenced in 1915. On census day in 1911, 68 vessels were at sea carrying crews of 595 men.⁶⁸ The major northern port of Fishguard had a population of 2,271 and connected south Wales with southern Ireland and to the wider maritime battleground of the U-boat menace during wartime. Tenby, in the south-east, had a population of 4,368 and enjoyed considerable prosperity as the principal tourist destination. Despite its relative isolation from the large conurbations, Pembrokeshire boasted the only Royal Navy dockyard at Pembroke Dock. Established in 1814 and employing 2,000-3,000 skilled engineers, craftsmen as well as the artisanal class it was an exceptionally important local employer as well as a strategic asset of national defence. The health of the dockyard was a litmus test for politicians seeking election and a nervous tension looked for any

⁶⁶ *Kelly's Directory*, 1914.

⁶⁷ K.D. McKay, *A Vision of Greatness. The History of Milford 1790-1990* (Haverfordwest, 1989), 182.

⁶⁸ PP. 1912-13 (Cd. 5705). Census of England and Wales, 1911. Preliminary report with tables of the population enumerated in England and Wales (administrative, registration and parliamentary areas).

sign of closure or downgrading. Decline set in after 1900 but was not perceptible to contemporaries. The armoured cruiser HMS *Defence* launched in 1907 was the last major warship, followed by one light cruiser a year and a handful of submarines.⁶⁹

The rest of the county contained a network of urban, rural district and parish councils created by the Local Government Act of 1894, with Pembrokeshire County Council (created in 1889) as the local education authority. These neighbouring communities showed social and economic differences in the late summer of 1914, a season which assumed the state of a permanent symbol of innocence before the test of modern war.⁷⁰ There were 129 voluntary controlled and county schools while the 400 or so churches and chapels reflected the differing worlds of Anglicanism and Nonconformist. The latter, especially, had received a palpable boost by the Revival of 1904-5 and religious adherence remained a potent force.⁷¹ Pembrokeshire contained two parliamentary constituencies, the Pembrokeshire county and Pembroke Boroughs (the latter incorporating major population centres like Pembroke and Haverfordwest). Both were solidly Liberal, especially after the *annus mirabilis* of Liberalism in 1906 when the party swept all before it.

There were increasing signs of disquiet in labour relations even before the outbreak of war. In 1911 the rail network was paralysed by a rail strike, while disputes over pay, conditions and victimisation of union members at Milford Haven would have brought the fishing industry to a standstill in the late summer of 1914, if it had not been for the outbreak of the war.⁷² Other industrial concerns included mineral and aggregate

⁶⁹ Lawrence Phillips, 'Pembroke Dockyard', in Howell, David W., (ed.), *Pembrokeshire County History. Volume IV. Modern Pembrokeshire 1815-1974* (Haverfordwest, 1993), 152-173.

⁷⁰ Paul Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford 1975), 24.

⁷¹ Robert Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival of 1904-5', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 57:3 (2006), 515-34.

⁷² K D McKay 'The Port of Milford: The Fishing Industry', in Howell, David W., (ed.), *Pembrokeshire County History Volume IV. Modern Pembrokeshire 1815-1974* (Haverfordwest, 1993), 174-186.

extraction at Porthgain (where there was a brick works) and a small but useful anthracite coal industry with mines at Hook, Saundersfoot and a few other places. War produced a set of threats and challenges very different from the geological and social ones which troubled the industry up to 1914.

Attempting to measure and explain the impact of the First World War on civilian lives from the longer trends apparent in society is a notoriously difficult task. Any project which seeks to surmise the experiences of 90,000 people over fifty-one months of war is of necessity a Herculean task. Thus a narrow, focused enquiry drilling into specific subject areas with the individual as the centre is essential in order to achieve real meaning. Changes to psychology, living conditions, social mores, perceptions of gender, politics, growth of local and national government and always retaining the aspect of the personal, whenever possible, is challenging but very rewarding. Changes certainly occurred, from a variety of causes, but teasing the origins and permanence is the key question beneath the overarching theme of war. Did fundamental change to attitudes and institutions occur and were these temporary or irrevocable? The analysis will demonstrate that the consequences were felt not at a theoretical or abstract level of high politics, but in the every-day lives of those who lived during those tumultuous years. Individual consciousness inevitably shaped how people regarded their own experiences.⁷³ Those who gathered at Salutation Square at Haverfordwest in September 1921 knew they had survived momentous events. It is a challenge of this historical research to give a more complete understanding of social change, even if limited and temporary, as propelled by war.

⁷³ Gordon Phillips, 'The Social Impact', in Stephen Constantine, Maurice W. Kirby and Mary B. Rose (eds), *First World War in British History* (London, 1995), 138.

Chapter I

The Growth of State Intervention

This chapter will examine changes to the organisational and functional role of the national state as it manifested itself in Pembrokeshire during the First World War. The purpose of this chapter is to clearly examine whether and how the state expanded, sometimes through entirely novel and innovative structures while elsewhere they grafted additional functions on to existing bodies. The focus is to determine whether expanded bureaucracy outlived the immediate post-war period. Nor was the state alone in the exercise of influence over the lives of the individual. Power was vested in a mixed network of formal and informal sectors, voluntary, commercial and statutory.

Nevertheless, the increasing escalation of war, especially from 1917 did exert unprecedented demands upon the British state, pressures and tests which mirrored the ‘totalising dynamic’ of the war itself.⁷⁴ The war marked a decisive change from a spatially remote, weak, *laissez-faire* state into a highly centralised, interventionist organ determined to mobilise war resources to achieve national efficiency although it is possible to detect a shift before 1914. The old machinery of Westminster, according to Turner, was not sufficient to ensure effective control under wartime conditions.⁷⁵

The changing structures presented considerable opportunities for the political community, with the Labour party cutting its teeth in Pembrokeshire by virtue of representative boards and bodies.

The initial slogan of ‘Business as Usual’ represented the improvised, hesitant response of the Asquith war ministry (1914-16) which left large parts of the economy

⁷⁴ Jones, O’Brien and Schmidt-Supprian (eds), *Untold War* 3.

⁷⁵ John Turner, *British Politics and the Great War. Coalition and Conflict 1915-1918* (London, 1999), 439.

to the caprice of private enterprise. Initially, state intervention was a piecemeal affair, where decisions were taken in an *ad hoc* rather than strategically planned method.⁷⁶ With a penchant for experts, improvisers and creative thinkers, the premiership of Lloyd George (6 December 1916) saw the apogee of the new collectivist urge which ran through the government. The new possibility of the state as agent of social and economic change was pithily put by the prime minister when he stated, ‘The whole of society is more or less molten and you can stamp upon that mass almost anything’.⁷⁷ There was a blurring of boundaries between the state and civil society as the dynamic of power shifted between the individual, local and national government.⁷⁸ However, in some senses this expansion of the state built on pre-war trends.

If greater state intervention was the new theorem of wartime government, then its empiricism was the expansion and increasing complexity of its bureaucracy. The latter has two-fold meanings, either the framework of administrative control in general, or the regulation and dictates which arose there from. This chapter will examine the effects of state intervention on the lives of Pembrokeshire civilians through the creation or adaptation of local government bodies, the extension of state-defined criminal activity, the regulation of alcoholic liquor supply and the fostering of thrift among the population for wartime expenditure. Each reflects a different facet of the changing local conditions and have significant amount of primary source material available.

⁷⁶ Roger Chickering, ‘World War I and the Theory of Total War: reflections in the British and German Cases, 1914-1915’, in Roger Chickering and Stig Forster (eds), *Great War, Total War. Mobilisation on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 2000), 40.

⁷⁷ Peter Murray, *Poverty and Welfare 1815-1950* (London, 2006), 137.

⁷⁸ Richard Thurlow, *The Secret State. British Internal Security in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1994), 68.

The Expanding State

The size of government increased exponentially with a plethora of boards, commissions, ministries and resource controllers. New bureaucratic structures provided opportunities for the industrialist, innovators, entrepreneurs and businessmen who would create and hustle along a gigantic new enterprise.⁷⁹ It was most certainly not 'Business as usual' as the ministry, with 65,000 on the payroll, directed the combined output of three million people. The creation of a war cabinet by Lloyd George foreshadowed new ministries in food, shipping, labour, National Service and Air Board.⁸⁰ Railways, mines and shipping were key national assets which were either directly managed or vicariously controlled through some other executive function. Such expansion from the centre was not entirely uncontested, with tensions emerging from local government via whom new regulations were communicated and enforced. Moreover, although the state bureaucracy did expand into new areas of economy and society, the success of executive control depended to a large extent on self-mobilisation 'from below'. Individuals, sectional interests and local communities remained the mainsprings of patriotic action replicating pre-war patterns of government and a strong tradition of localism and devolution.⁸¹

In Pembrokeshire four key areas marked new engagement with the state: the National Register (1915), National Service (1917), food control committees and the work of the Pembrokeshire County War Agricultural Executive Committee. Leaving aside the manpower issues which fuelled the conscription debate, the National Register was an

⁷⁹ Wrigley, 'Ministry of Munitions', 40.

⁸⁰ John Turner, 'Cabinets, Committees and Secretariats: the Higher Direction of War', in Kathleen Burk (ed.), *War and the State. The Transformation of British Government 1914-1919* (London, 1982), 64.

⁸¹ Keith Grieves, 'Lloyd George and the British War Economy', in Roger Chickering and Stig Forster (eds), *Great War, Total War. Mobilisation on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 2000), 386.

ambitious attempt to collect base-line data on almost the whole adult population of the United Kingdom between the ages of fifteen and 65. The National Register was undertaken on 15 August 1915 and represented a totem of state power. The procedure was widely conceived as being the precursor to military and industrial conscription.⁸² Some 25 million forms were issued with 46 occupational groups for men and 30 for women, all coded. The forms were then sorted by age and marital status.⁸³ Registration was under the aegis of the Local Government Board but was carried out within the existing framework of urban and rural district councils under the advice and guidance of the Registrar-General. In Pembrokeshire it is clear that the machinery of local government was harnessed in order to distribute and collect the pink forms, although this was similar to how census enumerators had always operated. This exercise engaged whole councils and was therefore a bureaucratic novelty. At Fishguard the urban council voted to assist their clerk who had attended a training session at Carmarthen where he had been shown how to fill out the forms.⁸⁴ Volunteers were urged to show 'practical patriotism' by joining in the work.⁸⁵ The urban district was divided into eight districts and the canvass done with efficiency and zeal, although there were some vague responses from 'shady side-o'-forty spinsters'.⁸⁶ At St. Dogmaels 8,000 forms were distributed by both male and female enumerators.⁸⁷ The Tenby Borough Council, as the local registration authority, applied for 30 memorandum books to enable them to cover the town.⁸⁸ A band of 27 volunteers were required to obtain responses to the set questions. Men and women

⁸² Rosemary Elliot, 'An Early Experiment in National Identity Cards: The Battle over Registration in the First World War', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17:2 (2006), 147.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁸⁴ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Minutes of Fishguard Urban District Council 1912-16, 16 August 1915.

⁸⁵ *CE*, 15 July 1915.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 19 August 1915.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 2 September 1915.

⁸⁸ *TO*, 22 July 1915.

acted as enumerators, coders and clerical assistants, an early opportunity for female administrative experience.⁸⁹ Typical of the resulting forms was that possessed by George Clark of Burton (Illustration 3). All in all the National Register afforded an opportunity for much greater local participation in the work of government than before.

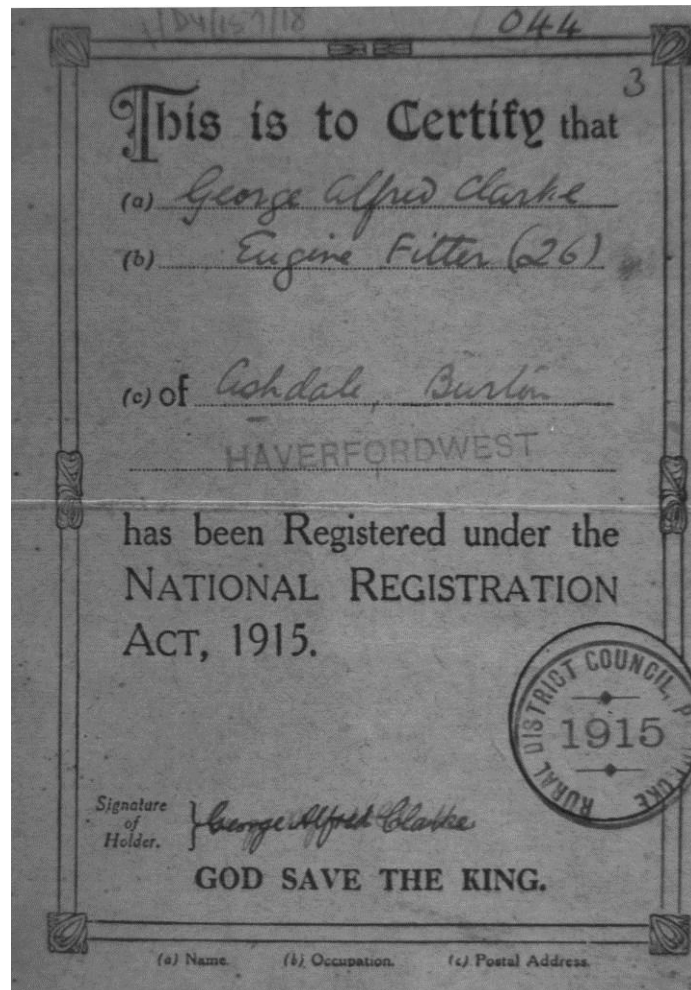


Illustration: 3 National Registration Card issued to George Alfred Clarke of Burton by the Pembroke Rural District Council, 1915. (PRO HDX/157/18).

If National Registration used existing structures and worked smoothly, despite the intrusive questioning over age and employment status, the same could not be said of National Service. Launched in February 1917, the intention was to find substitutes

⁸⁹ Ibid., 25 November 1915.

from men of military age who were in non-essential industries. Half a million workers were hoped for.⁹⁰ The Local Government Board requested (with the none-too veiled threat of coercion) co-operation from local authorities in the matter, a continuation of a widely used pre-1914 tactic. A county meeting was held for Pembrokeshire on 17 February 1917. Major General Ivor Philipps MP stated that they should find every man and woman who could be spared.⁹¹ Yet the local press generally deprecated the creation of a fresh bureaucracy with the implication of soft jobs and sinecures. For the solidly Liberal-supporting *Haverfordwest & Milford Haven Telegraph* ‘the creation of another horde of officials, all enjoying comfortable stipends, and all engaged in the congenial task of asking people to perform voluntary action’ seemed wholly unnecessary.⁹²

Since Pembrokeshire’s main industries were agriculture, fishing and the Pembroke Dockyard, and there was not a huge pool of male labour, it was unlikely there would be a flood of volunteers. In Pembrokeshire, National Service was not a success. At Tenby they were willing enough with a canvass organised of all town residents up to the age of 61, at the request of the Pembrokeshire National Service Recruiting Committee.⁹³ Advertisements called on patriotic workers to volunteer, so as to avoid compulsion. A proposal to air a special cinematic appeal at Tenby’s 700-seater picture palace did not proceed with since councillors thought the move ‘quite unnecessary.’⁹⁴ Despite a well-attended meeting at Milford Haven, the results of the Haverfordwest canvass were disappointing. At a follow-up meeting the mayor

⁹⁰ David Bilton, *The Home Front in the Great War. Aspects of the Conflict 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 2003), 75.

⁹¹ *H&MHT*, 21 February 1917.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *TO*, 8 March 1917.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29 March 1917.

described the scheme as rather ‘indefinite.’⁹⁵ At Pembroke an almost farcical situation arose when only a few hundred forms arrived instead of the thousands requested, with plenty of literature in Welsh which was of little use in this highly Anglicised part of Wales.⁹⁶ By mid-April 1917, only ten men had enrolled for National Service at Haverfordwest.⁹⁷ At Tenby when the committee met to discuss progress only nine of the 38 members bothered to attend.⁹⁸ There was little shock when the government scrapped the scheme and came in for ripe criticism for having spawned such a crass display of muddling.⁹⁹

The expanding state created tensions between various levels of local government which demonstrates that in Pembrokeshire the expansion of state apparatus was anything but uniformly harmonious. One of the most intractable problems of wartime health was the increasing incidence of tuberculosis, and an unseemly wrangle ensued between the Pembrokeshire Insurance Committee and the Pembrokeshire County Council as to the most efficacious means of treating sufferers of this infectious bacterial disease. There is a general consensus that tuberculosis was an irreducible problem which increased throughout the war years. This represents a major discontinuity with the Winter thesis of overall improving civilian health. Housing and working conditions, together with nutritional deficiency were undoubted factors, although as Bryder points out, the rise in the disease has not been adequately explained.¹⁰⁰ Migration and overwork might offer only partial answers.¹⁰¹ Contemporaries were in no doubt that much of the county’s wretched housing stock

⁹⁵ *H&MHT*, 18 April 1917.

⁹⁶ *PCG*, 6 April 1917.

⁹⁷ *TO*, 19 April 1917.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 26 July 1917.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 27 September 1917.

¹⁰⁰ Bryder, ‘The First World War: Healthy or Hungry?’, *History Workshop*, 24 (1987), 155.

¹⁰¹ Rollet, ‘The Other War II: Setbacks in Public Health’, *Capital Cities at War*, 485.

was the root cause, which the County Medical Officer noted in 1914-15 was the biggest cause of mortality in fifteen to 45 year olds.¹⁰²

One pan-Wales institution, the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association, dedicated to the prevention and eradication of tuberculosis, very prevalent in west Wales from the nineteenth century (alluded to as ‘the Welsh disease in the 1920s), received a Royal Charter in 1912. This sought to divide Wales into twelve districts each with a dedicated tuberculosis physician and institute although seldom co-terminus with existing county boundaries.¹⁰³ An intense and bitter controversy raged in Pembrokeshire over whether or not the county or more regional scheme would be more effectual in combating a disease which claimed 95 lives in 1914.¹⁰⁴ The debate was a vortex drawing in municipal party political and even nationalistic aspects above purely medical considerations. Pembrokeshire County Council’s Public Health and Housing Committee had devised a county tuberculosis scheme linking into existing public health structures ‘and it is absurd to set up a separate machinery for treating one disease.’¹⁰⁵ Initially the General Purposes Medical benefit and Sanatorium Sub-Committee of the Pembrokeshire Insurance Committee favoured the county scheme, although on 30 January 1915 their parent organisation rejected the Pembrokeshire- only scheme by a decisive majority. They warned of the dangers of isolation, leaving the county to depend merely on its own efforts to defeat the deadly scourge.¹⁰⁶ The county scheme envisaged 48 beds in a sanatorium, central and branch dispensaries and a dispensing tuberculosis officer. All told their scheme

¹⁰² *CE*, 21 January 1915.

¹⁰³ *TT*, 10 May 1912; Linda Bryder describes the work of the WNMA in Wales at a time when institutions were seen as a social panacea: ‘The King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association and its policy towards tuberculosis, 1910-48’, *WHR*, 13:2 (1986), 194-216.

¹⁰⁴ *PCG*, 15 January 1915.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 5 February 1915.

would cost £3,303, half of which would be met by government (Hobhouse) grant.¹⁰⁷

The county council came in for savage criticism over their failure to join the Welsh National Memorial Association, although one councillor, Major W.R. Roberts of Milford Haven, countered that the council were not prepared to divest themselves of dispensing and domiciliary care to their own people.¹⁰⁸ A succession of local councils and public bodies weighed in, deprecating the county council stance, although the latter refused to budge. The nascent Labour Party condemned the ‘shuttlecock stunt’ as both sides traded insults and offered to mediate a settlement.¹⁰⁹ The impasse remained until the Pembrokeshire Insurance Committee reluctantly gave way and adopted the county scheme on 27 October 1917. A tuberculosis doctor, E.F. Coghlan, duly commenced work on 1 January 1918.¹¹⁰ Ironically in the post-war retrenchment the county council were themselves to join with the Welsh National Association who bought St Brides Castle (former seat of Lord Kensington) and opened as a sanatorium in 1920.

Perhaps there was no greater example of wartime bureaucratic intervention than in the production and distribution of essential foodstuffs. A combination of a poor harvest in 1916 together with the unrestricted U-boat campaign from February 1917, which proved desperately serious, forced through a radical change in government food policies. On 8 December 1916, Lord Devonport was appointed as the nation’s first Food Controller.¹¹¹ His successor was the highly motivated Lord Rhondda who

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ *H&MHT*, 27 October 1915.

¹⁰⁹ *PCG*, 20 July 1917.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 1 February 1918.

¹¹¹ Margaret L. Barnett, *British Food Policy during the First World War* (London, 1985), 94.

reinvigorated the Ministry of Food which had come into being in January 1917. Dewey considers the question of food production and allocation as *the* most difficult challenge.¹¹² Food economy became essential and was combined with a robust food production policy, spearheaded by the Food Production department of the Board of Trade.¹¹³ Rationing of specific commodities was introduced with a national rationing of sugar on 31 December 1917.¹¹⁴ A general meat rationing order was extended nationwide in February 1918 and by July was extended to jam, butter, bacon, margarine and lard.¹¹⁵ Tea and cheese were rationed according to local options. Even so, 'National Control Tea,' sold at 2s. 8d. per pound, became a national phenomenon.¹¹⁶ By 1918 26,000 men and women were employed in food administration.¹¹⁷ Every adult citizen was issued with a ration book with detachable coupons. Burk considers how no other area of civilian life was so closely scrutinised by a meticulous and comprehensive local bureaucracy.¹¹⁸ In Pembrokeshire, food control was an example of expansion where genuinely new administrative machinery was created rather than the other form where additional work was grafted onto existing structures.

Localism was the essence of food control with nearly one thousand food control committees established to administer orders issued from the Food Controller under powers conferred by the Defence of the Realm Act regulations. Supposedly representative of traders, workers, farmers and women, the local committees were established across Pembrokeshire. In every borough, urban and rural district council

¹¹² P. Dewey, 'Food Production and Policy in the United Kingdom 1914-1918', *TRHS*, (1979), 71.

¹¹³ Joan Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. VIII 1914-1939* (Cambridge, 1978), 90.

¹¹⁴ Ian Beckett, *Home Front 1914-1918. How Britain Survived the Great War* (London, 2008), 120.

¹¹⁵ Jose Harris, 'Bureaucrats and Businessmen in British Food Control, 1916-19', in Kathleen Burk (ed.), *War and the State. The Transformation of British Government, 1914-1919* (London, 1982), 144.

¹¹⁶ John Burnett, *Liquid Pleasures. A Social History of Drink in Modern Britain* (London, 1999), 64.

¹¹⁷ Barnett, *British Food Policy*, 125.

¹¹⁸ Harris, 'Bureaucrats and Businessmen', 144.

area their operations and relationship to the centre highly revealing of the new nature of state control.

The work of food control was vested in local committees with executive officers, often serving council officials who carried out their normal tasks under increasing pressure. The grafting on of new duties to existing municipal posts was commonplace. The method by which officers were appointed varied across the county and the process was not always viewed as fair and open. At Fishguard, where meetings were held in closed session, their officer's salary was 12*s.* 6*d.* per week.¹¹⁹ Their food control committee had formerly been the National Service Committee but was merely renamed. They later appointed a food inspector to assist the executive with a salary of £65 per annum.¹²⁰ At Tenby there was an accusation of less than fair competition as the vacancy was filled without advertisement.¹²¹ The Pembroke committee also chose to augment local food control personnel by employing a shops inspector to ensure that food control prices were being adhered to.¹²²

There were often tensions and outright friction between food control committees and consumers as the former set down maximum prices as prescribed by the national controller. At Haverfordwest milk retailers demanded 6*d.* per quart and threatened to withhold supplies. They met with a timorous response from the committee who later found themselves the butt of much criticism due to a shortage of butter.¹²³ The discretionary powers to fix prices was only marginal but was still sufficient to create anomalies and distort the market for commodities. At Fishguard they raised the price of butter on account of a neighbouring committee allowing higher prices and thereby

¹¹⁹ CE, 6 September 1917.

¹²⁰ PRO.FGU/SE/1/3. Minutes of Fishguard Urban District Council 1916-21, 11 September 1917.

¹²¹ TO, 28 February 1918.

¹²² PCG, 28 September 1917.

¹²³ H&MHT, 28 November, 1917.

attracting most local supplies.¹²⁴ Food control committees advertised maximum prices for a vast array of staple foods although the change of available product did tend to vary dietary experiences. At Tenby margarine became a staple as their weekly allowance was a little over 11 hundredweight.¹²⁵ Frozen meat proved less than popular. Some 4,619 pounds of the item were allocated for Pembrokeshire every week but a significant number did not collect their entitlement.¹²⁶ Farmers were accused of profiteering, a charge which they rejected, arguing instead that shopkeepers were the worst offenders.¹²⁷

The advent of rationing in 1918 added greatly to the pressures on the new local bureaucracies. A county conference was convened to discuss rationing in February 1918 which became a reality with butter on 16 June 1918 (at five ounces a week per person).¹²⁸ The previous experiment with meat rationing in the county was labelled a fiasco by the press; the amount being allowed was so absurdly small ‘that the government will have no difficulty in delivering the goods.’¹²⁹ Meat rationing was introduced across the county in March 1918. All ration books had been duly issued at Fishguard by July 1918 but elsewhere additional labour was recruited from local schools to assist with administration, an example of inter-departmental co-ordination of scarce resources. Teachers at Pembroke East End School were engaged in filling out ration books.¹³⁰ When the Milford Haven Food Control Committee requested assistance from local elementary schools Hubberston School responded willingly.¹³¹

Some councils took decisive action to ensure adequacy of local supplies. The

¹²⁴ *CE*, 6 December 1917.

¹²⁵ *TO*, 18 April 1918.

¹²⁶ *PCG*, 21 June 1918.

¹²⁷ *H&MHT*, 1 October 1919. The Joint Haverfordwest Profiteering Committee appointed a woman, Miss John, as their clerical officer.

¹²⁸ *H&MHT*, 19 June 1918.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* 1 May 1918.

¹³⁰ PRO SSR/1/114/4. Pembroke East End Board School Logbook 1914-51; 5 July 1918.

¹³¹ PRO SSR/132/3. Hubberston National School Logbook 1910-36; 4 July 1918.

Haverfordwest Corporation opened a municipal milk depot where 1,470 gallons of milk were consumed weekly.¹³² There was an extraordinary complexity to efficient rationing schemes. A closing report by the Pembroke Food Control Executive Officer revealed how he had issued 15,204 individual sugar registration cards. (That issued to William James of Redberth an example of such papers Illustration 4) He also kept meticulous records of supplies, retailers and personal allowances in ledger accounts.¹³³ The effectiveness of the rationing measures seems difficult to measure given the lack of coverage given in the local press. Perhaps the most significant queues occurred at Pembroke Dock in 1918 where huge crowds lined up outside convenience stores; Maypole, the Star, Lipton's and Home and Colonial.¹³⁴

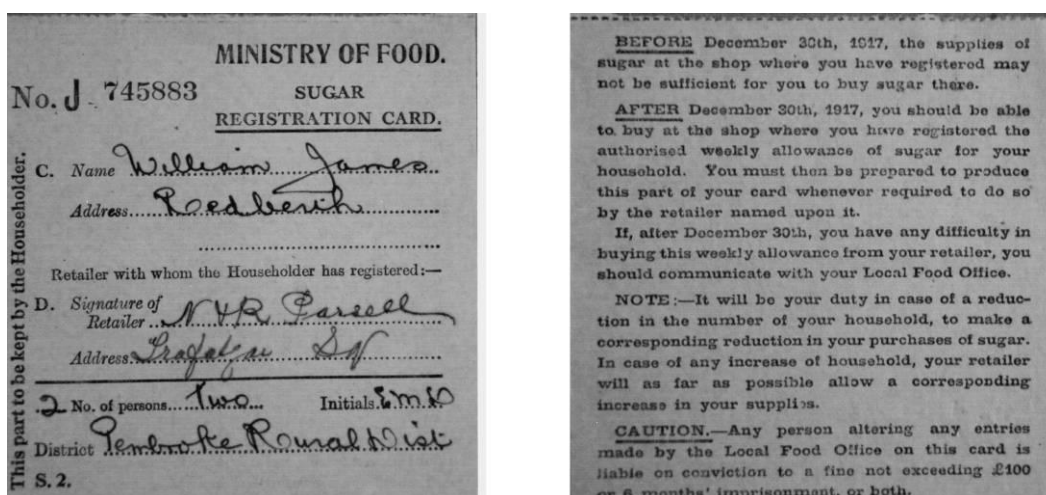


Illustration: 4 Ministry of Food Sugar Registration Card issued to William James of Redberth, 1917. (PRO HDX/353/10).

The bureaucracy of food control across Pembrokeshire was mirrored in the managing

¹³² PH, 6 December 1918.

¹³³ PCG, 15 November 1918.

¹³⁴ The recollections of William Henry Davies, aged 70 included how one queue was 1,000 people strong as residents sought to obtain a supply of margarine. Moreover even the rumour of supplies of tea or margarine reaching shops at Pembroke Dock would bring in hopeful shoppers from Tenby and Milford Haven, *Western Telegraph*, 6 February 1936.

of coal, coke and gas supplies, especially in the last months of the war.¹³⁵ Under the Household Fuel and Coal Order of 8 August 1918, local councils were required to appoint a fuel committee consisting of councillors along with representatives of coal merchants, railway and Gas Company concerns. Pembroke Borough duly appointed a fuel overseer at £100 a year, although they had appointed a coal prices committee the previous year and had interrogated local coal merchants as to how much they had increased their prices since 1914. They set down a maximum price of 42s. per ton for coal when delivered in bulk.¹³⁶ The Tenby Borough Coal prices sub-committee enforced the Retail Coal prices Order, 1917, when they set best house coal at 37s. 6d. per ton.¹³⁷ Discharged soldiers exerted a strong moral obligation upon the community when the posts of fuel officers were set to be filled; positive discrimination favoured those who had served with the colours. Fishguard council voted only to entertain applications from discharged servicemen.¹³⁸ At Tenby there was outrage when this post, attracting a salary of £40 a year, went to a civilian rather than to an ex-serviceman.¹³⁹ One local newspaper rounded on the corporation for showing a lack of patriotism and inflicting a gratuitous insult on a body of men who had served their country so that even Tenby Council might be able to live at home in peace and safety.¹⁴⁰ Existing council structures had considerable extra work during the war to which different councils adopted differing methods to ensure they had the capacity to meet.

One pan-Pembrokeshire wartime bureaucracy was the creation of the Executive of the

¹³⁵ PRO PEM/SE/5/1. Pembroke Borough Council minutes of a special committee 1911-19; 8 August 1918.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ TMAG TEM/BOOKS/3/2/3. Tenby Borough Council Sanitary and Food Control committee 1913-18. The council purchased £200 worth of coal which they sold in small amounts to ensure there was no acute coal shortage in the town during the winter, 18 June 1917.

¹³⁸ *CE*, 29 August 1918.

¹³⁹ *TO*, 25 July 1918.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

War Agricultural Committee which was transformed from the old pre-war agricultural committee of the county council. This body clearly evolved from, and substantially extended the pre-war pattern organization. Ensuring the sufficiency of food supply was no easy task when imports provided the bulk of the 3,454 calories which every adult consumed each day.¹⁴¹ In 1916 Lord Milner's study of food production recommended that there should be an establishment of executives 'to enter on and take possession of any land which, in their opinion is not being cultivated so as to increase...the food supply of the country.'¹⁴² Some 61 War Agricultural Executive Committees were established with executive officers and local district sub-committees usually co-terminous with rural district council areas.¹⁴³ District sub-committees were usually representative of people with agricultural or administrative experience and were appointed by the county committee.¹⁴⁴

The ambit of the executives was a broad one and included cropping, land in possession and especially farm labour.¹⁴⁵ There was considerable extension of the state to interfere in people's lives. A great deal of legislation and powers conferred by DORA gave considerable weight to the committee's directives. The Corn Production Act of 1917 empowered the Board of Agriculture to compel farmers to cultivate a higher percentage of arable land. In Pembrokeshire a War Agriculture Committee was appointed on 2 November 1915.¹⁴⁶ Six months later the county War Agriculture Executive Committee was formed on 18 May 1916, meeting monthly and not infrequently fortnightly.¹⁴⁷ Their deliberations included the granting of petroleum and

¹⁴¹ Dewey, 'Food Production and Policy', 72.

¹⁴² Caroline Dakers, *The Countryside at War 1914-18* (London, 1987), 147.

¹⁴³ P.E. Dewey, *British Agriculture and the First World War* (London, 1989), 171.

¹⁴⁴ Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, 97.

¹⁴⁵ Alan Armstrong, *Farmworkers; A Social and Economic History 1770-1980* (London, 1988), 158.

¹⁴⁶ PRO PCC/SE/1/6. Minutes of Pembrokeshire County Council 1912-15; 2 November 1915.

¹⁴⁷ PRO PCC/SE/2/3 Minutes of the War Agricultural Executive Committee 1912-18; 18 May 1916.

gun cartridge licences securing the services of female volunteers, seed potatoes, fertilisers, mechanisation and appealing against military service tribunal rulings when precious farm labour was being poached by the army. District sub-committees became essential as the amount of work increased, especially from 1917.

The personnel of food production became manifest with increasing regulation, inspection and specialisation. An executive officer, Mr. J.S. Owen, was appointed after passing a 'Welsh test' to ensure he was fluent in both languages.¹⁴⁸ The prominence of the Welsh language in the rural north of the county made bilingualism an essential skill for the new county executive. Greater use was made of local experts, a local reflection of a national trend, although patriotism was a powerful factor in appointments. Reflecting the advent of mechanisation, a machinery officer was deemed necessary at a salary of £200 per year.¹⁴⁹ The appointment was made in private which aroused suspicion that decisions were not made on merit alone. One newspaper strongly argued that 'the free air of publicity would destroy the popular feeling that nepotism is at work.'¹⁵⁰ A chief clerk was appointed as office manager and an ex-soldier was appointed 'Horse Officer' in February 1918.¹⁵¹ Four farm inspectors were later employed each with salaries of £150 plus travelling expenses.¹⁵²

Roles undertaken by executive committees included surveying and collating statistics and reference and research into the progress of the county agricultural community. During one specific enquiry one thousand forms were dispatched to farmers which school attendance officers were to collect if not returned by the due date, an

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3 April 1917.

¹⁴⁹ *H&MHT*, 20 June 1917.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 23 July 1917.

¹⁵¹ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. Minutes of the War Agricultural Executive Committee 1912-18; 13 February 1918.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 2 January 1918.

interesting example of joint-departmental networking.¹⁵³ Cultivation Orders, backed by the threat of prosecution, were meant to ensure compliance with food production targets. Typical was the order issued to Mr. David Thomas of Letterston on 3 December 1917 which gave him notice and directed him to cultivate not less than seven acres with corn, potatoes and roots for 1918.¹⁵⁴ Those who negligently or willingly failed to comply, a not infrequent occurrence, were guilty of summary offences against the DORA regulations.¹⁵⁵ There were a number of prosecutions. The executive committee's decisions were not without challenge. They sat in an appellate jurisdiction to hear appeals from district sub-committees. Mr Thorne of Thornton was ordered to plough fifteen acres instead of the twenty he was originally ordered to cultivate.¹⁵⁶ Sales of horses were permitted only by licence as Food Production Horses were allocated on a pooled basis.

An unprecedented level of bureaucracy regulated Pembrokeshire civilians during the war, although many of the structures did not survive the return to peace. The government responded in only a muted way to the political and economic changes which occurred in wartime.¹⁵⁷ Local controls fell like Marwick's proverbial autumnal leaves. The county war agricultural executive was wound up in January 1919 although its record was hailed as an unqualified success in subsequent newspaper reports.¹⁵⁸ Food Control Committees were similarly disbanded. The Milford Haven committee met for a final time in June 1920 as wartime bureaucratic controls were not maintained and translated in peacetime conditions. Individual perceptions of the possible extent of state power might not be forgotten while the apparatus of

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 30 January 1917.

¹⁵⁴ PRO PCC/SE/71/20. War Agricultural Executive Cultivation Orders.

¹⁵⁵ PRO PCC/SE/71/21. *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 24 January 1918.

¹⁵⁷ Lowe, 'Erosion of State Intervention', 271.

¹⁵⁸ *H&MHT*, 12 February 1919.

government remained much larger than its pre-1914 counterpart despite economic retrenchment from 1922.

Alcohol Control as a Paradigm of State Intervention

The wartime state, especially from 1917, exercised a range of measures which were calculated to modify the social habits of civilians so as to promote maximum economic productivity. Restrictions on the sale of alcohol were a key element of these controls. The intoxicating liquor trade was one of the most divisive, contentious and bitterly controversial aspects of national life in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The temperance movement (with their allies, especially Nonconformity) which was strong in Wales, vied for the allegiance of the working classes with very different and mutually exclusive social and cultural lifestyles on offer. Before 1914 alcohol was viewed as a primary societal problem with a litany of crime, disease and destitution laid at its door.

Nationally, consumers' expenditure on alcoholic drink in the years immediately preceding the war was £502.5 million.¹⁵⁹ Poverty and social dysfunction, it was asserted by temperance campaigners, sprang from intemperance. There was however a significant decline in alcohol consumption before 1914. Annual beer consumption fell from an average of 30,486 thousand barrels in 1909-13 to 21,265 thousand in 1914.¹⁶⁰ Public houses, which temperance reformers portrayed as dens of exploitation and iniquity, were also places of working-class leisure and recreation. The ethical, moral and religious issues surrounding strong drink and especially public drinking ensured it was, according to Rose, *the* significant factor in nineteenth-century

¹⁵⁹ Sue Bowden, 'The New Consumerism', In Paul Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (London, 1994), 243.

¹⁶⁰ Dewey, *War and Progress*, 193.

history.¹⁶¹

It would be difficult to exaggerate the omnipresent nature of inns, public houses and beer houses in rural counties like Pembrokeshire. In 1899 the county had 500 or one to every 164 people.¹⁶² The eight petty and three borough sessional areas were kept busy with a steady stream of drunkenness and its effects. Nearly twenty years later Pembrokeshire still had 349 publicans', beer house and sweet wine licences and the town of Haverfordwest had no fewer than 45.¹⁶³ This provides a baseline of data against which changes in public drinking habits can be assessed. In 1917, even after the wartime liquor regulations had been imposed, the county had 43.45 licenses per 10,000 of population and the county was high on the unenviable league table of convictions for drunkenness (12.35 per 10,000 in 1917). The only Welsh county with more was Carmarthenshire with 28.26.¹⁶⁴ In 1915 Pembroke Borough, which hosted the royal dockyard, had 78 public houses or one for every 200 inhabitants.¹⁶⁵ Mediating or curbing the habits of intemperance was not novel to wartime. There was a long history of national legislation over the drink trade including the Welsh Sunday Closing Act (1881) which showed a distinct Welsh element.

Although the nature of state intervention was mediated by the political mythology of drink, and by the operation in the political system of a powerful business pressure group, there was a qualitative and quantitative distinction to alcohol legislation during the First World War. Further, the priorities of the government shifted as all policies

¹⁶¹ M.E. Rose, 'The Success of Social Reform? The Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) 1915-21', in M.R.D. Foot (ed.), *War and Society. Historical Essays in Honour and Memory of J.R. Western 1928-1971* (London, 1973), 71.

¹⁶² Keith Johnson, *The Pubs of Haverfordwest, Milford Haven and Mid-West Pembrokeshire* (Wootton Almeley, 2006) 1.

¹⁶³ PP. 1918 (Cd.9222) *Statistics as to the operation and administration of the Laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor for 1917*.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ PRO PEM/SE/14/120. Pembroke Borough Council Liquor Control Conference minutes 7 October 1915.

were suborned by the need to guide the war economy.¹⁶⁶ The spring of wartime regulation came not from morality but from concerns for national efficiency, reducing workplace absenteeism and boosting production. The Intoxicating Liquor (Temporary Restriction) Act of 31 August 1914 enabled chief constables in any licensing district to impose restrictions on the sale of alcohol in order to preserve public order.¹⁶⁷ This was especially keen in military districts so as to enforce discipline.¹⁶⁸ Early in November 1914, the public houses of Milford Haven were declared out of bounds to troops after 9 p.m. by order of the Fortress Commander. At Fishguard, in response to entreaties from the district council, magistrates closed public houses after 10 p.m.¹⁶⁹ On 21 December 1914, the Chief Constable of Pembrokeshire applied to the petty sessions to close all public houses at 9 p.m. It was opposed by 38 licensed victuallers who hoped the bench would take into consideration the requirements of the civilian population.¹⁷⁰ The order was granted nonetheless.

There was a dramatic increase in the tenor of the liquor debate in early 1915, fuelled not least, by two much-quoted speeches made by Lloyd George. On 28 February 1915 he declared ‘Drink is doing us more damage in the war than all the German submarines put together,’ an allusion to the loss of munitions production.¹⁷¹ Thus his Nonconformist conscience effortlessly combined with concerns over national efficiency.¹⁷² On Easter Monday, 5 April 1915, King George V prohibited the use of alcoholic drinks in the royal palaces (with only a few ‘medicinal lapses’).¹⁷³ In a move known as the ‘King’s Pledge’, Nonconformists were keen to pick up the cudgel

¹⁶⁶ John Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade in the First World War’, *Historical Journal*, (hereafter *HJ*) 23:3 (1980), 594.

¹⁶⁷ Marwick, *A History of the Modern British Isles*, 37.

¹⁶⁸ Turner, ‘State Purchase of the Liquor Trade’, 594.

¹⁶⁹ *CE*, 19 November 1914.

¹⁷⁰ *H&MHT*, 23 December 1914.

¹⁷¹ John Greenway, *Drink and British Politics since 1830* (Basingstoke, 2003), 93.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 96.

against alcohol. On 21 April 1915 the members of Trinity Congregational Church, Pembroke Dock, ordered 500 copies of the king's pledge cards to circulate amongst their 224 members and into the wider community.¹⁷⁴

The campaign against drink viewed alcohol and the Hun as common enemies. There was a new moral drive to promote sacrifice and self-control. Drinking became associated with a lack of patriotism and deleterious to the war effort. The government seriously considered state purchase of the entire liquor industry in 1915 and 1917 but such proposals foundered on the grounds of cost: £225 million.¹⁷⁵ The sudden moral panic over alcohol provided the opportunity for much more decisive state control. On 19 May 1915, the Defence of the Realm (Amendment Number Three) Act was followed by the establishment of a Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) by an Order in Council on 10 June 1915.¹⁷⁶ Powers included limiting the hours of supply to two and a half in the day and three in the evening. Buying drinks for others, 'treating', was forbidden. Greenway and Rose have drawn attention to the wider aspects of the work of the Central Control Board (CCB) over and beyond the strict regulatory measures, including the occasional exercise in compulsory purchase in specific areas.¹⁷⁷

The state's other agency of influence over alcohol was regarding pricing and the strength of beer and spirits. Reductions in output of beer resulted from shortages of raw materials, especially the acreage under hops. 'Government Ale' was the unsatisfactory outcome of weaker and more expensive beverages at 7d. per pint, half

¹⁷⁴ PRO DFC/C/1/1. Trinity Congregational Church, Pembroke Dock, minutes 1908-27; 21 April 1915.

¹⁷⁵ Greenway, *Drink and British Politics*, 95

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹⁷⁷ Greenway, *Drink and British Politics*, 103.

going in taxation.¹⁷⁸ During the last eighteen months of the war beer shortages became common place.¹⁷⁹ The new licensing regulations promulgated by the CCB became effective in Pembrokeshire on Monday 22 November 1915, with houses able to sell alcohol for five and a half hours a day. No treating was allowed and special restrictions applied to the sale of spirits.¹⁸⁰

It would be misleading to assume a passive, unquestioning reception to the liquor control regulations emanating from the CCB. Drink underpinned vital parts of the urban economy as well as patterns of sociability, and the new controls, coupled with earlier regulations, were deeply resented as an unwarranted intrusion into lawful business activity. Being a major seaside resort, Tenby found the new licensing laws particularly irksome. The local Tradesmen's Association wrote asking the magistrates for an hour's extension, since, as a holiday town, they should give their customers what they wanted. One publican commented 'It was not a matter of the war; it was not going to affect the war one iota.'¹⁸¹ When the tradesmen appealed, pointing out that 'licensed premises remained open at Narberth and Saundersfoot until 10 p.m.' they were rebuffed.¹⁸² In 1915 Tenby had 23 licensed public houses to cater for a population of 4,368.¹⁸³ Local features of the civic year went on as usual, although magistrates refused to allow the public houses to remain open after 9 p.m. during Pembroke Fair.¹⁸⁴ Tenby's renowned and celebrated Oyster Supper went ahead with its usual sumptuousness, although all alcohol had to be ordered and consumed by 9

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁷⁹ David Englander, 'Police and Public Order in Britain 1914-1918', in Clive Emsley and Barbara Weinberger (eds), *Policing Western Europe. Politics, Professionalism and Public Order, 1850-1940* (Greenwood, 1991), 104.

¹⁸⁰ *CE*, 18 November 1915.

¹⁸¹ *TO*, 17 June 1915.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 22 July 1915.

¹⁸³ PRO PEM/SE/14/120. Pembroke Borough Liquor Control Conference minutes 7 October 1915.

¹⁸⁴ *TO*, 30 September 1915.

p.m.¹⁸⁵

The new CCB restrictions brought more strident opposition from those with vested interests, including the Pembroke and Pembroke Dock Licensed Victuallers Association. They sent in a petition to the borough council in December 1915 seeking to relax closing time.¹⁸⁶ Tenby Borough Council expressed itself in sympathy with this aim and sought to promote a conference of other seaside resorts with a view to appealing to the CCB to be less prescriptive.¹⁸⁷ Similarly, Narberth Urban District Council unanimously agreed with the petition submitted by their licensed victuallers pointing out that there were no soldiers or munitions workers within ten miles of the town.¹⁸⁸

On the other hand chapel meetings across Wales regularly passed resolutions calling for tighter state controls. The Pembrokeshire Congregationalists made such a call in June 1915.¹⁸⁹ The Rev Owen Jacobs of Albany Chapel called for prohibition during wartime and six months after hostilities had ended at a meeting held, appropriately enough at the Haverfordwest Temperance Hall.¹⁹⁰ Some religious moralists like Sister Elsie explicitly linked increased sin with immorality and drunkenness when she addressed Hook Chapel on Temperance Sunday, 1916.¹⁹¹ Two well-attended meetings at Goodwick and Fishguard in January 1918 raised the Nonconformist banner against any attempted state purchase of the poisonous fluid.¹⁹²

The social habits of public drinking were undeniably altered by wartime legislation

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6 January 1916.

¹⁸⁶ PRO PEM/SE/1/8. Pembroke Borough Council minutes 1914-20; 10 December 1915.

¹⁸⁷ *TO*, 22 June 1916.

¹⁸⁸ PRO NAU/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council minutes 1911-20; 30 November 1915.

¹⁸⁹ *PH*, 11 June 1915.

¹⁹⁰ *PCG*, 7 July 1916.

¹⁹¹ *H&MHT*, 15 November 1916.

¹⁹² *CE*, 31 January 1918.

although drinking at home is more difficult to gauge. As early as January 1915, Colonel W.R. Roberts asserted how Milford Haven had never been freer from drunkenness.¹⁹³ The trend was clear by 1916 when a host of petty sessional licensing sessions across Pembrokeshire noted significant reductions in alcohol-related offences. In February 1916 the Fishguard sessions disclosed how there had been 46 convictions for drunkenness during the year compared to 88 previously.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, at Mathry Annual Licensing Sessions there had been a marked decline since the beginning of the war.¹⁹⁵ The decrease at Narberth, where the new Order had been ‘faithfully carried out by the licensees’, amounted to one third.¹⁹⁶ One Haverfordwest publican, Mr Howard Palmer, was certain the new regulations had reduced consumption by 50 per cent. He elucidated four principal reasons for the decline; military enlistment, price increases, shorter opening hours and the introduction of the Daylight Saving Act.¹⁹⁷ The following tables clearly plot the downward trend of convictions in petty sessional areas and across the county.

¹⁹³ *PH*, 15 January 1915.

¹⁹⁴ *CE*, 10 February 1916.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *TO*, 10 February 1916.

¹⁹⁷ *H&MHT*, 28 June 1916.

Table 1: Convictions for Drunkenness in Pembrokeshire 1917-18

Petty Sessional Divisions	
Castlemartin	2
Cemaes	1
Dewisland	2
Dungledy	10
Kilgerran	0
Narberth	25
Roose	30
Boroughs	
Pembroke	30
Tenby	1
Haverfordwest	13
Total	114

Table 2 : Convictions for Drunkenness in Pembrokeshire 1915-18 198

Year	Number of Convictions
1915	334
1916	210
1917	114
1918	129
Total	787

Even urban areas with large military establishments recorded substantial decreases in convictions. In 1917, the borough of Pembroke with 77 licensed premises witnessed a decline of 46 per cent.¹⁹⁹ Tenby had very few cases, while Fishguard had ten cases during 1917-18. The following petty sessional statistics indicate the declining trend in

¹⁹⁸ *Returns of Convictions for Drunkenness in England and Wales during the years 1915-18* (London, 1919).

¹⁹⁹ *PCG*, 2 February 1917.

drunkenness convictions.

Table 3: Convictions by sessional area

<u>Fishguard Police Division 1915-18</u> ²⁰⁰				
	1915	1916	1917	1918
Total Offences	83	135	41	22
Drunkenness	27	19	10	4

<u>Saundersfoot Petty Sessions 1915-18</u> ²⁰¹				
Total Offences	69	60	38	39
Drunkenness	13	8	6	4
CCB (LT) Offences	1	1	-	-

<u>Dungledy Petty Sessions 1915-18</u> ²⁰²				
Total Offences	80	76	81	70
Drunkenness	10	8	3	-

State regulation and controls did tangibly change social drinking habits in Pembrokeshire, with reductions in crime and disorder and possibly improved living standards as less family incomes went on alcohol purchases.²⁰³ The county was fully reflective of the national experience, at least in the short term. The statistics can be scrutinised to reveal an interesting narrative. The appearance of foreign workers,

²⁰⁰ PRO PCC/RO/64. Fishguard Police Division Register of Charges 1914-26.

²⁰¹ PRO TPS/NS/3. Court Register for Saundersfoot Petty Sessional area 1913-25.

²⁰² PRO TPS/DU/2. Court Register for Dungledy Petty Sessional area 1913-20.

²⁰³ Roebuck, *Modern English Society* 97.

Nordic, Finnish and assorted nationalities in tree-felling camps near Narberth, some being survivors from neutral ships torpedoed off the Pembrokeshire coast after 1915, resulted in an increase in drunkenness for a time in 1918.

When the Pembrokeshire Standing Joint Committee met in April 1920 an increase in drunkenness was attributed to stronger beer, and, more reassuringly, the presence of strangers rather than the recalcitrant habits of locals.²⁰⁴ Wartime liquor control proved highly effective in curbing social drinking in Pembrokeshire and the perceived evils of excessive consumption, but this was an expression of longer-term shift as we have acknowledged was the case leading up to 1914. Another instance of how the social habits of Pembrokeshire residents could be influenced and manipulated by government was over the fundamentals of domestic household budgets and how and where individual saving decisions were made.

War savings: Capital Accumulation as Patriotism

The prosecution of a world war heavily depended upon the ways in which governments could tap into the residual capital resources of their economies and population. Inculcating thrift and avoiding unnecessary expenditure was a direction of state control which Pembrokeshire civilians experienced in a variety of explicit and implicit ways. Over the four years unprecedented sums were spent on munitions production and maintaining the fabric of the armed forces. The financial demands of the First World War dwarfed any previous experience, and the costs exceeded even the gloomiest prognosis from the most pessimistic economists and politicians. The outbreak of war marked a major discontinuity in economic and financial policies. As the conflict intensified so too did the scale of government expenditure.

²⁰⁴ *PT*, 14 April 1920.

The nation's own financial resources were targeted by deliberate state planning, thereby tapping into spending power and putting the citizen at the centre of the war effort. A new range of financial products, War Loans, bonds, War Saving Certificates and Exchequer stock were promoted using sophisticated propaganda techniques. Fixing the psychology of those who purchased government debt is no easy undertaking. A mixture of patriotism cannot be taken for granted but there was surely an element of business and investment calculation. The message of thrift was continually hammered home from public platform, pulpit and from the press.²⁰⁵ Posters promoted the twin virtues of patriotism and prudence especially from 1917.²⁰⁶

The pre-war savings habit of Pembrokeshire residents is difficult to deduce. Government securities would have been favoured only by the middle classes or landed gentry, although considerable efforts were made to change spending habits and attitudes to ready cash through school penny banks and Post Office banks from the 1860s. The second War Loan was promoted at Fishguard in July 1915 as a means of doing one's duty, even if it meant only investing a few shillings.²⁰⁷ Similar sentiments were expressed by newspaper editorials. At Haverfordwest it was noted how working people would be able to invest five shillings 'which is itself quite an epoch-making innovation in the history of British government finance.'²⁰⁸ The town of Milford Haven subscribed £35,000 to the loan which was euphemistically described as the great 'silver bullet crusade.'²⁰⁹ Saving was equated with patriotism and helping to win the war. Warm references were made to the workhouse lad who saved his 5s. and

²⁰⁵ Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction? First World War Posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester, 2007), 63.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁰⁷ *CE*, 1 July 1915.

²⁰⁸ *PCG*, 25 June 1915.

²⁰⁹ *H&MHT*, 14 July 1915.

purchased a savings voucher, truly an example of the widow's mite.²¹⁰ There was plenty of scope for institutional investment. The local Rechabites deposited £200 in the war loan.²¹¹ A prominent local charity, the Sir John Perrot Trust, put in £500.²¹² The North Pembrokeshire Farmers' Club deposited £100.²¹³

Gregory has written as to how the establishment of war savings provides a valuable benchmark and guide of how communities became more involved in financing the war.²¹⁴ There was a noticeable increase in local activity from late 1916 on account of greater state encouragement as the war intensified. On 20 November 1916 a war savings meeting was held at the Haverfordwest Borough Council chamber on the strength of which it was decided to host a wider conference with invitations extended to churches, chapels, schools, clubs, friendly societies and representatives of commerce.²¹⁵

War savings movements spread across the county, with prominent newspaper encouragement aided by church and chapel exhortation and peer pressure to 'do your bit'. By February 1917, twelve organisations existed at Haverfordwest (with 416 members).²¹⁶ Pembroke Dock had seven associations with a combined strength of 500 savers. Enthusiasm was not always universal. The launch of the Third War Loan in 1917 perceptibly boosted the number of Pembrokeshire associations and their affiliates. The levels of wartime saving reflected the ebb and flow of general civilian morale; the general crisis of the summer of 1918 saw a renewed resurgence in saving levels.

²¹⁰ *TO*, 12 August 1915

²¹¹ PRO DSO/8/3 Pembroke Castle Tent Order of Rechabites No. 1468 1913-20; 22 September 1915.

²¹² *PCG*, 7 July 1916.

²¹³ PRO DSO/30/2. North Pembrokeshire Farmers' Club minutes, 1906-32; 27 January 1916.

²¹⁴ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 220.

²¹⁵ *PCG*, 24 November 1916.

²¹⁶ *PCG*, 2 February 1917.

The Tenby War Savings Association which covered a prosperous community was particularly pro-active opting for a house- to-house canvass, proselytising by local clergy and getting war loan messages screened at the local Picture Palace.²¹⁷ The Tenby Corporation purchased £5,000 of stock so ‘as to break the hearts of the German nation and so bring the war to a close earlier.’²¹⁸ The rhetoric of saving was a locally expressed discourse and dressed in military terms, the language of glory and victory. Some £1,000 million was raised by the loan during 1917-18, with eight million subscribers.²¹⁹ Pembrokeshire raised £500,000 in War Bonds in six weeks.²²⁰ Associations comprised an eclectic mix of bodies connected by occupation, religious adherence, local or municipal unit or school. By March 1917, Pembroke Borough had 23 associations including fourteen schools, the local gas works, co-operative society and Trinity Congregational Church.²²¹ The heightened number of associations here revealed the availability of ready cash as the dockyard pumped thousands of pounds weekly into the local economy. Schools were particularly useful vehicles for encouraging thrift in children, and, vicariously, their parents. The Local Education Authority acted as a conduit between the Board of Education and schools in distributing literature and arranging local conferences. This cascading of information and directives reached a peak in 1917, and demonstrates the close chronology of the establishment of school savings associations and reach of the local bureaucracy.

Some of the funds subscribed by the children were impressively large. In two weeks the boys of Prendergast School, with 81 members, saved £57 9s. 8d.²²² Parish and borough councils would often give a municipal lead in setting up associations. The

²¹⁷ *TO*, 25 January 1917.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8 February 1917.

²¹⁹ David Stevenson, *With Our Backs to the Wall. Victory and Defeat in 1918* (London, 2011), 372.

²²⁰ *H&MHT*, 21 February 1917.

²²¹ *PCG*, 16 March 1917.

²²² PRO SSM/1/13. Uzmaston Council School Group Manager’s Minutes 1915-24; 3 April 1917.

Haverfordwest Borough Council formed itself into a savings association.²²³ The members of Narberth Urban District Council seized the initiative in distributing war savings literature.²²⁴ By 31 December 1917 Pembrokeshire had twelve war savings associations with many affiliates.²²⁵

The level of war savings was regularly boosted by nationally-orchestrated campaigns with striking themes: 'Feed the Guns,' 'Tank Week' and similar stirring images to stimulate more lending to the government. Events in Pembrokeshire appear to be part of a national pattern. There was almost a sense of carnival, with military bands, bunting uniting with technology in the shape of tanks or aeroplanes, in tours of the provinces. This was manifest in every local town. A none-too friendly civic rivalry was encouraged as towns vied against one another so as to appear higher in the *per capita* list of savings results. Community allocations were made by the National War Savings Committee. One successful endeavour, 'Businessmen's Week' was launched on 4 March 1918. The campaign secured £2,000 at just one meeting in Haverfordwest. Agriculturalists, whose wartime wealth was fabled, thanks to record high commodity prices, were particularly appealed to.²²⁶ Pembrokeshire towns generally did well. Milford Haven easily exceeded its quota of £20,000 with £70,000 subscribed.²²⁷ Tenby managed £25,627.²²⁸ There was shock that Pembroke, with the dockyard pumping record wages into the borough, did not make an effort and the civic leaders came in for harsh criticism for not making an effort. The borough more than made amends when, during 'Airship Week' they banked £234,900 (compared to

²²³ *H&MHT*, 25 October 1916.

²²⁴ PRO NAU/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council minutes, 1911-20; 6 February 1917.

²²⁵ PP. (Cd. 9112, 9202) 1918. *War Savings Committees*, Table III, 12.

²²⁶ *PH*, 8 March 1918.

²²⁷ *PCG*, 15 March 1918.

²²⁸ *TO*, 14 March 1918.

a quota of £40,000).²²⁹



Illustration: 5 A tank creates heightened interest at a War Savings event at Pembroke Dock in June 1918. (PRO HDX/1206/8).

Coupling war savings campaigns with the provision of specific weapons was a highly effective tactic which appealed to civic and local pride. To the chagrin of the people of Haverfordwest no tank was available for ‘War Weapons Week’; although the iron monster did appear in the streets of Pembroke Dock in June 1918 (Illustration 5). They had to content themselves with a model displayed in the window of W. H. Smith & Son instead.²³⁰ Branding individual machines with the name of the sponsoring community inculcated civic pride into the war savings effort. In July 1918, in return for £15,000 the authorities pledged to name an aeroplane after Haverfordwest. In the event £120,286 was raised, or £20 per head of population.²³¹ Civic culture and fund-raising were intimately connected during the war.

²²⁹ Ibid., 9 May 1918.

²³⁰ *PH*, 19 July 1918.

²³¹ Ibid.

One change in the social habit of saving came in the form of working-class capital accumulation. Before the war any surplus wages might have found their way into post office savings banks or friendly societies. The introduction of War Savings Certificates in 1916 was deliberately aimed at the lower end of the income scale and could be seen as the ‘democratisation’ of savings.²³² Offered at 15s. 6d., they matured to £1 if held for five years. Thus national savings, which only accounted for 0.1 per cent of total working-class savings in 1916, amounted to 19 per cent by 1921.²³³ Eventually 10.5 million people held War Savings Certificates, many with no previous culture of making such investments.²³⁴ In February 1917 Messrs Llewellyn, butter churn makers of Haverfordwest, advanced £5 to each of their employees to enable them to buy certificates with weekly wage deductions in repayment.²³⁵

Although overall long-term levels of savings did not differ greatly from before 1914, the war did introduce striking changes in the financial habits and expectations of wage earners.²³⁶ It enabled them to forge a sense of solidarity with soldiers and share the popular conviction that each £5 they saved was another ‘nail in the coffin of the Kaiser.’²³⁷

The Boundaries of Everyday Life

The appropriation of sweeping and unprecedented powers by the government provided for a drastic re-ordering of the state and civil society. In 1914 Britain possessed a rich and diverse civic culture where localism was still an important factor and remained so throughout the war. In the context of Wales, Thompson and Day

²³² Marwick, *Britain in the Age of Total War*, 63.

²³³ Bernard Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State; Society, State and Social Welfare in England and Wales, 1800-1945* (Basingstoke, 2004), 192.

²³⁴ Strachan, *Financing the First World War*, op. cit., 150.

²³⁵ *H&MHT*, 14 February 1917.

²³⁶ Mark Abrams, *The Condition of the British People 1911-1945* (Bath, 1970), 75.

²³⁷ *H&MHT*, 7 February 1917.

have explored the dynamics between local and national identity.²³⁸ Although more local government contacts were augmented over time by Medical Officers of Health, School Attendance Officers and other county and borough officials, intrusion into private behaviour was of a very restricted nature depending on class and locality. Most individual's form of reference, was the local parish with its inherent habits, mores and concepts. Jay Winter has described the eclipse of the local by the centralising state as marking a discontinuity which has never been the same since.²³⁹ This was especially true of the degree of supervision of the working classes.²⁴⁰ This section will argue that there was unprecedented state intervention in the lives of civilians during the war and that the reach of government was effective and pervasive.

Perhaps no aspect of the war was so pervading, comprehensive and total as the influence over the everyday lives of civilians which acquired a completely different meaning from peacetime understandings of normal life. State direction came to seek ascendancy and dominance over all aspects of expression, consumption and daily routine, along with changes to the assumptions of citizenship during wartime. Pre-war moral, legal and religious norms were reframed, as the individual's understanding of what functions the state should perform was altered.²⁴¹ The boundaries of everyday life were altered by the Defence of the Realm Acts. Passed on 8 August 1914. After a reading of only five minutes, the regulations were intended as a public safety measure.²⁴² Subsequent additions and codifications (1914-16) extended state control

²³⁸ Thompson and Day, 'Local Experiences and National Identity', in Ralph Fevre and Andrew Thompson (eds) *National Identity and Social Theory. Perspectives from Wales* (Cardiff, 1999), 33.

²³⁹ Jay Winter, 'Popular Culture in wartime Britain', in Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites (eds), *European Culture in the Great War. The arts, entertainment and propaganda 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1999), 330.

²⁴⁰ John Turner, 'The Challenge to Liberalism: The Politics of the Home Fronts', in Hew Strachan (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Great War* (Oxford, 1998), 175.

²⁴¹ Heather Jones, Jennifer O'Brien and Christoph Schmidt-Supprian (eds), *Untold War. New Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden, 2008), 9.

²⁴² Alfred Havighurst, *Twentieth-Century Britain* (New York, 1962), 130.

over vast swathes of economy and society, and necessarily had major implications for civil liberties. Parliamentary restraints on executive power were removed and the Acts provided for a constitutional basis for war emergency.²⁴³

Individual conduct was proscribed through coercive legislation although Roebuck reminds us of the mysterious alchemy of humour and humanity which transformed DORA from a set of draconian war measures into a human caricature.²⁴⁴ Assuming the persona of a kill-joy maiden aunt, Marwick's 'cruel and capricious maiden'; her competence ranged from requisitioning key economic resources down to smaller, irritating matters which plagued the lives of ordinary people.²⁴⁵ Located some 250 miles from Westminster, Pembrokeshire affords an interesting example of how government control of society could be expressed in the mundane experiences of civilian life. A primary focus of the DORA regulations was concern with national security, especially near military installations.

With a naval dockyard, designated fortress at Milford Haven and Royal Naval Air stations at Milton and Fishguard, security restrictions in Pembrokeshire were soon imposed on local residents, especially on the freedom to travel unknown in peacetime. Local civilians were to learn that activities, which in peacetime went unnoticed, were of sudden interest to the military and local police. Within a fortnight of hostilities, two people were detained at Milford Haven for taking photographs, although no regulations against this practice were yet in place.²⁴⁶ The latter were swiftly promulgated by the commander, General Triscott, in October 1915 and covered a wide area of rural and urban parishes bordering the Haven and prohibited

²⁴³Turner, 'Change and inertia in Politics', 164.

²⁴⁴Roebuck, *The Making of Modern English Society*, 91.

²⁴⁵Marwick, *The Deluge*, 76.

²⁴⁶*PH*, 14 August 1914.

photographing or sketching.²⁴⁷ Spy-mania was a noted feature of especially early wartime public psychology. The measures were given a wide interpretation. One Milford Haven photographer, William Oakes, received a fine of £2 for ‘making a photograph of naval and military work without the consent of the authorities’.²⁴⁸ In his case this was exhibiting an image of a British airship passing over Eastbourne which he ill-advisedly put in his shop window. At the Milford Haven Petty Sessions Luxembourg-born Jean Krier (his foreign birth enhanced suspicions) was fined £5 for possessing a camera in a prohibited area, contrary to paragraph 19.²⁴⁹

Freedom of choice to live or visit was strictly curtailed when new regulations were introduced to control the access of civilians to sensitive areas. The town of Milford Haven, with its docks, ancillary facilities and centre of west Wales’s maritime trade, was one such area. In 1915 Pierre Beart was charged with breaching the Aliens Restriction (Belgian Refugees) Order 1914 by visiting the town without permission.²⁵⁰ He would only be allowed to if the chief constable gave his consent. The authorities took a more lenient view when a female with eight children committed the same offence, being given 24 hours to leave under the threat of a custodial sentence.²⁵¹

Perhaps the restriction of lights was one of the most irksome arrogations by the state on the lives of civilians. Under section 11 of DORA (which became Law in 1915), authorities could require the reduction or extinguishing of any public or private illumination which was visible externally.²⁵² A limited blackout had been introduced

²⁴⁷ *PCG*, 15 October 1915.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 June 1916.

²⁴⁹ PRO TPS/NA/6. Narberth Petty Sessions 1909-15; 3 June 1915.

²⁵⁰ *PH*, 8 January 1915.

²⁵¹ *CE*, 11 February 1916.

²⁵² Cooksley, *The Home Front*, 117.

in October 1914 when illuminated signs and street lighting were ordered to be partially obscured.²⁵³ Being a peninsula with important shipping routes to Ireland and south-west England, the county was affected by lighting restrictions. In late January 1915, the lights at the Parrog and Stop and Call, Goodwick, were suppressed.²⁵⁴ At the other end of the county, the chief constable wrote in polite tones to the Tenby council ordering all lights visible from the sea to be obscured from sunset to sunrise.²⁵⁵ Prosecution followed where precepts failed. On 7 May 1915 John Griffiths of Long House, Abercastle, was prosecuted for failing to keep extinguished a light visible from seaward which he had placed on the cliff. The advent of Zeppelin raids on the English mainland, and increasing U-boat activity in the Irish Sea (from the spring of 1915), gave the ordinances greater edge. This north Pembrokeshire case, at which the chief constable appeared in person, was the first of its kind locally and cost the defendant three guineas as a fine.²⁵⁶ The lighting edicts applied equally to the contemplative and spiritual communities. In the winter of 1915, the monks of Caldey Island were deprived of the reassuring intermittent beam of light from the lighthouse which had temporarily illuminated their cells each night.²⁵⁷

Many new restrictions were imposed when a new order was effective from 10 January 1916. Under these provisions, no light was to be shown from any window which could be observed from the sea or navigable river. At Pembroke, where the council had already reduced the number of street lights, there was implied resistance through mocking allusions to the return of the 'Dark Ages.'²⁵⁸ The number of criminal proceedings increased dramatically in 1916, raising in the public consciousness the

²⁵³ Neil Hanson, *First Blitz* (London, 2008), 33.

²⁵⁴ *CE*, 28 January 1915.

²⁵⁵ *TO*, 28 January 1915.

²⁵⁶ *PH*, 7 May 1916.

²⁵⁷ PRO HDX/1028/3. *Pax. The Quarterly Review of the Benedictines of Caldey Island*, winter, 1915.

²⁵⁸ *PCG*, 14 January 1916.

powers of the local constabulary, although this occasionally entered the realms of the absurd. Indictments became commonplace in the court rolls. In March 1916 three men were fined for lighting gorse fires at Bolton Hill Beacon.²⁵⁹ The Fishguard Petty Sessions heard several similar cases. James John of Treathro, Goodwick, was fined £1 for making a fire which could serve as a landmark.²⁶⁰ At Tenby nineteen people were proceeded against for unobscured cycle lights costing various penalties of between 5s. to 10s.²⁶¹ Public transport was also affected. Some modifications permitted cyclists to wheel their bicycles instead of carrying them. Motor cars could use headlights provided the lenses were shaded.²⁶²

It would be erroneous to conclude that the civilian population were passive or phlegmatic recipients of state intrusion into everyday life. The spirit of a free press was amply demonstrated by the comprehensive denunciations of the new lighting orders. One editor remarked: 'In out of the way localities like Pembrokeshire they are a thousand times more irritating because people can never be convinced that they are necessary at all'.²⁶³ It was regretted that the people had become so 'Prussianised' (an interesting use of language) by the Defence of the Realm Act that they would put up with almost anything. The chief constable, who was supreme in the matter, was urged to reconsider.²⁶⁴ Another editorial, incensed by the timidity of the Haverfordwest Borough Council in acceding to the orders without argument, accused them of being as accommodating as 'Germanophile Greeks to invading Bulgars'.²⁶⁵ The restrictions were kept despite the protests. Seven shopkeepers were fined 7s. 6d. each at the

²⁵⁹ *PH*, 31 March 1916.

²⁶⁰ *CE*, 18 May 1916.

²⁶¹ *TO*, 20 April 1916.

²⁶² *CE*, 23 November 1916.

²⁶³ *PCG*, 29 September 1916.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 4 October 1916.

Pembroke sessions, for allowing lights to be visible.²⁶⁶ Lamp posts were painted white while the routine of Sunday worship at chapels was brought forward from six to five p.m.²⁶⁷

One of the most enduring social legacies of the war, emphasising the totality of executive power, was the legislation of time itself. On 17 May 1916, the Commons passed the Daylight Saving Act which advanced Greenwich Mean Time by one hour, thereby reducing the need for artificial light and allowing an invaluable extra hour of production.²⁶⁸ After the initial trial period (21 May-30 September 1916), the change became a permanent one.²⁶⁹ The estimated saving of coal was put at five million tons a year.²⁷⁰ At Haverfordwest the corporation saw coal consumption at the gas works decline by five to six tons because of the longer daylight hours.²⁷¹ This novel horological experiment witnessed a local surge in the demand for alarm clocks. At Haverfordwest, Mr Munt sold out completely.²⁷² The village school was a valuable conduit through which national changes could be explained and related back to parents. At Hubberston-Hakin School a collective lesson was given to pupils explaining the rationale behind the tampering with the clocks.²⁷³ At Martletwy sixteen children came late for school.²⁷⁴ Not everyone was enthusiastic with advancing time. The Pembrokeshire branch of the National Farmers' Union protested against the daylight saving, arguing that farm hands would try to leave their work earlier and contributed to the difficulties of farmers through the shortage of labour and reduced

²⁶⁶ *PCG*, 20 October 1916.

²⁶⁷ *PCG*, 3 November 1916.

²⁶⁸ John Williams, *The Home Fronts. Britain, France and Germany 1914-1918* (London, 1972), 123.

²⁶⁹ Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War*, 84.

²⁷⁰ *TO*, 25 May 1916.

²⁷¹ *H&MHT*, 21 June 1916.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 17 May 1916.

²⁷³ PRO SSR/1/132/1. Hubberston-Hakin Council School Logbook 1909-16; 19 May 1916.

²⁷⁴ PRO SSR/1/22/2. Martletwy National School Logbook 1914-52; 22 May 1916.

hours.²⁷⁵

The competition for increasingly scarce resources ensured that administrative control and direction would regulate the availability of food and fuel. One shortage which impacted on the more affluent sectors of society was the increasing dearth of petroleum. In 1913, there were 106,000 passenger cars and 103,000 commercial vehicles registered nationally.²⁷⁶ Rationing commenced in August 1916 when prices per gallon had reached 1s. 8d. for First Quality fuel.²⁷⁷ Expedients like the mixing of paraffin with petrol resulted in the familiar sight of jibbing cars on the steep streets of Haverfordwest.²⁷⁸ DORA regulations prohibited the use of the fuel for purposes other than for business purposes. What constituted a necessary journey became a police judgement rather than an exercise in personal freedom. Prosecutions followed in the summer of 1917. On 4 June the first Pembrokeshire court cases arising from the petroleum restrictions were heard at Haverfordwest Petty Sessions. Two Neyland men were fined 5s. each.²⁷⁹ The motor car proprietor George Ace of Tenby was fined 15s. for using a car in contravention of the Motor Spirit Consolidation and Gas Restriction Order 1918.²⁸⁰ Perhaps the law was not applied with equal zeal. One correspondent styled 'The Querist,' asked his readers how it was that certain persons were still able to drive their motor cars into Tenby for weekend shopping expeditions without hindrance.²⁸¹

The availability of foodstuffs in the light of U-boat sinkings, coupled with the huge calorific increase to sustain armies and the attendant munitions production, was a

²⁷⁵ PRO D/NFU/1/1. Pembrokeshire National Farmers Union minutes 1917-20; 17 September 1918.

²⁷⁶ Clive Emsley, 'Mother, What Did Policemen Do When There Weren't Any Motors? The Law, the Police and the Regulation of Motor Traffic in England 1900-1939', *HJ* 36:2 (1993), 358.

²⁷⁷ Bilton, *The Home Front*, 136.

²⁷⁸ *H&MHT*, 5 July 1916.

²⁷⁹ *TO*, 7 June 1917.

²⁸⁰ PRO TPS/DU/2. Dungleddy Petty Sessional area Court register 1913-20; 19 July 1918.

²⁸¹ *TO*, 18 June 1918.

great challenge to wartime government. A whole range of novel expedients were available to the administration including acquiring whole sectors of production, distribution and regulating prices; in effect suspending the market economy. There were constant appeals to reduce consumption and avoid waste through propaganda, and a Royal Proclamation (6 May 1917) aimed at restricting the use of wheat.²⁸² The Ministry of Food determined retail prices for basic commodities to ensure equitable distribution. Under the authority of DORA food control orders were issued in bewildering number. On one day in February 1918 the regulations issued weighed almost half a pound.²⁸³ They covered every scintilla of food use. When the Narberth Urban District Council considered the enforcement of the principal orders they covered bread, milk, potatoes, swedes, sugar, maize and butter.²⁸⁴ In April 1917 sundry regulations restricted pastry and cake-making, prohibited food-hoarding, increased non-wheat in flour and reduced quantities allowed to be served in hotels and restaurants.²⁸⁵ All borough, urban and rural district councils established food control committees in 1917.

Infringements of the food control regulations were prosecuted with a marked diligence and single-mindedness. The boundaries of every-day life had changed with startling speed as hitherto harmless activities became criminalised. There were 45,000 food control prosecutions in 1918-19.²⁸⁶ Dictates from the centre set a standard of expected behaviour but they still required at least public acquiescence in order to become workable.²⁸⁷ Food control infractions were found regularly across the county.

²⁸² Cooksley, *The Home Front*, 130.

²⁸³ Marwick, *The Deluge*, 287.

²⁸⁴ *PCG*, 15 June 1917.

²⁸⁵ Bilton, *The Home Front*, 131.

²⁸⁶ Winter, 'War and economic development', 513.

²⁸⁷ P.E. Dewey, 'Nutrition and Living Standards in wartime Britain', in Richard Wall and Jay Winter (eds), *The Upheaval of War. Family, Work and Welfare in Europe, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1988), 217.

At Pembroke Dock Police Court, Emily Evans was summoned for selling potatoes above the maximum price permitted under the Potatoes Order, 1 1/2*d.* per pound. Two offences were punished with a fine of £10 or one month's imprisonment in Carmarthen gaol.²⁸⁸ There were proceedings for selling tea above the proscribed price, while at Tenby Annie Brown was fined 10*s.* for selling chocolate to a policeman (possibly a test purchase) at four pence per ounce, a penny more than the law permitted.²⁸⁹ Stiff penalties were imposed. A fine of £30 was imposed on one lady for selling cheese without a price list on display and for failing to keep proper accounts, contrary to the Cheese Order, 1917 and 14 June 1918.²⁹⁰ Exceeding the scales allowed by the Meat Order 1917, cost one Narberth butcher £2 2*s.*²⁹¹ Resistance and non-compliance were far from uncommon.

The number of orders it was possible to breach were legion. Mr John Smith, fishmonger, was fined £1 for selling fish in contravention of the Fish (Prices) Order No. 2 (1918).²⁹² Twenty-two prosecutions of various grocers at Pembroke Dock in December 1917 included seventeen cases where jam was sold above the proper price.²⁹³ Butter, cheese, ham and peppermints did not escape the watchful gaze of the local bureaucrats. Wasting food was similarly discouraged. Corporal Betts was fined 10*s.* for wasting rice and a further 10*s.* for 'damaging or treating a quantity of Quaker oats to render same unfit for human food.'²⁹⁴ When a Pembroke Dock labourer threw his dinner on the fire, he was charged with wasting food and fined £3 3*s.*²⁹⁵ Hoarding was seen as a moral slight against the community values of shared shortages and was

²⁸⁸ *TO*, 7 June 1917.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 4 July 1918.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1 August 1918.

²⁹¹ *PCG*, 9 November 1917.

²⁹² PRO TPS/RM/3. Milford Haven Petty Sessional area Court Register 1915-22; 5 June 1918.

²⁹³ PRO TPS/PE/12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessional area Register 1917-25; 8 December 1917.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *PCG*, 22 February 1918.

treated with particular opprobrium. Few Pembrokeshire cases are encountered, perhaps partly explained by rurality and the small chance of detection. In June 1918 David Harrison of Tenby was charged with hoarding 54 pounds of jam and 43 pounds of marmalade, judged to be six month's supply for his household. There were allegations of bias when the defendant, coincidentally High Sheriff of Pembrokeshire, saw his summons dismissed by the magistrates.²⁹⁶ Rationing provided an abundance of administrative opportunities for prosecutions, especially with failure to follow the rubric of the ration books. One Charles John of Pembroke Dock was fined 7*s.* 6*d.* for selling a rabbit without detaching the appropriate coupon.²⁹⁷

The experiences of war were felt in a myriad of different ways, including the curtailment of all-important local pleasure and hiring fairs, the introduction of smaller newspapers (due to an acute paper shortage), requisitioning of transport like local ferries and horses, whilst at Tenby there was much angst when the popular Bristol Channel steamers no longer called in during the season.²⁹⁸ The state, as experienced both locally and nationally, was omnipotent and omnipresent requiring civilians to carry identity cards stemming from the National Registration Act. This highlighted thoughts on the collective use of such personal information by government.²⁹⁹

The agricultural community found itself superintended in many ways never before envisaged. The Corn Production Act, 1917, compelled farmers to cultivate more arable land.³⁰⁰ At Narberth William Price of Yerboston Gate, Begelly was fined £30 for negligently or willingly refusing to plough fifteen acres as ordered by the county

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 28 June 1918.

²⁹⁷ PRO TPS/PE/12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessions 1917-25; 26 October 1918.

²⁹⁸ *TO*, 29 July 1915.

²⁹⁹ Eliot, 'An Early Experiment in National Identity Cards', 147.

³⁰⁰ Parry, 'Gwynedd and the Great War, 1914-1918', 98.

war agricultural committee.³⁰¹ Livestock found itself under severe government restraints. Thomas Davies of Rhoswell was fined 5s. for failing to dip his sheep.³⁰² For selling a bull for slaughter other than in accordance with the Livestock Sales Order 1918, one farmer found himself in court to face a stiff fine.³⁰³ Public lighting and the use of petroleum and food provides three areas where personal freedom was severely curtailed by state proscription. The significant number of prosecutions for infringements, (and for agricultural cases from 1917) suggests an attentive wartime bureaucracy even in rural counties like Pembrokeshire.

Policing and Public Order

The extension of criminal activities into the ordinary and mundane patterns of behaviour and greater state regulation generally put immense pressures on local police forces who were the principal agents of inspection and enforcement. DeGroot has asserted how authority became much more intrusive as misdemeanours were seen as being perpetrated not just against an individual but also an affront to society.³⁰⁴ In 1914, the police force of England and Wales amounted to just over 53,000, many of military age.³⁰⁵ In Pembrokeshire, the constabulary stood at between 60 and 70, with an additional 61 officers of the Metropolitan Police based at Pembroke Dockyard.³⁰⁶ The competing demands of military recruitment and securing an adequate number of officers created obvious tensions and put increasing pressure on law-enforcement officials.

Eight members of the Pembrokeshire force enlisted in the army in September 1914,

³⁰¹ *PH*, 5 April 1918

³⁰² PRO TPS/DU/2. Dungleddy Petty Sessional area Court Register; 29 September 1916.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 25 October 1918.

³⁰⁴ DeGroot, *Blighty*, 140.

³⁰⁵ Clive Emsley, *The English Police. A Political and Social History* (Harlow, 1991), 121.

³⁰⁶ PP. 1918 (Cd. 9204) *Report on the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis for 1917*.

including two reservists, their posts being kept open as long as they served.³⁰⁷ Five months later another five men exchanged their blue uniforms for khaki, their departure 'regretted by all law-abiding citizens.'³⁰⁸ The Standing Joint Committee was hawkish in ensuring as many officers as possible should be released for military service. Mr. Fred Summers, chief constable, reported his force to be 40 per cent under strength and he was distinctly sceptical about how well special constables could do the work. The Pembrokeshire Constabulary possessed 20-22 men under the age of 40 and these details had been passed on to the Home Secretary.³⁰⁹ The force faced a loss of a further fifteen constables, men classed A and B1 by the medical board from 1 May 1917. By 1917 the constabulary had an establishment of twelve sergeants and 35 constables and was faced with the closure of police stations because there was not even one officer to man them.³¹⁰ Soon there were voluble complaints across the county about the visible lack of police.³¹¹ An earlier economy measure had seen the absorption of the mounted section, resulting in a saving of £300-£400 per year plus the proceeds from the sales of horses and vehicles.³¹²

It was supposed that Special Constables could easily make up the shortfall and at least these civilian auxiliaries were a preference to military force on the streets. Police authorities were advised to appoint men of steady habits and of good character. The Specials were lauded in the press as civic-minded patriots, although it was estimated that it took six or seven part-time Specials to do the work of an ordinary police constable.³¹³ There were tensions between the Specials and the remaining full-timers

³⁰⁷ *PH*, 11 September 1914.

³⁰⁸ *CE*, 11 April 1915.

³⁰⁹ *PH*, 12 January 1917.

³¹⁰ *H&MHT*, 11 April 1917.

³¹¹ *PCG*, 20 April 1917.

³¹² *TO*, 13 January 1916.

³¹³ Emsley, *The English Police*, 123.

with a significant drop-out rate among the former. The experience of the Special Constabulary in Pembrokeshire was not altogether satisfactory.

Early in the war the chief constable was empowered to swear in auxiliaries in each district and procure badges and batons for them as necessary.³¹⁴ In Tenby the arrangements appeared to work well, the town divided into two wards and around 40 constables appointed by 1917.³¹⁵ Sir Charles Philipps, chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, expressed himself as disappointed by the lack of Specials appointed at Haverfordwest, whereas at Tenby the response had been splendid.³¹⁶ At Pembroke Dock there were complaints about the miserable little white rag with 'special constable' inscribed on it worn on the arm, and unfavourable comparisons made with the uniform and equipment provided elsewhere.³¹⁷ Although some Specials had been employed at 40s. per week, the chief constable excited the ire of the volunteer policemen by revealing he had never been in favour of their appointment and had only seen them as a temporary expedient. The Pembroke Dock Specials resigned *en masse* describing his comments as unpatriotic and 'damned impertinence'.³¹⁸ This ill-feeling experienced during wartime was manifest.

Despite manpower pressures, contemporaries and later historians have detected an appreciable decline in the crime rate during the war. *The Times* reported lower rates of offending and the need for fewer prisons by 1916.³¹⁹ DeGroot asserts how the crime rate plummeted.³²⁰ Clive Emsley notes the changed wartime conditions: many possible offenders in the army, restrictions on aliens, reduction of poverty and stricter

³¹⁴ PRO PCC/SE/42/3. Pembrokeshire Standing Joint Committee Minutes 1912-25; 15 August 1914.

³¹⁵ *TO*, 1 March 1917.

³¹⁶ *CE*, 12 April 1917.

³¹⁷ *PCG*, 25 May 1917.

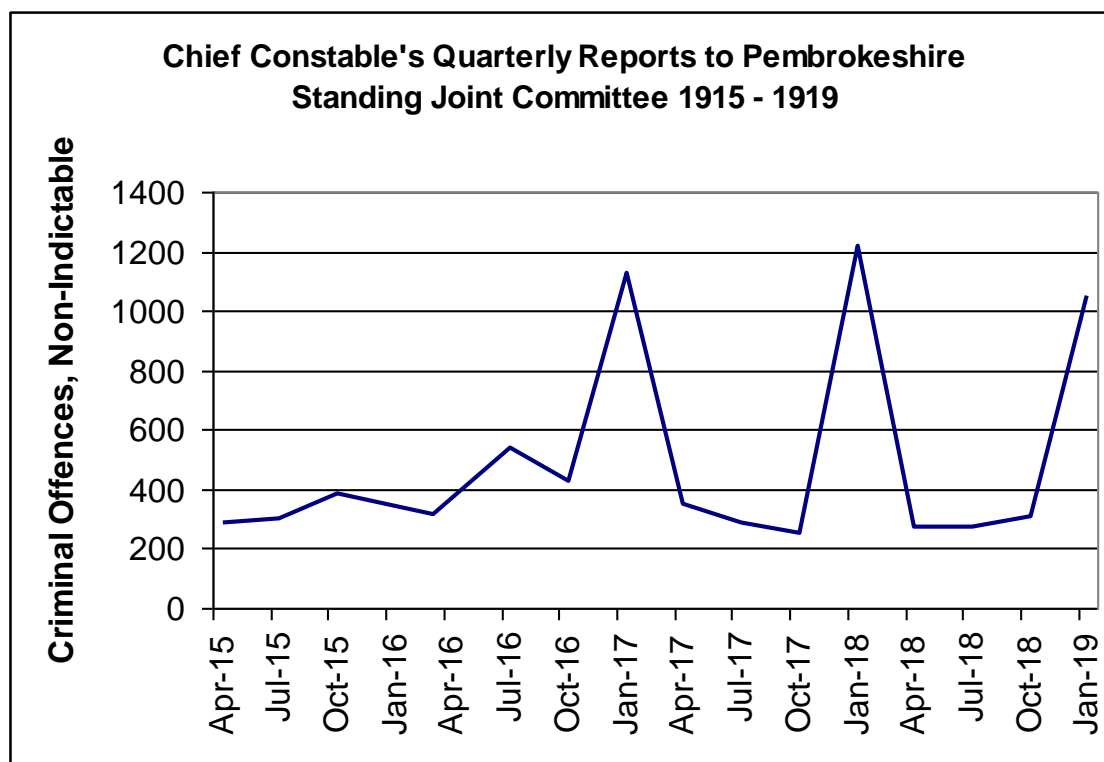
³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 27 July 1917.

³¹⁹ *TT*, 6 June 1917.

³²⁰ DeGroot, *Blighty*, 140.

control on alcohol.³²¹ Nevertheless, shifting police priorities saw a move away from investigating petty crime towards the enforcement of ‘innumerable orders’ under the DORA regulations.³²² One of the most marked changes to crime patterns between 1914-18 was a significant reduction which the Pembrokeshire scene discloses.³²³

Table 4



This county-wide trend was also reflected in specific petty sessional divisions. When increases did occur they usually reflected the new lighting offences in 1916 and food control offences in 1917. The Saundersfoot Petty Sessions saw the total number of offences decline from 69 in 1915 to 38 by 1918.³²⁴ The Pembroke Petty Sessions witnessed a decline from 356 to 292.³²⁵ At Fishguard the decline was more dramatic, from 83 offences down to 22.³²⁶ Localised factors, the presence of Scandinavian

³²¹ Elmsley, *The English Police*, 123.

³²² *PH*, 18 April 1918.

³²³ PRO PCC/SE/42/3. Pembrokeshire Joint Standing Committee minutes 1912-25.

³²⁴ PRO TPS/NS/3. Saundersfoot Petty Sessional area Court Register 1913-25.

³²⁵ PRO TPS/PE/11-12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessional area Court Register 1914-25.

³²⁶ PRO PCC/PO/64. Fishguard Police Division Register of Charges 1914-26.

lumbermen, explained an aberration at Narberth where there was an actual rise in 1918.³²⁷

CONCLUSION

The civilian population of the county was more closely supervised, inspected and scrutinised than any generation before. Although wartime necessity blunted much of the opposition it would be wrong to assume people were ambivalent about their loss of traditional liberties.³²⁸ The local press, especially, were vociferous in their criticism of certain regulations, especially when there was no apparent connectivity to the war effort. A precedent had been set and the state was much more visible. Every fresh encroachment which modified everyday habits became an accomplished fact. The everyday experiences of war were highly diverse and a wartime re-ordering of the definitions of well-being demonstrated how far the boundaries had changed.³²⁹ The national state extended its competences over areas never before contemplated and in so doing directed and changed the lives of Pembrokeshire civilians through increased bureaucratisation and myriad forms of control.

Changes in Political Activism: The Growth of the Labour Party and Organised Labour

The expansion of the state during the war provided opportunities for political activism and involvement by political parties and trades unions so that the political landscape changed dramatically in the decade following the two General Elections of 1910. This was certainly true in Pembrokeshire. By 1920 political alignments had shifted into

³²⁷ PRO TPS/NA/6-7. Narberth Petty Sessional area Court Register 1912-18.

³²⁸ T.O. Lloyd *Empire to Welfare State. English History 1906-1976* (Oxford, 1979), 71.

³²⁹ Jay Winter, Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919: Capital Cities at War', in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert (eds), *Capital Cities at War. Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919* (Cambridge, 1997), 19.

new entities which rose due from a greatly increased electorate and redefined concepts of political theory. Helle proposes a longer time frame holding the view that the political system should be seen holistically from the 1880s with the decline of 'high politics,' imposition of a national bureaucracy, formation of pressure groups and new patterns of territorial, ethnic, cultural, religious and social groupings. Turner's evaluation of change in state, society and economy has a similarly long antecedence. Further, the political realignments following on after 1918 were all highly unpredictable.³³⁰ Turner stresses the importance of longer-term forces, with the war providing a temporary disruption to established procedures and conventions.³³¹

A similar dichotomy of views exists to explain the rise of the Labour Party during 1914-18 which 'surged' to second-party status and supplanted the divided Liberal Party, former home of the centre left.³³² The party took several steps during the period 1900-14 whereby it constituted a more coherent and organised form. For Williams, 1910 marked a period of three decades where Labour established hegemony in industrial south Wales with distinct organisational and cultural underpinnings. Successful advocacy was accompanied by a heightened vision of socialism.³³³ Francis and Smith have very lucidly described the symbiotic relationship between the mining communities and growth of Labour politics in the twentieth century.³³⁴ Although at a local level the party made considerable progress, their national appeal was restricted as shown in their dismal results in the 1910 general elections.³³⁵ Before the war the

³³⁰ Searle, *A New England?* 823.

³³¹ Helle, 'Long Decline of Politics', 191.

³³² Andrew Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (Basingstoke, 1997), 32.

³³³ Chris Williams, *Democratic Rhondda. Politics and Society, 1885-1951* (Cardiff, 1996), 10. Similarly John Williams maps out the wider context for the growth of socialism in Wales in 'The economic and social context', Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds), *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000), 23-39.

³³⁴ Hywel Francis and Dai Smith, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff, 1998).

³³⁵ D Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000* (Cardiff, 2000) 83.

Liberal edifice across Wales still seemed secure.

The debate over the causality of war versus contingency and longer-term trends is highly instructive when seen in a Pembrokeshire context. The county's experience of organised labour and new political formations illuminates the national discussion. In 1914 the Labour Party was but one element of a labour movement which comprised trades unions, co-operative organisations, socialist societies and local trades' councils.³³⁶ The party was still a loose and ill-defined allegiance rather than a single coherent entity with specific policies and had limited electoral appeal.³³⁷ In December 1910 the party polled a mere 6.4 per cent of the vote.³³⁸ Labour's domination of south Wales was gradual and was achieved in a far from linear form with consolidation of institutional, cultural and economic developments.³³⁹

Marwick and Winter view the rise of the interventionist, corporatist state displaying and legitimising 'war socialism' as giving the lead for greater empowerment of the working class in the political system.³⁴⁰ Such explanations have come under sustained challenge during recent years. McKibbin agrees that the rise of the Labour Party was due in part to developing working-class assertiveness but he disagrees with seeing the war as the event of primary importance in Labour's post-war success: 'Everything points to Labour's ante-bellum character'³⁴¹ which was both propagandist and evangelical. Thus the war, for him, was the accelerator rather than the generator of change.³⁴² Tanner alludes to the more complex set of relationships between the trades unions and the party, whereby the party's own efforts in creating political

³³⁶ K. B. Smellie, *A Hundred Years of English Government* (London, 1950), 224.

³³⁷ McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party*, 240.

³³⁸ Tanner, 'Politics of the Labour Movement', 39.

³³⁹ Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000*, 82.

³⁴⁰ Waites, *A Class Society at War*, 14.

³⁴¹ McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party*, 240.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 243.

support should not be underestimated, rather than Labour growing on the coat tails of the unions.³⁴³ Further, his analysis of municipal election results discloses how Labour ‘was on the march’ before 1914.³⁴⁴ Tanner and Reid lodge objections to the notion of class-based discontinuity in Labour’s rise, but rather point to changes in conditions of work and reforming values.³⁴⁵ No consensus is likely to explain how Labour came to displace the Liberals for political primacy although this remains a key field of modern British historiography.³⁴⁶

Notwithstanding the foregoing arguments there is very strong evidence that the war did generate significant permanent political change in Pembrokeshire and resulted in Labour’s rise but not ascendancy in local and parliamentary elections. Before 1914 the politics of the county was solidly Liberal. Both constituencies (Pembroke Boroughs and the County) had Liberal members. The latter had not returned a Conservative member since 1874.³⁴⁷ Likewise, Pembrokeshire County Council had long enjoyed a healthy Liberal majority and even some parish councils, a feature of democratic life since 1894, often prided themselves as being all from the radical party. An Independent Labour Party was first established at Haverfordwest on 13 September 1907 with thirteen members, although Pembrokeshire’s first brush with socialist ideas does not seem to have survived into the immediate pre-war years.

The summer of 1916 was a crucial moment for the emergence of the Labour Party in Pembrokeshire. The initial emphasis was not on abstract political theory or

³⁴³ Tanner, ‘Politics of the Labour Movement’, 40.

³⁴⁴ Duncan Tanner, ‘Elections, Statistics and the Rise of the Labour Party, 1906-1931’, *HJ*, 34:4, (1991), 894.

³⁴⁵ Neville Kirk, *Change, Continuity and Class. Labour in British Society 1850-1920* (Manchester, 1998), 194.

³⁴⁶ Michael Childs, ‘Labour Grows Up: The Electoral System, Political Generations and British Politics 1890-1929’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 6:2, (1995), 123; A. Mor-O’Brien, *A community in wartime: Aberdare and the First World War*, PhD., Wales, Swansea (1986) states how the inexorable rise of Labour in Aberdare was hastened by the war.

³⁴⁷ Thorne, ‘Pembrokeshire and National Politics’, 265.

intellectual socialism but rather the spark came from mundane, literal bread- and-butter concerns over high food prices, thus a direct consequence of war conditions. The focus was firmly on the local and immediate. Pembroke Dock Trades Council was praised for attempting to reduce the price of coke and gas in the town.³⁴⁸ Five weeks later, on the initiative of the Pembroke Dock Trades Council and the National Union of Teachers, a conference was held in the dockyard town on 22 July 1916 to formally establish the first county party.³⁴⁹ The inaugural meeting passed resolutions calling for the government to requisition all food stuffs (a portent of actual future state action) and democratise the Naval and Military War Pensions Act committees. Skilled artisans and local teachers seemed to provide the impetus for action.

The primary importance of the trades' councils in establishing the new political structure for the county was all too apparent, a pattern typical of the co-ordination in the smaller boroughs and county towns.³⁵⁰ Alan Clinton has detected a parallel accession to power where, at a local level, and in response to exclusion in other areas, trade councils provided participation for and prestige to working men.³⁵¹ The Pembroke Dock Trades Council was established in 1912 and seemed to reflect the national experience of the hybrid association consisting of teachers, local government officers, and other workers. They were a means whereby trades unionists could exert influence beyond the strict confines of their own workplace.³⁵² This was a process mirrored nationally by the government taking into ministerial ranks Labour members and permitting the first experiences of power. Initially the nascent Labour movement was concentrated in the few industrial centres especially the dockyard town of

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 16 June 1916.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 28 July 1916.

³⁵⁰ McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party*, 72.

³⁵¹ Alan Clinton, 'Trade Councils during the First World War', *International Review of Social History*, 15, (1970), 202-234.

³⁵² Evans, *History of Wales 1906-2000*, 80.

Pembroke Dock, the fishing town of Milford Haven and railway termini of Neyland and Fishguard. In September 1916 a district Labour committee was established at Pembroke Dock for explicitly 'local political purposes.'³⁵³ A committee for Pembroke had been established by the year's end, while preparations were being made for a branch at Neyland, which, being a 'purely working-class town', was confidently expected by one correspondent to become a Labour stronghold.³⁵⁴ The works of the district committees were clearly espoused as fighting elections, 'rural, municipal and parliamentary'.³⁵⁵

Within five months of their initial conference, four district Labour committees had been established with preparations for three more including putative ones for Haverfordwest and Goodwick. Those that were not members of a trades union could still join the party (which did not have a conventional individual membership system) as associates.³⁵⁶ Even in a small county like Pembrokeshire there were significant operational differences which imply there was organic growth and not complete county co-ordination. Milford Haven preferred a Trades and Labour Council rather than a district committee and indeed, eschewed any notion of party politics. Rather, they advocated the uplifting and betterment of the workers of the town. State expansion provided opportunities for the politicisation of mundane issues even if this did not mean the involvement of party politics. Fishguard and Goodwick, on the north coast, were particularly receptive to the new Labour message. On 23 February 1917 a meeting to further the creation of a Trades' Council was held in the town.³⁵⁷ The prime mover of the Labour movement was county secretary Mr. Edgar Phillips

³⁵³ *PCG*, 29 September 1916.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 8 December 1916.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 19 January 1917.

³⁵⁶ *H&MHT*, 6 December 1916.

³⁵⁷ *CE*, 1 March 1917.

Harries. He assured his audience that in the present state of affairs ‘when all the old landmarks are being swept away and many changes are being enacted, Labour has just as much right to sound its voice.’³⁵⁸ The Fishguard and Goodwick Trades and Labour Council was duly established on 23 July 1917. Nationally the number of affiliated divisional and Labour parties and trades councils increased from 215 to 397 between January and July 1918.³⁵⁹

A prominent role in Labour formation was taken by school teachers who occupied a fairly ambiguous social status. Julie Light has demonstrated the problems inherent in discussing the Welsh middle class as a pivotal concept but one very hard to define; certainly no school teacher was counted among the urban elites of Bridgend, Pontypool or Penarth. Perhaps identity and sense of place mattered more than class.³⁶⁰ The National Union had affiliated to the Pembrokeshire Labour Party by July 1917. One pedagogue, Mr Evan Anthony, reminded his fellow teachers of their proletarian origins, they being ‘mostly sons and daughters of workers.’³⁶¹ By uniting with Labour they could accomplish more for education. An occupational analysis of the Fishguard Trades and Labour Council reveals a clear balance between rural and agricultural crafts. They comprised of a school teacher, fireman, railway men, contractor and several agricultural labourers. Later the council boasted representation from every branch of local industry.³⁶²

The Pembrokeshire Labour Party’s first annual conference demonstrated how a successful, if limited political structure had been established by 1917. Over 50

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party*, 137.

³⁶⁰ Julie Light, ‘The Middle Classes as Urban Elites in Nineteenth-Century South Wales’, *WHR*, 24:3 (2009), 29-55

³⁶¹ *PCG*, 26 July 1917.

³⁶² Ibid., 9 August 1917.

delegates met at the Temperance Hall, Pembroke Dock on 25 August 1917 with attendees from Stepside, Neyland, Begelly, East Williamston, Letterston, Pembroke and Goodwick. The most prominent apologist for socialism, Mr Harries, encapsulated the hopes of activists, coupled with an almost Evangelical plea, 'It is not to the existing Liberal Party that the younger and finer spirits look for the *Risorgimento* of British democracy. On the contrary they are beginning to flock to the banners of Labour. And if these are flung wide enough by next spring they will float over a mighty host.'³⁶³

Nevertheless not all of the county was receptive to the voice of Labour. The county town of Haverfordwest did not have a trades and labour council until 27 April 1918. The seat of many of the county gentry, the residents were facetiously described as being 'too respectable' and hostile to unionism. This demonstrates the historical and geographic spatial influences on political geography. At Tenby, a major seaside resort with no industrial presence to speak of there was not even a hint of a trades' council until the very end of the war.³⁶⁴ Thus worker political activism very much mirrored local economic and social structures.

The war emergency, with greater state intervention, bureaucratisation and mobilisation, led to the creation of a new structure which offered aspiring Labour activists their first opportunity of serving on local bodies and demonstrated the importance of local government.³⁶⁵ As such, these bodies served a similar role to the earlier school boards which had offered the way for Liberal participation from the 1870s. Labour looked for comprehensive recognition and if they felt overlooked,

³⁶³ Ibid., 7 December 1917.

³⁶⁴ *TO*, 5 September 1918.

³⁶⁵ Eddie May, 'The Mosaic of Labour Politics, 1900-1918', in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds), *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000), 80.

would lobby for seats. The Naval and Military Pensions committee, Military Service Tribunals and Food Control Committees all had earmarked spaces for nominees of labour, at least acknowledging the need for inclusivity. Food control was very dear to the Labour movement, with members keen to scrutinise what they saw as abuses or preferential treatment.³⁶⁶ ‘Muscling in’ on local administrative bodies provided keen opportunities for activism.³⁶⁷ In Pembrokeshire the political rhetoric from Labour was more likely to be concerns over sugar rather than socialism *per se*. Activists who denied political allegiances were keen to express their local loyalty by securing a fair share of food resources. In March 1917 the Milford Haven Trades and Labour Council, a particularly assertive body, urged tenants not to pay any rent increases demanded by landlords; they also lobbied for the provision of allotments and the town’s rightful share of seed potatoes.³⁶⁸ The rise of Labour was rooted in the availability and equitable distribution of basic commodities during wartime.

Local food supplies were the rubric of Pembrokeshire socialists. Accusations of profiteering by grocers, who were charging 9*d.* per pound for sugar were encouraged to be submitted to the county secretary so that he could forward them to the Sugar Commission.³⁶⁹ The Milford Haven Urban District Council was even more interventionist, receiving 200 quarts of milk each day and selling it at no more than 4*d.* per quart.³⁷⁰ Later they supported the actions of the National Union of Railwaymen who refused to handle milk and butter freight being sent out of the

³⁶⁶ Bernard Waites, ‘The Government of the Home Front and the Moral Economy of the Working Class’, in Peter H. Liddle (ed.), *Home Fires and Foreign Fields. British Society and Military Experience in the First World War* (London, 1985), 186.

³⁶⁷ Searle, *A New England* ? 828.

³⁶⁸ *H&MHT*, 21 March 1917.

³⁶⁹ *PCG*, 26 January 1917.

³⁷⁰ *H&MHT*, 30 May 1917.

locality before local needs had been supplied.³⁷¹

Representation was a key platform where politicisation of local government bodies reflected the national process of greater partisanship and Labour discourse. District pensions committees regularly co-opted Labour members. The Llanfyrnach Parish Council nominated a labourer to the district committee.³⁷² Likewise, Slebech council appointed a roadman to the Narberth District Pensions Committee.³⁷³ John Lloyd, a mason, was appointed to the Narberth Food Control Committee in 1917.³⁷⁴ The party was vigilant in exposing vested interests or malpractice. Mr E.P. Harries wrote to the County War Agricultural Executive complaining about the composition of the Haverfordwest Rural District Council Food Control Committee. The latter was composed of eight farmers and a squire's wife.³⁷⁵ Mr Harries demanded redress and threatened to write to Lord Rhondda if action was not taken to ensure a more balanced committee.

One aspect of public life which the Labour Party was determined to achieve was to see their members appointed as Justices of the Peace. Perhaps the desire for social acceptability or as a challenge to existing order. They prevailed upon the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee and in October 1916 four Labour magistrates were appointed: a fitter, shipwright, miner and railwayman. This 'marked the entry of the

³⁷¹ *PCG*, 23 November 1917.

³⁷² PRO HSPC/5/2. Llanfyrnach Parish Council minutes 1906-32; 9 June 1916

³⁷³ PRO HSPC/53/1. Slebech Parish Council minutes 1894-1974; 12 June 1916.

³⁷⁴ PRO NAU/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council minutes 1911-20; 15 August 1917.

³⁷⁵ Labour History Archive and Study Centre (People's History Museum) WNC/19/6/43. 4 March 1918. Edgar Phillips Harries (1888-1963) was born at Pembroke Dock, the son of Thomas Henry Harries. He became an apprentice shipwright in 1903. He was the first county secretary of the county Labour Party, later serving as president. He was the first Labour Alderman of Pembrokeshire County Council 1918-22. He was secretary of the organising department of the TUC (1932-48) and was awarded a CBE in 1948; P.E. Harries, 'Edgar Phillips Harries CBE (Better known as 'EP')'. Some Aspects of His Life', *Journal of Pembrokeshire Historical Society*, 4 (1990-91), 74-90.

Labour Party into the political life of the county.³⁷⁶ Thus these sons of toil would sit on the bench with the local squirearchy as their equals. Later, complaints were raised about how Haverfordwest's 68 magistrates were not representative of society, and changes should be made.³⁷⁷ The county party expended much effort in promoting political and general education.

The party's second conference held at Milford Haven on 22 June 1918 was heralded as marking a new era in Pembrokeshire politics. Local Labour fortunes were aided by a sympathetic local press in the form of the *Haverfordwest & Milford Haven Telegraph* (a staunch Liberal supporter since 1854). One editorial alluded to the remarkable progress during the past twelve months and hoped how 'a new spirit of comradeship' would soften class antagonisms and lead to social change.³⁷⁸ Although it is easy to exaggerate the extent of change, the war did transform the fortunes of the left by 'playing into Labour's hands.'³⁷⁹ By 1918 the party entered a new phase of institutional history with a new constitution and new category of individual membership.³⁸⁰ Labour gained a voice in Pembrokeshire during the war, one derived from the articulation of day- to- day issues rather than political principle or theory.

Trades Union Growth and Conflict

The fundament of the labour movement, the trades unions, were the chief beneficiaries of wartime conditions since their collective work for the war effort was indispensable in munitions production. In Pembrokeshire there was an increase in union organisation and greater assertiveness which is in contrast to the general

³⁷⁶ *PCG*, 27 October 1916.

³⁷⁷ *PH*, 3 May 1918.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 3 July 1916.

³⁷⁹ Maurice Bruce, *The Coming of the Welfare State* (London, 1966), 200.

³⁸⁰ Clare V.J. Griffiths, *Labour and the Countryside. The Politics of Rural Britain 1918-1939* (Oxford, 2007), 3.

passivity before 1914 although there was a major commercial dispute amongst the fishermen at Milford Haven in the summer of 1914. There is no doubting that membership of trades unions and the numbers of strikes before 1914 did constitute an important element of the Edwardian 'Great Unrest.' Union membership stood at 4,135,000 in 1914.³⁸¹ Robb has argued how slow economic growth and greater employer resistance led to a massive escalation in the use of the strike as a weapon. In 1909 there were 422 stoppages, rising to 1,459 by 1913.³⁸² Stagnating real wages and a growing sense of relative deprivation have been offered as possible explanations for the unprecedented unrest as witnessed at Tonypany in 1910.³⁸³ Price and White contend that the labour unrest should be seen in a longer context from the 1890s.³⁸⁴

The outbreak of war changed the dynamic of power relationships between the government and organised labour. An accommodation was essential if disruption to the war effort was to be avoided, although any generalisation of local situations should be avoided... For Waites, trades unions were increasingly recognised as legitimate agents by government and drawn into the decision making process to which they had hitherto been excluded.³⁸⁵ Collective bargaining did provide for an institutionalised form of class conflict, which was subsequently interpreted as the norm. This was explicitly recognised by Asquith when he conceded 'for the first time in the history of this country since the Black Death, the supply of labour has not been equal to demand and the working man knows it.'³⁸⁶ The requirements for huge production increases necessitated the Treasury Agreement of March 1915 between the

³⁸¹ Chris Wrigley, 'The Impact of the First World War', in Chris Wrigley (ed.), *A Companion to Early Twentieth Century Britain* (Oxford, 2003), 511.

³⁸² Robb, *British Culture in the First World War*, 68.

³⁸³ Roy Church, 'Edwardian Labour Unrest and Coalfield Militancy, 1890-1914', *HJ*, 30:4 (1987), 842.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 843.

³⁸⁵ Waites, *A Class Society at War*, 29.

³⁸⁶ Stevenson, *British Society 1914-1945*, 29.

government and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. This set out a rubric for collaboration, relaxing union demarcation, and a voluntary agreement to end strikes and walk outs. The Munitions of War Act made the agreement legally binding.

Before 1914, organised labour in Pembrokeshire, given the overwhelming pastoral nature of the economy, had made very limited progress. Such industry as it existed included the craft unions in the dockyard at Pembroke Dock and other ship building centres, and very small mining and other mineral extraction spread throughout the county. Thus Hook colliers formed a branch of the National Labourers' Federation in 1890 and a small branch of the South Wales Miners Federation was established at Saundersfoot in 1898. A branch of the Shopworkers' Union became a reality at Haverfordwest in 1907. At Milford Haven, membership of the National Amalgamated Union of Labourers (NAUL) and the National Sailors and Firemen's Union (NSFU) had increased steadily by 1910. In 1911 a public meeting was held to promote membership of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.³⁸⁷ In July 1914 the unions had claimed how average wages at Milford Haven were lower than at other ports and victimisation practised on union members. Deadlock ensued, although the outbreak of war changed the dynamics of the situation and caused the labour agitation to collapse.³⁸⁸ Elsewhere, during the early years of the war union, organisation strengthened at existing centres and tentatively expanded into new areas. By 1915 a 'strong revival' (invoking the parlance of resurgent Nonconformity) of unionism was manifest across the county. State expansion and the necessity for workplace harmony provided new opportunities for Pembrokeshire trades unionists within the admittedly narrow industrial sector.

³⁸⁷ McKay, *A Vision of Greatness* 191

³⁸⁸ PRO D/MDC/D/8. Milford Docks Company Board minutes 1903-14; 25 August 1914.

A strong branch of the NAUL was established at Porthgain with its stone quarries and brick works on the north coast. One speaker there urged the men to organise and secure better wages and use the union as an instrument to check rising prices.³⁸⁹ The small Pembrokeshire anthracite coalfield, tiny by south Wales' standards, witnessed disruption in 1916. At Hook colliery sixteen miners went on strike in January 1916 demanding wages of one pound a week.³⁹⁰ Later, the miners at Bonville's Court and Reynoldston threatened a walk-out unless their claim for a fifteen per cent wage increase was acceded to.³⁹¹ There was an absence of the Marxist-driven class antagonism which characterised the eastern industrial valleys, disseminated through tutorial classes of the Central Labour College and of the Plebs League.³⁹²

The three principles of wartime union expansion were the establishment of the Agricultural Workers' Union across the county, a particularly strong docks at Milford Haven and the militancy of the workers at the Great Western Railway terminus at Fishguard harbour. On 10 July 1915 the Fishguard quaymen, around 110 in number, downed tools demanding an extra one penny per hour. Refusing to return to work even when appealed to 'on patriotic grounds' by local secretary Fitzmaurice, they reluctantly went back on the understanding that their claim would be subject to arbitration and they would still enjoy their old rates of pay, five pence per hour with three shillings a week war bonus, subsidised coal and 'privilege' tickets on trains.³⁹³ A 24-hour strike by seamen and firemen at the same harbour led to the cancellation of sailings to Rosslare in August 1915. The men initially refused to work despite

³⁸⁹ *PCG*, 29 January 1915.

³⁹⁰ *TO*, 3 January 1916.

³⁹¹ *PCG*, 1 August 1916.

³⁹² Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 172-174; Hywel Francis and Dai Smith, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff, 1998), 22-3.

³⁹³ *CE*, 15 July 1915.

pressure from their own officials but then went back.³⁹⁴

The most significant quantitative increase in organised labour occurred at Milford Haven, hardly surprising given the important combination of fishing port and docks. On 23 November 1916, a Fishermens' Fish Workers' and General Labourers' Union was founded with almost 200 members. They affiliated to the local trades' council which by then boasted 700 'organised workers'.³⁹⁵ The National Labourers' Union was in regular conflict with the Milford Haven Docks Company for wage increases to meet, as they saw it, rising food and fuel prices. In October 1917, dock labourers had secured an additional twenty shillings per week increase in wages since the war began.³⁹⁶ At one mass meeting the secretary foresaw the day when all workers in Milford Haven would be active, while resolutions were passed calling for labour representation on the local urban district and county councils.³⁹⁷ The increased assertiveness of local labour was acknowledged by Mr James Ward, local manager of the docks, in a letter written to the company secretary, Mr Brocklebank. Ward regretted the influx of militant unionists from elsewhere, and the support which the workers were receiving from the government.³⁹⁸ This is a clear inference to outside and perhaps more militant influences at work.

One aspect of trade union growth which was encouraged by union activists and the local Labour Party, although met with decidedly mixed results, was in the county's very wide agricultural sector. The state played a decisive factor in all aspects of food production, regulation and distribution; a higher national priority to the rural economy which Labour and trades unionists were keen to capitalise on. Pretty has detected a

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19 August 1915.

³⁹⁵ *PH*, 1 December 1916.

³⁹⁶ *CE*, 4 October 1917.

³⁹⁷ *H&MHT*, 19 November 1917.

³⁹⁸ PRO MDC/S/6/40. Milford Docks Company Ministry of Labour File 1917-20; 17 March 1918.

new sense of stubborn independence displayed by farm labourers across Wales in 1917-18 as wartime cost of living pressures peaked.³⁹⁹ The role of outside trade unions in assisting this awakening, as Howell asserts, was crucial.⁴⁰⁰ By September 1917, the county Labour party had organised meetings in the south of the county, at Merrion, Cosheston, Waleston and Angle, and they were keen to launch ‘expeditions’ into the north to promote a farm labourers union.⁴⁰¹ They were anxious to emphasise the minimum wage aspects of the Corn Production Act, 1917. One meeting at Solva enrolled 50 members to their new branch.⁴⁰² One visitor to the county welcomed the advent of this new feeling whereby the labourer had grown tired of waiting for the pleasure of ‘parson, squire, landlord and farmer’ by taking matters into their own hands.⁴⁰³ Labourers saw strength in organisation as they pressed their case for better wages, shorter hours and security of tenure in tied cottages. Thomas E. Nicholas of Glais played a prominent role in organising north Pembrokeshire labourers. On 8 June 1918, a branch of the agricultural workers’ union was established at the Rhos (Picton) with 50 members in the backyard of the leading land-holding family, the Philipps of Picton Castle.⁴⁰⁴ By August 1918 there were fifteen branches across the county.⁴⁰⁵

The Labour Party and organised labour made much headway across the county during the war, although from a very low or non-existent base. Both consolidated and expanded; party allegiances and voting habits did change, although Liberalism remained a potent force in Pembrokeshire politics. Challenging policy issues, state compulsion and expansion sacrificed many of the old Liberal shibboleths of limited

³⁹⁹ David A. Pretty, *The Rural Revolt That Failed. Farm Workers’ Trade Unions in Wales 1889-1950* (Cardiff, 1989), 77.

⁴⁰⁰ David W. Howell, ‘Labour Organization among Agricultural Workers in Wales, 1872-1921’, *WHR*, 16:1-4 (1992-3), 63-92.

⁴⁰¹ *CE*, 20 September 1917.

⁴⁰² *H&MHT*, 14 November 1917.

⁴⁰³ *CE*, 3 January 1918.

⁴⁰⁴ *PH*, 14 June 1918.

⁴⁰⁵ *PCG*, 30 August 1918.

government, free trade and economic orthodoxy. Just as destructive was the inability to absorb the working classes within its ranks, thereby driving them into the emerging Labour Party.⁴⁰⁶ The latter did evolve a more coherent strategy with ideological identity, political activism and they appeared under the old Liberal mantle as social reform champions.

The General Election of December 1918: Wartime political change in context

One test of wartime political change was the General Election held on 14 December 1918. Citizen participation had been hugely extended by the Representation of the People Act with all males over the age of 21 and women over 30 entitled to cast their ballot. The measure has sometimes been referred to as the Fourth Reform Act on account of its political significance.⁴⁰⁷ The electorate increased from seven million in 1910 to over 21 million eight years, later as property ceased to be the overriding principle of the franchise.⁴⁰⁸ In the end 30 per cent of them voted.⁴⁰⁹ The 'Coupon' Election saw the return of 332 'couponed' Conservatives and 127 Coalition Liberals. The Lloyd George-led (but Conservative- dominated) coalition could muster 472 seats, an unassailable margin of victory.⁴¹⁰ Labour returned 59 members, more than twice the number of Asquithian Liberals.⁴¹¹ In Wales Labour secured ten of the 36 seats and took 30.8 per cent of the vote or 163,000 votes.⁴¹²

Pembrokeshire's first post-war election demonstrated considerable changes over the

⁴⁰⁶ Laybourn, *A Century of Labour*, 18.

⁴⁰⁷ Ian Machin, *The Rise of Democracy in Britain, 1830-1918* (Basingstoke, 2001), 146.

⁴⁰⁸ Robert Blackburn, 'Laying the Foundations of the Modern Voting System: The representation of the People Act 1918', *Parliamentary History* 30:1 (2011), 33-52 for a discussion of the political and constitutional changes instituted; Neal Blewett, 'The Franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918', *P&P*, 32:3, (1965), 27-56.

⁴⁰⁹ Barry McGill, 'Lloyd George's Timing of the 1918 Election', *JBS*, 14:1, (1974), 122-123.

⁴¹⁰ Chris Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party 1900-1967* (Basingstoke, 1998), 75.

⁴¹¹ Brian Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940* (London, 1974), 17.

⁴¹² Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation* 180.

two previous polls in 1910. The electoral register had expanded to 42,808, including 17,171 women aged over 30. The Absent Voters list contained another 7,139 names which included fifteen serving women.⁴¹³ Labour's first local parliamentary candidate was Alderman Ivor Gwynne of Swansea, while a Christian Socialist candidate, G.B. Thomas of Kilgerran, also entered the contest. The Conservative candidate sportingly withdrew from the election in late November in favour of his fellow Coalitionist explaining how it was of vital importance to return a supporter of Lloyd George.⁴¹⁴ An extraordinary accommodation was achieved between local Liberals and Conservatives unthinkable before 1914, showing how the political frontiers had shifted during the war. At Fishguard both parties held a joint meeting in a chapel schoolroom and agreed on a joint canvass.⁴¹⁵

The Pembrokeshire Conservative and Unionist Association endorsed the candidature of Sir Evan Jones on 30 November 1918 where he attracted support from a Catholic Headmaster, a Wesleyan Methodist minister and the secretary of the large labourers' union, demonstrating that no automatic correlation between unionism and Labour should be assumed.⁴¹⁶

The turnout at 64 per cent was low with little interest manifested at Hakin where only 400 out of a possible 700 voted.⁴¹⁷ Sir Evan Jones secured 19,200 votes over Gwynne's 7,712. The Christian Socialist candidate polled 597 votes. The margin of victory was wider than anticipated. Labour blamed their lack of vehicles on election day as having cost them 1,000 votes.⁴¹⁸ Labour's first parliamentary performance had

⁴¹³ *H&MHT*, 30 October 1918; PRO D/LJ/739. Pembrokeshire Absent Voters List, 1918.

⁴¹⁴ *TO*, 28 November 1918.

⁴¹⁵ *CE*, 28 November 1918.

⁴¹⁶ *H&MHT*, 4 December 1918.

⁴¹⁷ *H&MHT*, 18 December 1918.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

been solid and respectable, if not spectacular. Labour's first outing at municipal elections in 1919 saw them capture four seats on Pembrokeshire County Council compared to the Liberal's 24 and Conservative's eighteen seats.⁴¹⁹ The results demonstrated just how deep-rooted the traditional parties had become, established in the social and cultural fabric of local communities and the limits of wartime politicisation.

The post-war world returned to renewed labour agitation (including a police strike); in 1919 there were local strikes among Haverfordwest churn makers, Milford Haven fishermen, carpenters, masons and labourers.⁴²⁰ Others correspondingly note the ascendancy of labour as a temporary phenomenon with plenty of corporatist reverses in the 1920s, as the middle classes were determined to regain what they had lost in terms of status and living standards. Nevertheless, the rise of Labour in the local political landscape was attributable to the war, although the party had to wait until 1950 to capture the local parliamentary seat. The manifestations of the expanded state were of limited duration with food control committees being disbanded by 1920. Likewise, restrictions upon individuals, use of petroleum and onerous lighting restrictions were quickly terminated. Those aspects which proved difficult over a longer period of time were the licensing restrictions for the sale of alcohol which were not changed until 2003, while the growth of the Labour party in Pembrokeshire from 1916, and rise of the agricultural trades unions marked a permanent social legacy of the war.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1919.

⁴²⁰ *PT*, 12 May 1920.

Chapter II

Work, Living Conditions and Health Services

There was no more visible measure of social change than the circumstances in which people found themselves in the procurement of food, travel and other necessities. The degree of dislocation and distortion caused by the First World War to the usual standards of living, patterns of employment and the nature and extent of the labour force was significant. This chapter will examine the changes to these fundamentals in Pembrokeshire through gauging changes to agriculture, the principal industry, but also coal mining, tourism, transportation and shipping. It will examine the national debate which holds that wartime experiences resulted in an enhanced standard of living for the poorest. The chapter will examine whether there was a dramatic breakthrough in female employment opportunities.

Agriculture

No analysis of work and living standards in Pembrokeshire can ignore the centrality of agriculture in what was an overwhelmingly pastoral economy. Agriculture was the dominant sector in Pembrokeshire with 8,308 male workers, of whom 2,981 were farmers or graziers with a further 2,307 labourers.⁴²¹ A decade later the numbers employed were exactly the same even though the number of farmers had risen to 3,387.⁴²² Most of the 5,981 holdings were small-scale while the county acreage stood at 395,151.⁴²³ The mountain and heathland of the Preselis provided pasture for many of the 157,973 sheep in Pembrokeshire.⁴²⁴ The picture was a decidedly mixed one

⁴²¹ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, areas, families or separate occupiers. Volume 1. Administrative areas, counties and urban and rural districts.*

⁴²² PP. 1921 (Cd 1485) *Census of England and Wales. County of Pembroke.*

⁴²³ [http://: www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk). 1908 Agricultural Statistics for the County of Pembrokeshire.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

with dairying, corn-growing, rearing of young cattle, horses, pigs, sheep and poultry on most farms.⁴²⁵ Around 42,800 acres were given over to arable in 1912-14.⁴²⁶ Sheep farming was widespread although it was of secondary importance to cattle breeding and dairy farming.⁴²⁷ Pembrokeshire was typical of the Welsh pattern, a stock-rearing county dependant on its herds and flocks.⁴²⁸ This section will examine employment, output and the factors of production for farming in Pembrokeshire during the war.

National agricultural policy as reflected in rural counties like Pembrokeshire before 1917 lacked central direction, with Dewey maintaining how farming still operated within the *laissez faire* framework of pre-war years.⁴²⁹ Farming income rose very quickly in 1914-15 with returns on capital rising from two and three quarters to eleven and a half per cent between 1914-15.⁴³⁰ The local farmer and his sons were seen as the chief beneficiaries of the new agricultural prosperity. Thereby they earned a measure of scorn and opprobrium usually reserved for the profiteer. Eventually the increased cash flow enabled many tenants to purchase their own farms. The new wealth was not an apparition. At Haverfordwest £250,000 was deposited in local banks, much a sign of farmers' rising fortunes.⁴³¹

Dewey has argued how the dynamics of production and distribution changed dramatically due to poor domestic and international harvests coupled with the depredations by U-boats, especially from 1917.⁴³² The three tenets of the new

⁴²⁵ David W. Howell, 'Farming in Pembrokeshire, 1815-1974,' *Pembrokeshire County History Vol. IV*, 89.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁴²⁸ *Welsh Outlook* 2:5 (May 1915).

⁴²⁹ Peter E. Dewey, 'British Farming Profits and Government Policy during the First World War', *EcHR*, 37:3 (1984), 373.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁴³¹ *H&MHT*, 7 February 1917.

⁴³² John Sheail, 'Land Improvement and Reclamation: The Experience of the First World War in England and Wales', *AgHR*, 24:2 (1976), 71.

stratagem identified by Sheail were the promotion of grain and potato cultivation, the conversion to grassland into arable (with price guarantees) and supplying the requisites of resources, labour, fertilisers and motive power.⁴³³ Farming became a controlled industry in the fullest sense with direct inspection and supervision of farms by local and national bodies. County war agricultural committees were created in 1915 by the Board of Agriculture in order to maximise local resources.⁴³⁴

Pembrokeshire agriculture reflected national changes which occurred during 1917 and 1918. The 'plough policy' aspired to reclaim four million acres of grassland and was directed by the Food Production Department (FPD) of the Board of Agriculture. A heavy workload was placed on the new county war agricultural executive committees which issued cultivation orders, balanced agricultural- military labour questions, distributed fertilisers and the means of ploughing and harvesting. A Corn Production Act (1917) guaranteed prices for wheat and oats at 60s. and 38s. 6d. respectively.⁴³⁵ Ploughing quotas were issued to local committees so that an additional 340,000 acres were put into production in 1917 and 2.13 million by 1918.⁴³⁶

The county war agricultural committee as originally constituted by Pembrokeshire County Council sat as a body of 23 members. An executive committee was established on 18 May 1916 to expedite business more effectively, essential given their increasing workload. The executive represented direct government direction of the rural economy backed by the sweeping legislative competence of DORA. A county executive officer, the quietly heroic Mr James S. Owen, was appointed on 3

⁴³³ Ibid., 110.

⁴³⁴ Bonnie White, 'Feeding the war effort: Agricultural Experiences in First World War Devon, 1914-17', *AgHR*, 58:1, (2010), 97.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 95.

⁴³⁶ Dewey, *British Agriculture in the First World War*, 201.

April 1917.⁴³⁷ As an advocacy and research body the executive was an effective tool. Their county census revealed an area of 54,722 acres under the plough in 1916 with an anticipated nineteen per cent increase to 65,161 acres for 1917.⁴³⁸ A target of an additional 30,000 acres was set for Pembrokeshire for the 1918 harvest and it is useful to examine how the competing pressures were balanced to promote food production.

Labour shortage was the key production factor to overcome in Pembrokeshire as elsewhere. The extent of labour depletion from wartime agriculture has been challenged by Dewey who asserts how the decline by July 1915 was around fifteen per cent.⁴³⁹ Middleton has estimated how around 273,000 men aged 18-41 left agriculture for the front or factory during the war.⁴⁴⁰ Labour depletion was much more serious for the small-scale family holdings.⁴⁴¹ Nationally depletion peaked in 1916-17 before declining to nine per cent in 1918. Hilary Crowe's assessment of Westmorland demonstrates severe shortages, while emphasising the important nuances of locality and region.⁴⁴²

In Pembrokeshire the agricultural labour supply created considerable correspondence between the county war executive who made representations to the War Office. In January 1916 one farmer, formerly employing nine men, was reduced to only three farm hands, one a 'nipper' aged thirteen.⁴⁴³ The Pembrokeshire Farmers' Union expressed alarm at the taking of more farm workers to meet the military

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 14 April 1917.

⁴³⁹ Peter E. Dewey, 'Military Recruiting and the British Labour Force during the First World War', *HJ*, 27:1, (1984), 203.

⁴⁴⁰ T.H. Middleton, *Food Production in War*. (1923), 266.

⁴⁴¹ P.E. Dewey, 'Agricultural Labour Supply in England and Wales during the First World War', *EcHR*, 28:1 (1975), 109.

⁴⁴² Hilary Crowe, 'Keeping the Wheels of the Farm in Motion: Labour Shortages in the Uplands during the Great War', *Rural History*, 19:2 (2008), 201.

⁴⁴³ *H&MHT*, 19 January 1916.

emergency.⁴⁴⁴ Some 674 farmers had appealed in respect of 713 men since the Military Service Proclamation of 20 April.⁴⁴⁵ Replacement labour did have a significant impact, coming chiefly from the Women's Land Army, school children, low-category soldiers and prisoners of war.

The employment of school children was an exceptional measure which furnished cheap labour with no minimum rates of pay. By the autumn of 1916 57 local authorities had relaxed byelaws to allow their release from school.⁴⁴⁶ In Wales the figure stood at 562 children.⁴⁴⁷ The Pembrokeshire County War Agricultural Committee resolved to ask the education authority to release suitable children aged twelve to fourteen assist with the hay harvest seasons.⁴⁴⁸ Generally the education authority took a negative view to their request, bolstered by the local Labour Party who were vociferous opponents in relaxing these byelaws.⁴⁴⁹ Numbers were minuscule. In May 1916 only seventeen children of school age had been released for the fields, including three girls.⁴⁵⁰ This number excluded those children habitually kept at home to assist with agricultural operations. Over 40 boys from the Haverfordwest Grammar School showed practical patriotism by volunteering to work during their summer vacation in 1916.⁴⁵¹

Serving soldiers also helped to bridge the labour shortage gap. The men were usually categorised in low medical groups precluding them from front-line service. Despite vicissitudes in numbers Dewey estimates that they reached a peak of 84,000 in

⁴⁴⁴ PRO D/NFU/1/1. Pembrokeshire National Farmers Union 1917-20; 9 July 1918.

⁴⁴⁵ *H&MHT*, 15 May 1918.

⁴⁴⁶ Dewey, 'Agricultural Labour Supply', 117.

⁴⁴⁷ Pretty, *Rural Revolt That Failed*, 66.

⁴⁴⁸ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 15 May 1918.

⁴⁴⁹ PRO PCC/SE/16/20. Pembrokeshire Education Committee minutes 1916-17; 26 January 1917.

⁴⁵⁰ PP. 1916 (Cd. 8302). Report of the Board of Education. School attendance and employment in agriculture, 31 January-31 May 1916.

⁴⁵¹ *PCG*, 4 August 1916.

November 1918.⁴⁵² The daily wage rate was 4s. without food, although farmers were not sparing of criticism of the ineptitude and ignorance of their khaki-clad helpers, several of whom are pictured here working on a north county farm servicing a threshing machine (Illustration 6). The county was allocated 375 men. These soldier agriculturalists frequently had previous experience and were drawn from an eclectic mix of units.⁴⁵³



Illustration: 6 Soldier labour on a North Pembrokeshire farm, *circa* 1917 (Tom Mathias Collection, Scolton Manor).

Labour shortages were occasionally met through the employment of German prisoners of war, despite antipathy and hostility shown by the local executive, an expedient which perhaps touched of Germanophobia which will be discussed later in

⁴⁵² Dewey, 'Agricultural Labour Supply', 112.

⁴⁵³ PRO PCC/SE/71/31. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes Register of Soldier Labour 1918. Units included 26th Durhams, Welsh Regiment, Royal Garrison Artillery and 4th Monmouthshire. Their minimum cash wage per week was set at 12s. 6d.

the thesis. Nationally some seventy-five camps were constructed to house them increasing to 190 camps with 11,794 men by June 1918.⁴⁵⁴ A gang of 65 German prisoners were set to work clearing Burton Mountain in February 1917.⁴⁵⁵ On 9 April 1918 the local executive resolved to establish centres at Narberth, St David's and Fishguard. Later, Rickeston House was established as a centre by the War Department at the behest of the FPD.⁴⁵⁶ The 40 inmates included ten German ploughmen.⁴⁵⁷ The increasingly cosmopolitan amalgam of the county workforce included a Serbian camp at Letterston, while Belgian women laboured on Ramsay Island and Russian Finns felled timber at Slebech near Blackpool Mill.⁴⁵⁸ Other timber felling was accomplished by local labour. Scotland Wood at Cresselly was cut down under the superintendence of John Lewis of Bubbleton and the timber floated downstream to the quay where it was taken to Kilgetty railway station for dispatch.⁴⁵⁹

The Pembrokeshire executive provides a good example of the broad, interventionist organisations which were empowered by the war. These included the provision of credit facilities for farmers unable to afford capital investment. Arrangements were made with Haverfordwest banks to advance £10 to Mrs Sarah Jenkins of Duggan's Farm to purchase seed corn.⁴⁶⁰ The local executive exercised wide discretionary powers regarding the distribution of lead shot, petrol licenses, seed potatoes, malt permits and other incidentals. The provision of fertiliser, whether basic slag, bones, guano or phosphate of lime, was a constant concern. Rigorous government action

⁴⁵⁴ Sheail, 'Changes in the Use and Management of Farmland', 26.

⁴⁵⁵ *H&MHT*, 7 February 1917.

⁴⁵⁶ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 24 April 1918.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁸ *H&MHT*, 28 August 1918.

⁴⁵⁹ Robert Scourfield and Keith Johnson, *Down the Quay* (Llandysul, 2007), 125.

⁴⁶⁰ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 11 May 1917.

ensured that superphosphate supplies actually rose by eight per cent.⁴⁶¹ The importation, allocation and distribution of fertilizer were governed by strict national controls.⁴⁶² An early county survey undertaken by the committee revealed shortages of both feedstuffs and fertilizer, mainly on account of railway difficulties.⁴⁶³ One locally-inspired initiative rested on a survey of the county's limekilns and the requirements to re-open many of them. On 14 August 1918 the thirteen at Tenby were estimated to be capable of producing 800-1000 tons of lime per week. Undoubtedly the most important factor of agricultural production in Pembrokeshire was the introduction of the tractor.

Increasing mechanisation represented a genuine wartime innovation which transformed Pembrokeshire agriculture, given the general scarcity of draft animals. The county had a long tradition of implement manufacture from the Marychurch iron foundry at Haverfordwest and the Llewelin churnworks in the same town, whose exports of churns and separators was a worldwide export business. The county had seen its first tractor at Penllwyn near Narberth in around 1905, while the novelty of mechanised milking arrived at Cornishdown near Tenby in 1914.⁴⁶⁴ The FPD supervised the purchase of 'Government tractors' (seen before a group of quizzical farmers at Haverfordwest in 1917 in Illustration 7) with management passing to local executives. Fordson was a popular model on account of its manoeuvrability although Titan, Overtime and Moghul were employed in significant numbers on Pembrokeshire farms. By October 1918 there were 3,925 Government tractors in service.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶¹ Peter Dewey, 'Production Problems in British Agriculture during the First World War', in B.A. Holderness and Michael Turner (eds), *Land, Labour and Agriculture, 1700-1920* (London, 1991), 245.

⁴⁶² Thirsk, *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, 74.

⁴⁶³ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 20 November 1915.

⁴⁶⁴ *TO*, 12 November 1914.

⁴⁶⁵ Sheail, 'Land Improvement and Reclamation', 116.



Illustration: 7 A tractor demonstration near Scotchwells, Haverfordwest in 1917.

The Pembrokeshire executive appointed a Machinery Officer, a local expert, in 1917, while Mr Eric Green, a leading motor car proprietor was appointed tractor representative.⁴⁶⁶ Mechanisation of local farms began in earnest in 1917 although a Moghul tractor had demonstrated its capabilities at Tierson in 1915.⁴⁶⁷ Over 50 local farmers, usually chided for their caution, attended a new motor plough in operation at Gellyswick, Milford Haven on 26 September 1917. A later demonstration was held at Scotchwells, Haverfordwest in front of curious farmers (Illustration 7). Mr Green instructed a motley crew of low-grade soldiers, normally barbers, barmen and miners to produce work normally expected of skilled ploughmen. By November 1917 the county had fifteen tractors in action reddening the soil of the county with their ploughs.⁴⁶⁸ Three-fifths of grassland had already been ploughed by February 1918, a process in which tractors played a significant role. All told, the 32 tractors ploughed

⁴⁶⁶ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 27 June 1918.

⁴⁶⁷ PCG, 29 October 1915.

⁴⁶⁸ PCG, 9 November 1917.

2,888 acres and harvested 1,076 acres in addition to threshing.⁴⁶⁹ FPD horses were also in great demand being loaned out to 230 farmers.

Despite the pressure on inputs the county committee succeeded in cultivating the 30,000 acres required by the FPD quota. In fact it secured 32,000 additional cultivated acres, perhaps a reflective of not only powers to direct but also reflecting the co-operation of the farming community.⁴⁷⁰ Local District Cultivation Orders demanded significant increases across the county.⁴⁷¹ The following table demonstrates the extra land taken for beneficial cultivation across Pembrokeshire and discloses an aggregate increase in excess of 40 per cent right across the board.

Table 5: Cultivation Orders 1917-18

District	1917	1918
Fishguard	5458	7505
St David's	7911	8325
Pembroke	4825	7101
Maenclochog	2560	4195
Tenby	6180	7610
Letterston	5587	8318
Eglwysrw	8682	11514
Clarbeston Road	4869	7655
Narberth	3257	6074
Haverfordwest	13768	20465
Llanfyrnach	3674	5089
Total	66771	93951

⁴⁶⁹ *H&MHT*, 12 February 1919.

⁴⁷⁰ *H&MHT*, 6 November 1918.

⁴⁷¹ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 14 April 1917.

At Dale, Crabb Hill saw the required cultivated area increase from 88 acres to 118 while the parish of Marloes ploughed more than 100 extra acres in 1917-18.⁴⁷² Lawrenny was practically the fiefdom of Colonel Lort-Phillips who owned all the farms, covering 2,258 acres in the parish. In 1918, 545 acres were harvested compared to 395.5 the year before.⁴⁷³

In 1917 Pembrokeshire had added considerably to cereal production, including 4,771 acres under wheat, 19,212, under barley, 3,031 under potatoes and marginal cover of beans and peas (three and 22 acres respectively).⁴⁷⁴ Overall, stock levels were resilient. Pig numbers mirrored the national picture so that there was a decline. Dewsland's resident porker population fell from 5111 to 4406 (1917-18).⁴⁷⁵ The number of horses in the Castlemartin district declined from 2020 to 1994 in three years.⁴⁷⁶ Cemaes was the most populated region for sheep with 29,089 in 1918 while Cilgerran had 9,074.⁴⁷⁷

The necessity of boosting national food production was recognised by municipal authorities whose marginal common land or fields in urban areas were pressed into use. The Tenby Borough Council was especially pro-active, signalling their intent by appointing a Food Production Committee in 1917 to provide allotments and create corporation piggeries. The FPD was keen to publicise examples of good practice, publishing 'Municipal Trading at Tenby,' a photograph taken on 22 December 1917 showing pork, hams and bacon ready for sale.⁴⁷⁸ Example was indeed more

⁴⁷² PRO PCC/SE/71/7. War Agricultural Executive Register of holdings, owners, occupiers, areas and acreages under cultivation, 1917-18

⁴⁷³ PRO PCC/SE/71/8. Ibid.,

⁴⁷⁴ PP. 1918 (Cd. 9006, 9089, 9163). *Agricultural Statistics for Great Britain, 1917.*

⁴⁷⁵ TNA MAF68/2846. Summary of Agricultural Returns for Pembrokeshire 1917.

⁴⁷⁶ TNA MAF68/2903. Summary of Agricultural Returns for Pembrokeshire, 1918.

⁴⁷⁷ TNA 68/2732 Summary of Agricultural Returns for Pembrokeshire, 1915.

⁴⁷⁸ TMAG. TEM/SE/30/6. Tenby Borough Corporation Miscellaneous Correspondence, November 1917.

efficacious than precept.

Allied to increasing mechanisation, the war stimulated new agricultural enterprises across Pembrokeshire. The county poultry industry was worth £67,439 but there was the potential in the opinion of one commentator to easily increase value by ten per cent.⁴⁷⁹ Beekeeping became a popular activity as did cockling, while the monks of Caldey Island expanded herb growing under the patronage and encouragement from the Marchioness of Bute.⁴⁸⁰ Perhaps the most significant long-term development was the growing of the second crop of early new potatoes, which in the opinion of the Board of Agriculture was particularly suited to the area.⁴⁸¹ National food supply problems often found local solutions, resulting in distinct regional patterns of food supply and consumption.

Important as food production was, Dewey maintains how food shortages were a potential problem rather than a real one and policies of food control, especially rationing and food economy made a telling difference.⁴⁸² Pembrokeshire's agricultural community, beset with shortages of labour, horses and transportation did materially rise to the challenge of greater production, though only with rigorous action from local and central government.

Wages, Prices and the Cost of Living

The dynamics of the peacetime economy were dislocated during wartime by unprecedented government intervention and distortions to both supply and demand.

⁴⁷⁹ *CE*, 7 January 1915

⁴⁸⁰ *PCG*, 22 June 1917

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 8 February 1916

⁴⁸² Dewey, 'Food Production and Policy', 86; More recently Gazeley and Newell have noted that although calorific intake was maintained, there was a closing of the nutritional gap between skilled and unskilled workers and reductions in intakes of several key vitamins like Vitamin C; Ian Gazeley and Andrew Newell, 'The First World War and working-class food consumption in Britain', *European Review of Economic History*, 17:1 (2013), 71-94.

The wellbeing of an individual on the home front had many determinants including class, gender, ethnicity, locality, skill set, and union membership, consequently movements in earnings were far from uniform.⁴⁸³

Perhaps nothing was more vexatious on the home front than the nature, extent and causes of rising food prices due to wartime conditions and psychological uncertainty about the future. The issue transcended the boundaries of domesticity and entered the mainstream of political discourse, strengthening the burgeoning labour movement. In 1914 the average working-class family spent 23s. 9d. on food, a figure which increased to 40s. 2d. by 1918.⁴⁸⁴ Obtaining staple foods like bread, cheese, butter, milk and fish became a daily struggle at the core of wartime living standards. Making ends meet became a true test of wits and stamina.⁴⁸⁵ In Wales some communities witnessed a 77.7 per cent increase in butter prices, 107.5 per cent for that of beef while sugar prices increased 200 per cent in two years.⁴⁸⁶ The drive to increase food production coupled with rationing did help dampen inflationary pressures to ensure equity of supply.⁴⁸⁷ On account of rurality and limited supply, the cost of living in Pembrokeshire was seen as more expensive than for city dwellers. The economics of distribution was an important determinant in price differentials.

As the war progressed certain commodities became virtually unobtainable causing anguished pleas from local bodies. It is clear that some commodities like bread generated anguish on account of their psychological or symbolic value. In 1916 the Haverfordwest Borough Council petitioned the Government to control exorbitant

⁴⁸³ Tony Corfield, 'War and Wages, 1914-18', *History Today*, 43:11 (1993), 22.

⁴⁸⁴ Winter, *Great War and the British People*, 272.

⁴⁸⁵ Jonathan Manning, 'Wages and Purchasing Power', in *Capital Cities at War*, 283.

⁴⁸⁶ Pretty, *The Rural revolt That Failed*, 68.

⁴⁸⁷ Thirsk, *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, 79.

prices.⁴⁸⁸ Eggs, poultry and fish were especially scarce. By November 1916 eggs were sold at Haverfordwest Market at 4*d.* each, while butter had reached 1*s.* 9*d.* to 1*s.* 10*d.* a pound, to the distress of working people.⁴⁸⁹ Fish, which was psychologically important for the major fishing port of Milford Haven had reached famine prices despite the best endeavours of local trawlers and drifters. In September 1916 herrings sold for 77*s.* 6*d.* per kit at Milford Haven.⁴⁹⁰ The *Fish Trades Gazette* commented on the acute dearth at the market there in November 1917.⁴⁹¹

Intense public scrutiny focused on those whose economic power conferred an unfair advantage, clearly an expression of opposition. The sense of solidarity through shared shortages and hardships was shattered by the activities of alleged profiteers and exploiters. In their turn, local farmers, their wives, grocers and wholesalers were vilified as commercial villains. The farmer was also castigated for his parsimoniousness by local newspapers.⁴⁹² Wartime inflation did much to create the illusion of a myriad of profiteers.⁴⁹³ A central tenet of community politics was the demand to protect against the ‘unashamed practices of profiteers’.⁴⁹⁴

The emotive subject of community food supplies and exploitation found a powerful expression in instances of direct consumer action. A new food activism became increasingly apparent in which women were leading agitators, although the dominant language was ungendered appeals for justice and fair play.⁴⁹⁵ Coles contends how overturning carts and appropriation of supplies was evocative of the moral economy

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 29 September 1916.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 17 November 1916.

⁴⁹⁰ *PCG*, 29 September 1916.

⁴⁹¹ *Fish Trades Gazette*, 10 November 1917.

⁴⁹² *H&MHT* 11 August 1915.

⁴⁹³ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 140.

⁴⁹⁴ Gurney, *Co-operative Cultures*, 211.

⁴⁹⁵ Hunt, ‘The Politics of Food and Women’s Neighborhood Activism’, 22.

of the late eighteenth-century crowd.⁴⁹⁶ The redoubtable fisherwomen from the villages of Hook and Llangwm spent two weeks at the market endeavouring to enforce a maximum price of 1s.1d. a pound for butter declaring an' not a farthing more'.⁴⁹⁷ Their success was a temporary phenomenon for within a week the price had risen back to 1s. 10d.⁴⁹⁸

Rising food prices were not the only increases which altered the living standards of Pembrokeshire residents. Increasing charges and impositions affected a wide range of goods and services making price escalation the norm. Railway tickets increased, adding 2d. per mile to most journeys in 1917.⁴⁹⁹ The price of coal and coke became challenging for squeezed household budgets which before the war typically cost 2s. a week.⁵⁰⁰ Coal shortages, especially in 1918 became acute. At Tenby the price was 37s. 2d. per ton, reflecting the wage rises granted to colliers.⁵⁰¹ School budgets, already subject to economies, were severely pinched. At St. David's County School expenditure on coal, books, stationery and apparatus nearly doubled.⁵⁰² In 1917 Messrs Arnold's contract with the local authority for books was increased by 133 per cent on account of advances in the cost of paper.⁵⁰³ Rurality was clearly a factor in price rises in wartime Pembrokeshire on account of greatly increased transportation costs.

Allied to rising prices came strictures and exhortations urging economy and careful husbanding of resources. Cutting waste became a mantra for the patriotic compared to

⁴⁹⁶ Coles, 'The Moral Economy of the Crowd', 158.

⁴⁹⁷ *H&MHT*, 16 February 1916.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23 February 1916.

⁴⁹⁹ *PH*, 1 June 1917.

⁵⁰⁰ Winter, *Great War and the British People*, 229.

⁵⁰¹ *TO*, 18 October 1917.

⁵⁰² PRO PCC/ED/2/482. St David's County School Headmaster's Report for 1918.

⁵⁰³ PRO PCC/SE/16/21. Pembrokeshire County Council Furnishing Sub-Committee 1917-18; 11 May 1917.

the dissipation and frivolity of the shirker. There is ample evidence of economy drives in Pembrokeshire. Thrift was encouraged in county elementary schools with special lessons like those at Begelly in 1915.⁵⁰⁴ School attendance medals were dispensed with, fewer Christmas cards were sent, while local newspapers assumed a ‘Liliputian form’ due to the scarcity of newsprint.⁵⁰⁵ Salvage and re-use of commodities became a Government policy with the creation of a National Salvage Council in March 1918.⁵⁰⁶ The work of the scrap metal merchant became an allegory of the glorious battle of the foundry turning waste into weapons.⁵⁰⁷ At Tenby, local ladies collected three and a half tons of waste paper which went to a local depot.⁵⁰⁸ The deposits of local scavengers became worthwhile pickings for some. At Neyland, swarms of people were seen working through the municipal tip.⁵⁰⁹ The steward’s office on Caldey Island sent in discarded rubber boots as part of a national drive to salvage waste rubber.⁵¹⁰ Such actions expressed a combination of community action, patriotism and sometimes simple necessity, perhaps the most compelling of all.

Changing patterns of consumption were a response to shortages and higher prices across the county; although in rural communities such improvisation might well have been a feature of pre-war life. A Government enquiry into living standards in October 1918 disclosed a change in the composition of diets with more milk, potatoes, bread

⁵⁰⁴ PRO SSM/1/8. Begelly Council School Group of Manager’s 1914-19; 7 December 1915.

⁵⁰⁵ *TO*, 13 May 1916.

⁵⁰⁶ Tim Cooper, Challenging the ‘Refuse Revolution’: War, Waste and the rediscovery of Recycling, 1900-1950, *HR*, 81, 214.

⁵⁰⁷ Aulich and Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?*, 128.

⁵⁰⁸ *TO*, 18 July 1918.

⁵⁰⁹ *PCG*, 7 July 1916.

⁵¹⁰ TMAG TEM/SE/30/13. Tenby Borough Corporation Miscellaneous Correspondence. 27 February 1919. The men’s club at St Martin’s Church, Haverfordwest took up wood carving and shoe making in 1916 re-soling boots and shoes using old motor tyres obtained by Eric Green and Mr Bland, motor car retailers. David Smith, *They Did It Their Way. The Story of St Martin of Tours, Haverfordwest* (Haverfordwest, 1992), 76.

and oatmeal consumed.⁵¹¹ Only half as much fish was available in 1918 while butter, cheese and beef fell far from their 1913 levels.⁵¹² Margarine was a reluctant substitute for scarce butter.⁵¹³ For individuals, doubtless skilled craftsmen or prosperous tradesmen, in Tenby the breakfast table underwent a strange transformation consisting of toasted bread with dripping or jam instead of viands of bacon, butter and eggs.⁵¹⁴ Public authorities switched food stuffs to reduce costs. The dietaries of local workhouses witnessed a reduction in bread. At Haverfordwest bread allowances were reduced in April 1917.⁵¹⁵ Across the Haven at Pembroke, rabbit dinners were instituted instead of beef, resulting in the saving of 19s. 10d. a week.⁵¹⁶ One columnist mused on how the war had changed many things, including the disappearance of many accustomed delicacies, to be replaced by less expensive 'but quite as appetising dainties.'⁵¹⁷ The scarcity of ready-made clothing gave a boost to repair and mending. Boot and shoe repairers could not keep up with the demand, while mole and rabbit skin dealers enjoyed prosperous times. Wearing clogs became commonplace. Mr William E. Dixon, timber merchant, enjoyed full orders for the cheap footwear.⁵¹⁸ The focus of local demand was clearly upon cheaper items of wearing apparel and food.

The rising cost of food led to, in general, in uneven, sectoral rises in wage rates. Winter's figures for real wages and Feinstein's estimate of average real earnings suggest wages only outpaced price rises in 1917 and 1918.⁵¹⁹ In 1914 the average skilled worker earned £106 per annum while his unskilled contemporary received

⁵¹¹ Winter, *Great War and the British People*, 216.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, 219.

⁵¹³ P.E. Dewey, 'Nutrition and Living Standards in Wartime Britain', in *The Upheaval of War*, 204.

⁵¹⁴ *TO*, 14 February 1918.

⁵¹⁵ PRO SPU/HA/1/19. Haverfordwest Union Board of Guardians minutes 1915-21; 4 April 1917.

⁵¹⁶ PRO SPU/PE/1/17. Pembroke Union Board of Guardians minutes 1916-18; 4 January 1917.

⁵¹⁷ *H&MHT*, 21 June 1916.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 17 January 1917.

⁵¹⁹ Harris, *Origins of the British Welfare State*, 167.

£63.⁵²⁰ A hierarchy of skills covered the spectrum of working people for which it is dangerous to generalise. The lower paid did proportionately best of all as wage differentials between skilled and unskilled occupations became eroded. Labourers' wages rose from 25s. a week to 60s (1914-19), while those of skilled workers increased from 40s to 78s.⁵²¹ In A.L. Bowley's memorable phrase 'it had needed a war in order to rise up the wages of the poorest paid.'⁵²² Gregory is sceptical of the newly wealthy worker of wartime legend, alluding to the relative disadvantage of dockers, miners and railwaymen in 1916-17.⁵²³

The paucity of wage records makes estimation of precise trends in Pembrokeshire patchy but it is possible to use anecdotal evidence to give a sense of wartime wage changes, which seem to demonstrate how the lowest paid in Pembrokeshire did better in the league of wage increases. Agricultural workers in Pembrokeshire did better than most workers, their position boosted by the enhanced status and importance of their economic sector, and safeguards contained in the wage boards of the Corn Production Act of 1917. Although they did start from a low base, with an average weekly rate of 15s-20s. per week in 1914,⁵²⁴ by 1917 many received 35s. weekly.⁵²⁵ At Portfield Hiring Fair in 1917, skilled ploughmen earned £40-£50 per annum.⁵²⁶ The fortunes of individual agricultural workers can be followed. In 1915 J.W. Absalom who worked on the Angle Estate earned 4s.6d. a day in 1915. By 1918 this had reached 8s.6d. a day.⁵²⁷ These figures disclose solid gains.

⁵²⁰ Paul Johnson, *Saving and Spending. The Working-Class Economy in Britain 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1985), 206.

⁵²¹ Abrams, *Condition of the British People*, 82.

⁵²² Marwick, *The Deluge*, 12.

⁵²³ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 195.

⁵²⁴ Thirsk, *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, 60.

⁵²⁵ *H&MHT*, 6 June 1917.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 10 August 1917.

⁵²⁷ PRO D/ANGLE/44. Angle Estate Wages Book 1915-21.

No sector of the local workforce was so envied or despised as those employed at Pembroke Dockyard which was viewed as a cosseted community combining cosy employment, safety from military service and immoderately high wages. Both skilled and unskilled could prosper there. Being a government establishment, workers benefitted from regular uplifts in wage and salary rates. In December 1915 a war bonus of 4s. was announced with piece work rates rising by 17 ½ per cent.⁵²⁸ Later, £10,000 in cash was given out in weekly wages with some employees getting £10 each.⁵²⁹ Salaried staff did less well. Their pre-war salary scales persisted until September 1916 when they had a 4s. a week rise.⁵³⁰ With an assertive labourers' union agitating for regular bonuses, the employees of the Milford Docks Company saw wages keep ahead of inflation. Those engaged in munitions or Admiralty work did particularly well. In 1916 dock employees expressed their satisfaction at their war bonuses.⁵³¹ Shipyard labourers received 10s. extra in September 1917.⁵³² That year coaling gangs received 38s. weekly for a 56 ½ working week.⁵³³ Dock labourers had seen a 17s. increase in wages over three years.⁵³⁴ Writing to the company chairman, C. E. Newbon on 7 January 1918, the local manager, James C. Ward indicated the extent of pre-war and current wage rates, as revealed in the following table.⁵³⁵ The lowest paid workers did best of all.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 23 December 1915.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., 26 December 1917.

⁵³⁰ Ibid., 22 September 1916.

⁵³¹ PRO D/MDC/D/9. Milford Docks Company Board minutes 1915-26; 24 October 1916.

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ *H&MHT*, 26 September 1917.

⁵³⁵ PRO D/MDC/S/6/40. Milford Docks Company Ministry of Labour file 1917-20; 7 January 1918. Some 136 men, 11 boys and 1 girl benefitted from a war bonus in December 1917.

Table 6 Pay rates at Milford Docks in 1918

Occupation	Pre -War Wage (shillings)	Wage as of 1.1.1918 (shillings)	Increase (shillings)
Office			
Traffic Clerk	38	58	20
Foreman	41	57	16
Pierhead			
Dep. Dockmaster	39	55	16
Occupation	Pre -War Wage (shillings)	Wage as of 1.1.1918 (shillings)	Increase (shillings)
Berth Master	33	49	16
Pierheadman	27	43	16
Maintenance			
Foreman	28	44	16
Platelayer	26	44	18
Boy	11	17	6
Labourer	23	40	17
Slipway			
Foreman	29	54	25
Labourer	23	40	17
Fish Porters	23	41	18
Cargo			
Labourer	23	40	17
Locomotives			
Driver	34	50	16
Shunter	26	42	16
Loco Cleaner	23	43	20

Goods Porter	23	43	20
Enginemen	34	61	27
Crane Driver	33	50	17
Shipwright	33	54	21
Admiralty Coaling	23	43	20
Coal Trimmer	23	45	22
Occupation	Pre -War Wage	Wage as of 1.1.1918	Increase
	(shillings)	(shillings)	(shillings)
Police (9 Officers)			
Sergeant	33	49	16
Constable	29	45	16

Increasing wages and the lowering of thresholds brought many Pembrokeshire workers into direct taxation. The number of local tax payers is not clear but nationally the number liable for income tax rose from 1.130 million to 3.747 million.⁵³⁶ By the end of the war around the country 70 per cent of payers were manual workers and provided a clear demonstration of how the cost of living question was central to wage determination.⁵³⁷ War bonuses were determined by the caprice of public bodies with little sign of consistency. Police officers received a ten per cent bonus across the board which brought the half -yearly wage bill up to £2,145 17s. 7d.⁵³⁸ On 9 July 1917 constables received an additional fifteen per cent while sergeants and inspectors got ten per cent. This round of bonuses cost the county £680 18s. 8d. Before the war,

⁵³⁶ T. Balderston, 'War Finance and Inflation in Britain and Germany 1914-1918', *EcHR*, 42:2 (1989), 236.

⁵³⁷ R. C. Whiting, 'Taxation and the Working Class 1915-24', *HJ*, 33:4, (1990), 909.

⁵³⁸ PRO PCC/SE/42/3.Standing Joint Committee minutes 1912-25; 13 April 1915.

constables had earned 30s. weekly.⁵³⁹ Across Pembrokeshire the ability of different occupational groups to withstand the rigours of wartime inflation varied widely. Wartime separation allowances represented an important element of the Pembrokeshire wartime economy, as government replacement income for primary wage earners in the armed forces must have maintained thousands of families. Even in one of the smallest urban communities like Neyland, some 309 war separation allowances were granted.⁵⁴⁰

Members of the teaching profession in Pembrokeshire received modest increases, largely thanks to concerted efforts by the National Union of Teachers. Those on salaries of less than £30 a year received a £3 supplement in 1915.⁵⁴¹ A special War Bonus committee did award a general bonus of 2s. which cost £2,300 per annum.⁵⁴² In 1917-18 county teachers' salaries amounted to £46,267.⁵⁴³ Rural, urban and borough councils displayed a variety of attitudes to applications for increases from their labourers, scavengers, roadmen, surveyors, lamp lighters, collectors and hauliers. At Fishguard, hauliers received an extra 2s. early on, in December 1914.⁵⁴⁴ The same employees enjoyed an advance of another 3s. weekly in 1917.⁵⁴⁵ Neyland Urban District Council was praised for their generous raises to employees. They granted an extra 3s. per week in recognition of the 27 ½ per cent increase in prices since the start of the war.⁵⁴⁶ In 1917 the Pembroke Rural District Council awarded a bonus of 2s. to an employee over the age of 70 with those under the retirement age receiving 1s.

⁵³⁹ PP. 1912-23 (Cd. 6054). *Wages (Standard time rates) Board of Trade (Labour Department) Standard time rates of wages in the United Kingdom at 1 January 1912.*

⁵⁴⁰ *PT*, 19 February 1925.

⁵⁴¹ *CE*, 1 April 1915.

⁵⁴² PRO PCC/SE/16/20. Pembrokeshire Education Committee minutes 1916-17; 23 January 1917.

⁵⁴³ PRO PCC/SE/16/22 Pembrokeshire Education Committee minutes 1918-19.

⁵⁴⁴ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16; 14 December 1914.

⁵⁴⁵ PRO FGU/SE/1/3. *Ibid.*, 1916-21; 14 August 1917.

⁵⁴⁶ *H&MHT*, 3 March 1915.

weekly.⁵⁴⁷

Those who breached the preached philosophy of restraint and abstemiousness incurred the wrath of the community. There was outrage in August 1915 when the county Clerk of the Peace secured hefty increments bringing his salary up to £935 (1919) from £775 (1910) to dissuade him from applying for a better-paid post in Yorkshire.⁵⁴⁸ When the Pembroke Justices Clerk was awarded a £50 salary increase a public protest meeting at Pembroke attracted a crowd of 1,500 indignant objectors.⁵⁴⁹

Assessing the changes to living standards of the comparatively small salaried class and those on retirement pensions is problematical. These groups appear to have lost ground during the war. Nationally the number of white-collar jobs rose from twelve to 22 per cent.⁵⁵⁰ This was not translated into greater earning power. Living standards for professional groups fell by ten per cent.⁵⁵¹ Middle-class occupations were minute in Pembrokeshire in 1911. Out of a workforce of 28,083 men only 57 were municipal officials with 118 barristers, solicitors or clerks.⁵⁵² Old age pensioners or those living on annuities must have suffered hardship. The state pension of 5s. a week remained fixed until August 1916 when it was belatedly raised by half a crown.⁵⁵³ With 6,216 retired or economically inactive males, and 26,001 females of the same description their struggle to make ends meet must have been considerable.⁵⁵⁴ Weekly paid labourers saw the greatest factored wartime wage increases in Pembrokeshire, although starting from a much lower pre-war base they too faced considerable

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 28 November 1917.

⁵⁴⁸ PRO PCC/SE/42/3. Standing Joint Standing Committee minutes 1912-25; 14 August 1914.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 23 May 1917.

⁵⁵⁰ Whiteside, 'British Population at War', 243.

⁵⁵¹ Jon Lawrence, 'Material pressures on the Working Classes', *Capital Cities at War*, 243.

⁵⁵² PP. 1912-13 (Cd. 5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties, urban and rural districts.*

⁵⁵³ Harris, *Origins of British Welfare State*, 167.

⁵⁵⁴ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties, urban and rural districts.*

hardship in facing rising food prices.

Poverty

A vital aspect of living condition research is to ascertain the relative fortunes at the bottom of the income levels in society during the war. 'Life cycle' risks of childhood, sickness and old age were acknowledged as primary causes rather than the older stereotypes of fecklessness and ignorance.⁵⁵⁵ The death of a wage earner, unemployment, pronounced fecundity, coupled with low wages were all too common social evils. For Gregory the rawness of life before 1914 equipped the British public with the stoicism and capacity for endurance of wartime suffering.⁵⁵⁶ Higher wages, regular employment, separation allowances and expanded female employment created circumstances which generally ameliorated the worst effects of poverty.⁵⁵⁷ The number in receipt of poor relief in England and Wales declined from 762,000 (January 1915) to 555,000 by 1918.⁵⁵⁸ In Pembrokeshire the three workhouses at Haverfordwest, Narberth and Pembroke housed 265 paupers while a further 1,816 persons received outdoor relief.⁵⁵⁹ Both numbers declined during the war.

Notwithstanding this shift, there was a temporary increase in wartime vagrancy. The old polity of deterring vagrancy through compulsory labour was attractive to local guardians. Male vagrants of military age became an increasingly uncommon sight. The workhouse garden at Haverfordwest went uncultivated since most 'men of the road' had enlisted.⁵⁶⁰ Later the Guardians had to find other means of propulsion for

⁵⁵⁵ George Davey Smith, Daniel Dorling and Mary Shaw (eds), *Poverty, Inequality and Health in Britain 1800-2000* (Bristol, 2001), xxxiii.

⁵⁵⁶ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 279.

⁵⁵⁷ Marwick, *The Deluge*, 163.

⁵⁵⁸ Michael E. Rose, *The English Poor Law 1780-1930* (Newton Abbot, 1971), 287.

⁵⁵⁹ PP. 1916 (Cd. 8195) *Forty fourth annual report of the Local Government Board 1914-15*.

⁵⁶⁰ *CE*, 18 March 1915.

the funeral bier since there were not sufficient men to push the old one.⁵⁶¹ The West Wales Vagrancy Committee noted a 50 per cent decline in itinerants by November 1915.⁵⁶² For the year ending 31 March 1916 the fall in the number of casuals admitted throughout the whole area amounted to 2,764.⁵⁶³ At Pembroke the ‘tramp ward’ was only used 77 times in the whole year.⁵⁶⁴ By then only the residuum of incorrigibles were left, the ‘super tramp’ who was suspected of doing rather well.

The decline in outdoor relief was equally marked, another reflection of greater employment opportunities during the war, although unions had been under pressure to accomplish this since the 1870s. Addressing the Haverfordwest Union, the Local Government Board inspector remarked on the great decline in pauperism ‘brought about no doubt by this terrible war.’⁵⁶⁵ At Haverfordwest in April 1916 the rate of pauperism was 2.5 per cent compared to 3.4 per cent five years before.⁵⁶⁶ Outdoor bread stations were discontinued through lack of demand from recipients. At Wallis only two vagrants used the facility in a three month period.⁵⁶⁷ Similarly the Pembroke Guardians closed the Redberth bread station.⁵⁶⁸ To their credit the Guardians attempted to mitigate the steep rise in food prices by granting additional relief. In February 1915 the Haverfordwest Union granted 6*d.* a head extra with others following suit.⁵⁶⁹ Economic pressures resulted in several dietary changes with rice substituted for suet, haricot beans for barley soup while fish and rabbit replaced beef.⁵⁷⁰ Nationally, poverty was squeezed by the war with a 40 per cent decline in

⁵⁶¹ *PH*, 25 February 1916.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 3 December 1915.

⁵⁶³ *PCG*, 19 May 1916.

⁵⁶⁴ *H&MHT*, 1 June 1917.

⁵⁶⁵ *PH*, 18 June 1915.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 21 April 1916.

⁵⁶⁷ PRO SPU/HA/1/19. Haverfordwest Union Board of Guardians minutes 1915-21; 26 January 1916.

⁵⁶⁸ PRO SPU/PE/1/17. Pembroke Union Board of Guardians minutes 1916-18; 16 August 1917.

⁵⁶⁹ *PCG*, 26 February 1915.

⁵⁷⁰ PRO SPU/PE/1/17. Pembroke Union Board of Guardians minutes 1916-18; 27 March 1918.

outdoor relief between 1910-17.⁵⁷¹ This too was a Pembrokeshire experience.

Corporatism and New Models of Associational Life

The aggregation of individual endeavour and resources mirrored greater state intervention, especially from 1917, which in turn increasingly legitimised collectivist or corporatist responses to economic and social challenges. In some respects individualism lost ground as a political concept as the state directed, controlled and allocated national resources.⁵⁷² Living standards could be protected by joint action. Marwick has identified the vitals of wartime collectivism as egalitarianism in times of high prices and desire for scientific efficiency.⁵⁷³ Corporatism in Pembrokeshire was not a unique wartime phenomenon, but as a model it obtained far wider currency as a commercial practice. This was especially true of agriculture. A Clynderwen and District Farmers' Co-operative Society was established in February 1905 while a Haverfordwest co-operative was founded in May 1911.⁵⁷⁴ Wartime agriculture fully reflected the strength of the co-operative movement. The Haverfordwest society saw its membership increase by 83 to 328, and had a turnover of £8,000 by April 1915.⁵⁷⁵ According to the accountant Mr Fred J. Warren of Haverfordwest, the war had changed attitudes to Pembrokeshire's primary industry.⁵⁷⁶ His local society had paid-up capital of £416 and 452 members in 1917.⁵⁷⁷ The largest agricultural co-operative at Clynderwen reached a turnover of £52,563 by May 1916.⁵⁷⁸

Perhaps the most compelling evidence for the growing realisation of the strength of

⁵⁷¹ Brundage, *English Poor Laws*, 144.

⁵⁷² Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, 68.

⁵⁷³ Marwick, *The Deluge*, 279.

⁵⁷⁴ *PCG*, 26 May 1911.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 April 1915.

⁵⁷⁶ *PCG*, 6 April 1917.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁸ *H&MHT*, 31 May 1916.

collectivist principle was the creation of a county-wide farmers' union. Before the war any form of organisation was difficult to achieve. The shift in action might be explained by local imitation of national organisational action. One commentator from St David's urged the necessity to organise, so as to 'bring about the very best results for the common weal of our beloved country.'⁵⁷⁹ A meeting at the Haverfordwest Temperance Hall on 12 June 1917 agreed with the advantages arising from joint action.⁵⁸⁰ It was resolved to form a chamber of agriculture for Pembrokeshire with an executive committee of 26 members.⁵⁸¹ The idea of a chamber was abandoned but a farmers' union (using the parlance of the growing labour movement) was formed instead.⁵⁸² The union developed into a powerful organ articulating the sectional interest of the agriculturalists. Several months later the figure had reached nearly 1,000.⁵⁸³ The wartime farmers took Lord St David's at his word when he described how all classes were 'busily organising.'⁵⁸⁴ By 1919 the county union boasted 1,800 members, a very significant level of adherence.⁵⁸⁵

The spirit of collaboration and combination extended beyond agriculture into the wider commercial and retail sectors.⁵⁸⁶ At Milford Haven, a Fish Trades Protection Association was created among employers to protect their vital industry from Government or worker pressures on 14 October 1912.⁵⁸⁷ Although pre-war in its antecedence it expanded under wartime conditions. Milford Haven hosted an Industrial Society, which, despite its name was effectively a co-operative retail store.

⁵⁷⁹ *PCG*, 18 May 1917.

⁵⁸⁰ *PH*, 15 June 1917.

⁵⁸¹ PRO D/NFU/1/1. Pembrokeshire National Farmers' Union minutes 1917-20; 12 June 1917.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, 22 May 1918.

⁵⁸⁴ *PH*, 22 March 1918.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 15 January 1919.

⁵⁸⁶ Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence and the Origins of the Welfare State* (Cambridge, 1993), 87.

⁵⁸⁷ PRO D/RTM/4/113. Milford Docks Company. File of sundry matters 1912-17; 14 October 1912.

By 1918 this sector accounted for ten per cent of retail sales nationally.⁵⁸⁸ The Milford Haven society was formed in 1917 at a time of sugar, milk and potato shortages and soon racked up £1,000 in sales.⁵⁸⁹

Increased pressures on the retail sector advanced the principle of collectivism, or co-operation at least, still further and reflected local ideas regarding civic identity in Pembrokeshire towns. A Chamber of Trade was established at Haverfordwest on 18 July 1916 although there had been a Victorian forerunner which petered out many years before.⁵⁹⁰ They advocated a munitions factory for the borough, the billeting of troops, introduction of electric lighting, livestock fairs and better railway services.⁵⁹¹ Across Pembrokeshire new forms of economic and sectional syndicates became apparent. At Tenby a Tradesmen's Association had been long established along with a Ratepayers' representative body. A National Union of Clerks established a branch at Milford Haven with the prospect of lobbying for a seat on the local industrial councils which were much anticipated.⁵⁹²

The war equally stimulated new forms of secular civic association. Although McKibbin describes the new mode of sociability fostered by new networks as 'apolitical', the new grassroots activism was an important medium of civic participation.⁵⁹³ This was particularly true of veterans' movements whose aim was, *inter alia*, to secure economic recognition and advantage for their members. Providing an alternative to *ad hoc* local groups of ex-servicemen began to form in the summer

⁵⁸⁸ Gurney, *Co-operative Culture*, 209.

⁵⁸⁹ *H&MHT*, 20 June 1917.

⁵⁹⁰ *PCG*, 21 July 1916.

⁵⁹¹ *H&MHT*, 3 October 1917.

⁵⁹² *PCG*, 3 May 1918.

⁵⁹³ Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford, 1998).

of 1916 becoming the first nationwide veterans' group, the National Association.⁵⁹⁴ Securing advances for unemployed members was a central aim. Much of the discourse of veteran's movements was centred on working-class politics. Another movement, the Comrades of the Great War was more focused on commemorating the fallen, combined with the preservation of economic and political liberalism.⁵⁹⁵ The National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers had more proletarian roots and initially at least, developed a close relationship with the trades unions. The rivalries between the Comrades and DSSA in Pembrokeshire represented a bitter struggle for supremacy as the legitimate voice of the ex-serviceman. The acrimony, counter-accusations and outright poaching of members sapped the latent potency of veteran-issue politics. The DSSA was established at Fishguard and Goodwick on 14 September 1917 with 26 names on the register.⁵⁹⁶

The association was committed to promoting the representation of ex-servicemen on public bodies, scrutiny of pensions and lobbying for enhanced welfare legislation with expanded employment opportunities. A county organisation of 200 men was created in January 1918, nearly all of whom had seen active service.⁵⁹⁷ The Comrades had by then become rooted in the county, attracting support from officers who either could not or would not join the DSSA. Intense friction characterised their relationship with allegations of unfair and unsportsmanlike tactics although they did not cite any examples.⁵⁹⁸ The DSSA championed 'justice not charity' which advocated for an improvement in the living conditions of ex-service personnel. The Fishguard branch

⁵⁹⁴ Douglas Higbee, 'Practical Memory: Organised Veterans and the Politics of Commemoration', in Jessica Meyer (ed.), *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, 2008), 204.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 212.

⁵⁹⁶ *CE*, 27 September 1917.

⁵⁹⁷ *H&MHT*, 30 January 1918.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

grew to 70 members by September 1918.⁵⁹⁹ Despite a suggestion by Lord St David's that amalgamation should occur, the Comrades, supported by the local elites among the officer corps, proved more robust. Using the cognomen of military service, they established 'posts' across Pembrokeshire with a county association by January 1918.⁶⁰⁰ Their Haverfordwest branch alone boasted 300 members by the summer of 1919.⁶⁰¹ The writing was on the wall for the DSSA. The Fishguard branch merged with the Comrades, (who in turn, joined with the other national veterans' organisations to create the British Legion in 1921).⁶⁰² The expanded scope of corporatism as expressed through the ex-servicemen's groups provided solidarity but a powerful reflection of the increasing capacity of joint action to further the living standards of their members. Across Pembrokeshire there were greater examples of corporatist working and combining to secure economic protection of members. This was true not just during the war but in order to face up to the uncertain conditions of the post-war world.

Local Industries and Commercial Enterprises

The war had a protean effect on British industry, stimulating those areas connected to war production. The war provided an opportunity for adaptation and diversification. Pembrokeshire's principal industries were typical in this respect. The major concerns were the principal fishing port of Milford Haven, a scattering of anthracite mining, coastal shipping, aggregate extraction in the north and ship building at Pembroke Dockyard and small civilian yards. In the south-east there was a well-developed tourist industry centred upon Tenby. The war exerted powerful influences on all local

⁵⁹⁹ *CE*, 5 September 1918.

⁶⁰⁰ *H&MHT*, 30 January 1918.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 25 June 1919.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 26 November 1919.

commercial sectors, as an analysis of fishing, coal mining and quarrying will demonstrate. The war did provide new opportunities while restricting them in other areas.

Nationally the fishing industry was a vital component of the nation's food supplies. An average of 14,451,200 cwt of wet fish had been landed at British ports (1909-13).⁶⁰³ In Pembrokeshire, in 1911, there were 598 fishermen, including three women.⁶⁰⁴ With a trawl-fish market, mackerel landing stage and market, smoke house, two large ice factories, box factory and railway connection, Milford Haven's fishing industry was of vital importance to the local and regional economy.⁶⁰⁵ Being the principal port on the western coast of Wales adjacent to the Irish Sea, St George's Channel and Severnside economic areas enforced changes to normal commercial activity.

The war had a dramatic influence on the usual operation of the port as government appropriation of trawlers for mine sweeping hit the local fleet hard, especially early on (1914-15). Within days of the August declaration of war, sixteen large trawlers had been requisitioned.⁶⁰⁶ This figure rose to 28 by mid-September 1914.⁶⁰⁷ Around 60 per cent of boats had gone by early January 1915 taking several hundred local men on operations around the British Isles and much further afield.⁶⁰⁸ The port of Milford suffered a number of wartime losses with heavy loss of life. Nationally, 214 trawlers

⁶⁰³ Robb Robinson, *Trawling. The Rise and Fall of the British Trawl Fishery* (Exeter, 1996), 141.

⁶⁰⁴ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties and urban and rural districts.*

⁶⁰⁵ In 1908 some 44,283 tons of fish were landed at Milford Haven representing the fourth in value amongst 56 ports on the east coast and 32 of west coast ports. There was a 57,000 square foot trawl fish market and facilities for coal, ice, boxes and oils. *The Fishing Industry, Milford Haven 1889-1908*, Milford Docks Company.

⁶⁰⁶ *PH*, 7 August 1914

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 18 September 1914.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

went down on active service, an average loss of one per week.⁶⁰⁹ The loss of fishing capacity was ameliorated to a large degree by the arrival of Belgian trawlers, part of the Diaspora following the German invasion, and others from English east coast ports. In November 1914 fourteen English trawlers from east coast ports arrived.⁶¹⁰ Thus the war changed the balance between locally registered trawlers (many of which were taken) and substitution by Belgian-owned ones. The sustainability of the fishing port was due to the large economic and political migration from Belgium. A colony of 1,800 had settled by 1916.⁶¹¹ Relations with the Belgian crews were not uniformly harmonious. In August 1915 they went on strike in pursuit of higher wages. A second strike in March 1916 brought exasperated government action by way of requisitioning five trawlers and selling a sixth to France.⁶¹² The quantity of fish landed remained surprisingly healthy although bad weather was also a significant factor. In April 1915 730.5 tons of fish and 1,058.5 tons of mackerel were despatched by rail compared to 2,383.5 tons and 1,554.5 tons in the same period in 1914.⁶¹³ By September 1915 the port had 25 Belgian trawlers and fourteen others still in operation.⁶¹⁴ Catches generally declined in 1916 and 1917. If the quantity of wet fish declined, the prices which they realised went in the opposite trajectory. The market saw a string of record-breaking prices from exceptionally lucrative voyages as fish scarcity boosted prices.

The war provided an opportunity to expand into new commercial activities. The Dock Company's premises were inspected by Messrs Anthony Gibbs which controlled nitrate supplies for the Government, which was anxious to have the commodity

⁶⁰⁹ Robinson, *Trawling*, 137.

⁶¹⁰ *H&MHT*, 18 November 1914

⁶¹¹ PRO D/RTM/4/113. Milford Docks Company. File of sundry matters 1912-17; Memorial to the Rt. Hon. A.J. Balfour, First Lord of the Admiralty, January 1916. The letter sent on behalf of the trawler owners, fish merchants and salesmen pleading for no further depletion in the number of fishing vessels since many had been impressed into Government service.

⁶¹² *H&MHT*, 15 March 1916.

⁶¹³ PRO D/MDC/D/8. Milford Docks Company minutes 1903-14; 22 April 1915.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

packed away ‘in out of way places in the country.’⁶¹⁵ The first nitrate vessel, *Jason*, left Chile on 27 June 1916 with a cargo of 8,130 tons.⁶¹⁶ The docks manager was anxious to recruit sufficient labour to unload the nitrate and ‘not to make a mess of the first ship sent to us.’⁶¹⁷ The SS *Framlington Court* docked on 8 June 1917 with 6,800 tons unloaded by the Transport Workers Battalion. Later nitrate vessels included the *Onda*, *Chakrata*, *Tarantia* and the SS *War Anemone*. The latter docked on 13 September 1918 with 7,801 tons of nitrate on board.⁶¹⁸ In January 1918 the Shipping Controller directed the SS *Cheniston*, carrying 7,000 tons of sugar in to port *en route* for Liverpool.⁶¹⁹ Milford also remained a vital coaling and staging port for convoys. In April 1917 twelve large steamers were anchored in the harbour before proceeding to Liverpool.⁶²⁰ The war created commercial opportunities for diversification at least in the short term. Other fishing concerns struggled with the same problems. The Neyland Steam Trawling Company, only inaugurated in 1908, had all its new trawlers requisitioned by April 1915, the sole revenue stream being Government hire payments which contributed to a company profit of £5,154 1s. 1d. in 1917.⁶²¹

The war had a significant impact on Pembrokeshire’s anthracite coal industry although with a total of 533 men directly employed in mining it was not perhaps the most sectorally important area. Local anthracite lay in a belt stretching from Hook to Reynalton and across to Bonville’s Court at Saundersfoot. The total employed rose

⁶¹⁵ PRO D/MDC/S/5/25. Milford Docks Company Ministry of Munitions file 1916-18; Letter from J.C. Ward to Brockelbank, 8 May 1916

⁶¹⁶ PRO D/MDC/S/5/2. Milford Docks Company Admiralty file. The *Jason* arrived on 28 July. Discharging the cargo cost £1,900 6s. 9d.

⁶¹⁷ PRO D/MDC/S/5/25. Milford Docks Company Ministry of Munitions file 1916-18; Ward to Brockelbank, 23 July 1916.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*

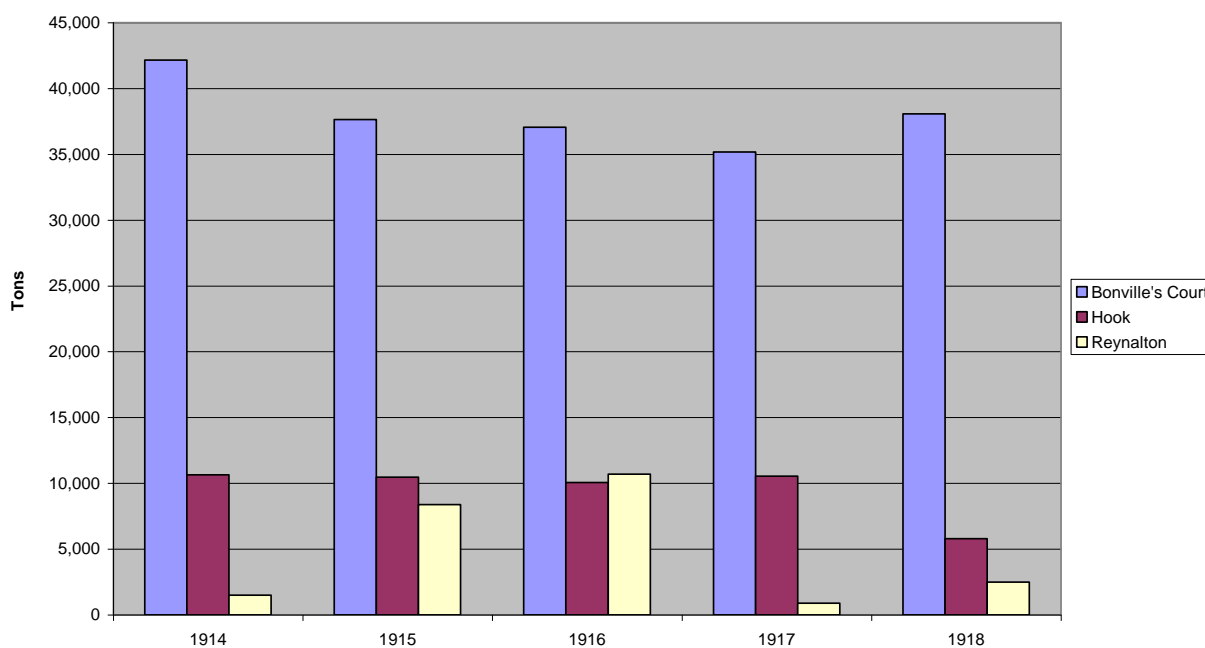
⁶¹⁹ PRO D/MDC/D/9. Milford Docks Company Manager’s Notebook 1915.

⁶²⁰ PRO D/MDC/S/5/28. Milford Docks Company Port and Transit Executive Committee file 1915-17; 1 April 1917

⁶²¹ PCG, 16 March 1917.

slightly to 543 men by 1917.⁶²² The county had four principal coal mines including Hook, where a new pit had been sunk in 1907-10.⁶²³ The largest new enterprise was at Reynalton where a new anthracite coal company was established in 1913, for the purposes of opening a new shaft and extending railway access with a one and a half mile extension to the colliery. The colliery opened in 1915. Bonville's Court colliery, with 307 workers by 1918, was the largest local enterprise, while Hook employed 69 men and Reynalton 72.⁶²⁴ Coal output remained steady but there was tangible decline by 1918, although not at Bonville's Court, the largest concern, as the following table demonstrates.

Table 7 Pembrokeshire Coal production 1914-18⁶²⁵



The war did stimulate local coal exports, especially to France. In 1915 the Hook colliery intended to ship large coal to the Continent, seeking storage facilities on

⁶²² PP. 1917-18 (Cd. 8668). *Reports of the Commission of Enquiry into Industrial Unrest: No. 7 Division, Wales and Monmouthshire.*

⁶²³ M.R. Connop Price, 'The Pembrokeshire Coal Industry', *Pembrokeshire County History*, 132.

⁶²⁴ M.R. Connop Price, *Pembrokeshire. The Forgotten Coalfield* (Ashbourne, 2004), 197.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, 244.

Milford Docks until the steamers called to collect.⁶²⁶ In January 1915 a vessel carried 130 tons of coal to France.⁶²⁷ The war effectively killed an ambitious scheme to exploit littoral anthracite reserves at Nolton by means of a St Bride's Light Railway and also stimulate new industrial development.⁶²⁸ A Light Railway Order was obtained but the £90,000 scheme foundered on several objections and the post-war slump.⁶²⁹

The war had a debilitating effect on the other principal extraction industry in the north, stone and slate quarrying which employed 249 and 126 men respectively in 1911.⁶³⁰ There was considerable industrial activity at Porthgain with slate, granite, brick and road stone products widely exported. By the spring of 1915 due to the lack of shipping, a dozen hands were laid off.⁶³¹ The following week another six departed.⁶³² Production was highly cyclical. By May 1915, shipping movements were back to peacetime normal with 49 cargoes in June alone.⁶³³ Although the largest vessel, *MountCharles*, displaced 300 tons, most craft were ketches like the *Democrat* (105 tons) or *Bessie Clark* (79 tons). The tiny port of Porthgain had 252 shipping movements in 1916; 194 in 1917 and 98 between January and July 1918.⁶³⁴ The industry was then at its lowest ebb with a mere half dozen employees.

Coastal shipping had from time immemorial been central to the Pembrokeshire economy and was still important after the arrival of the railway network. The appropriation of vessels combined with wartime losses led to an escalation in ship

⁶²⁶ PRO D/MDC/D/9. Milford Docks Company Board minutes 1915-26; 21 October 1915.

⁶²⁷ *PCG*, 15 January 1915.

⁶²⁸ *H&MHT*, 17 February 1915

⁶²⁹ Price, *Forgotten Coalfield*, 141.

⁶³⁰ PP. 1911 (Cd.5705) *Census of England and Wales, 1911*.

⁶³¹ *CE*, 4 March 1915

⁶³² *Ibid.* 11 March 1915.

⁶³³ Davies, *Porthgain and Abereiddi*, 61.

⁶³⁴ PRO DB/7/416. Porthgain Quarries list of vessels entering and being discharged 1915-18.

values and freight rates. The decline in tramp shipping was of a marked tendency to the extent of 50 per cent.⁶³⁵ Haverfordwest was badly affected when the Bacon Line suspended their route from Bristol for the first time in half a century. In 1918-19 for the first time in recorded history, not a single vessel cleared out of Haverfordwest, with silent quaysides and a borough council ruing their lost tolls.⁶³⁶

Pembroke Dockyard

Pembroke Dockyard remained the largest single employer of skilled labour in the county. Phillips describes the decline of the yard as really setting in after 1900, although as Illustration 8 shows, it was still a mighty arsenal with its row of covered slipways. The armoured cruiser HMS *Defence* (1907) was the yard's last major warship followed by an average of one light cruiser per year, the last being HMS *Curacao* in 1917.⁶³⁷ Nevertheless, with 2,140 men employed there, the essential nature of the arsenal was amply demonstrated by the £166,938 which was paid out in wages in 1911-12.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁵ Derek H. Aldcroft, *Studies in British Transport History, 1870-1970* (Newton Abbot, 1974), 145.

⁶³⁶ *PH*, 5 February 1919.

⁶³⁷ Lawrence Phillips, 'Pembroke Dockyard'.

⁶³⁸ *PCG*, 29 March 1912; the health of the dockyard was often seen as a barometer of the local economy. When significant discharges of labour occurred there was consternation when 300 men were thrown out of work in 1905, 'a very serious matter for the dockyard, town and vicinity,' *Ibid.*, 21 September 1905.

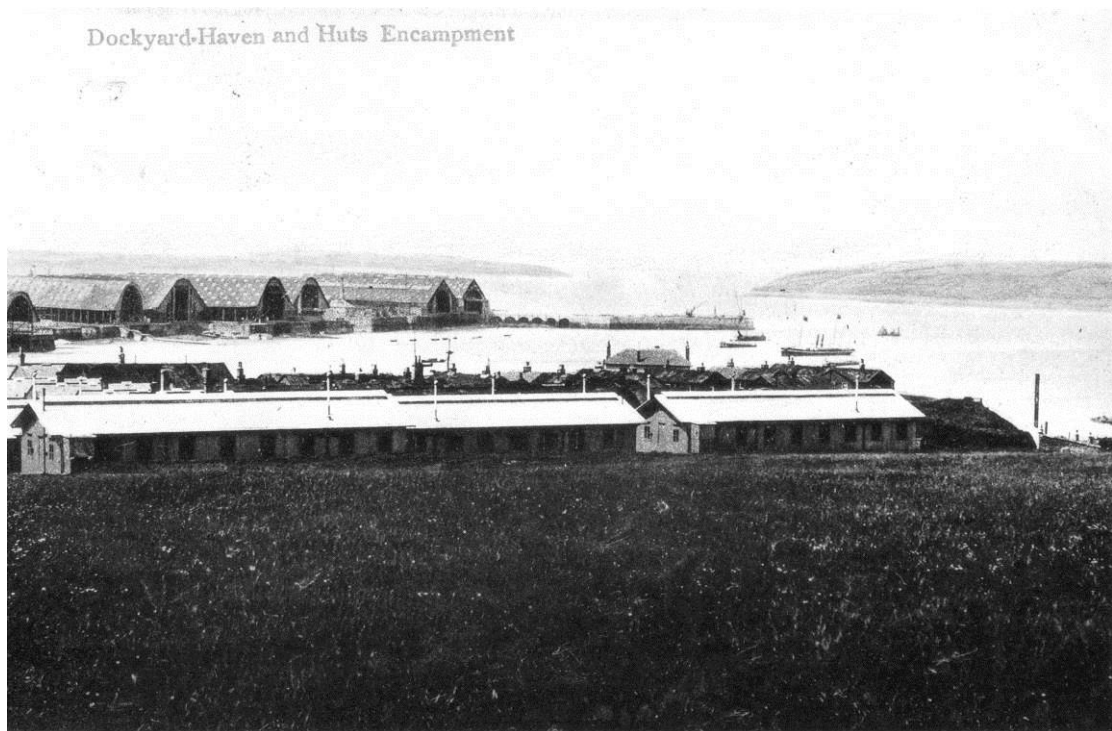


Illustration: 8 Pembroke Dockyard and Hut Encampments *circa* 1905.

Pembroke Dockyard was small and old-fashioned in the opinion of Franklin D. Roosevelt, assistant secretary to the United States Navy when he visited in July 1918. He noted the building of four submarines and how the workforce had greatly expanded.⁶³⁹ Throughout the war the yard was synonymous with high wages and a safe refuge for those with an aversion to military service.⁶⁴⁰ When one group of Pembroke employees was drafted to a Scottish yard it was mockingly stated how there were as many tears as though they were being sent to the trenches.⁶⁴¹ Articles in the press savagely criticised the 4,000 men in the yard doing the work of half that number. The post-war world saw savage cuts with a reduced establishment of 1,200 and a government saving of £155,000 per year in August 1921.⁶⁴² An Admiralty Fleet Order No. 1477 dated 4 June 1926 placed the yard on a care and maintenance basis,

⁶³⁹ Phillips, 'Pembroke Dockyard', 170.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 10 July 1918.

⁶⁴¹ *PCG*, 22 September 1916.

⁶⁴² *PT*, 10 August 1921.

with only a handful of caretakers.⁶⁴³ The war probably hastened the demise of the dockyard.

Transportation

The war placed unprecedented pressures on all means of public and private transport and the county's infrastructure, exacerbating existing problems of rurality and distance from large conurbations. The road network did benefit from investment due to the presence of military camps across Pembrokeshire linking Dale, Scoveston, Hearson, Angle and other ancillary sites. Many roads were improved or entirely rebuilt so as to facilitate the movement of motor transport. At the behest of the War Office new roads costing £3,771 were constructed to East and West Blockhouse.⁶⁴⁴ When improvements were undertaken in the Pembroke Rural District Council area, grants of 75 per cent were made available.⁶⁴⁵ By July 1918 the county council received £6,310 9s. 5d. on account of highway improvements for the military.⁶⁴⁶

Despite petrol restrictions there was a perceptible increase in the use of motor vehicles, mirroring the national picture of greater bus and haulage enterprises, especially after 1918.⁶⁴⁷ In 1914 there were 400 registered motor cars and a similar number of motor cycles on the county's roads.⁶⁴⁸ As horses became scarce, motor travel increased. In 1916 a motor van connecting Milford Haven to Dale was started.⁶⁴⁹ Increasing fares, service cuts and other curtailments proved irksome for railway travellers with serious consequences for the local economy. One line of track

⁶⁴³ Phillips, 'Pembroke Dockyard', 168.

⁶⁴⁴ PRO PCC/SE/38/4. Pembrokeshire County Council Roads and Bridges Committee 1914-21; 13 April 1915.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ John Benson, *The Working Class in Britain, 1850-1939* (London, 1989), 23.

⁶⁴⁸ *H&MHT*, 2 September 1914.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., 5 April 1916.

from Neyland to Clarbston Road was removed never to be replaced.⁶⁵⁰ Proposals had been advanced to remove the permanent way from Maenclochog to Clynderwen, although this was retained 'for goods and cattle traffic only.'⁶⁵¹ Another portion between Maenclochog and Letterston went nevertheless 'for use in the Great War.'⁶⁵² Increased rail fares were of particular local concern for tourism, especially for Tenby and the south-east which had been a fashionable tourist destination since the eighteenth century. The increase in January 1917 was thought likely to hit Tenby badly.⁶⁵³ The borough council there urged steps for to be taken to fight the proposal, although in reply, Lord St David's advised them to submit without grumbling.⁶⁵⁴ Later rumours of a national fifty- mile travel limit, although unimplemented caused panic in the resort.⁶⁵⁵ Being a highly income responsive industry, tourism reflected the vagaries and shifting patterns of the national economy. Little attention has hitherto been paid to the fortunes of British seaside resorts during the war.⁶⁵⁶ The August declaration of war caused a mass exodus home and led to the cancellation of most events.⁶⁵⁷ Trade was so slack as to prompt shops to close at 7pm, an hour earlier than usual.⁶⁵⁸ Marketing and promotion of the qualities of Tenby through advertising in the national press, variously hailed as the 'Naples' of Wales, were essential to maintain the town economy and was masterminded by the Estates Committee of Tenby Borough Council.

The bombardment of the English resorts of Hartlepool, Whitby and Scarborough on

⁶⁵⁰ *H&MHT*, 7 February 1917.

⁶⁵¹ *CE*, 25 January 1917.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 1 February 1917.

⁶⁵³ *TO*, 11 January 1917.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1 February 1917.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 28 June 1917.

⁶⁵⁶ John K. Walton, 'Leisure Towns in Wartime': *The Impact of the First World War in Blackpool and San Sebastian*, *JCH* 31:4 (1996), 603.

⁶⁵⁷ *TO*, 20 August 1914.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 10 September 1914.

16 December 1914 accentuated Tenby's essential attribute as a place of safety. This message was repeatedly rammed home in a variety of promotions. The local tradesmen's association initiated an imaginative advertising campaign pointing to the safety from air raids.⁶⁵⁹ The venture proved highly successful, so that visitor numbers in 1918 broke all records.⁶⁶⁰ Other Pembrokeshire resorts fared better than might have been expected. Visitors flocked to Fishguard, Goodwick, Dinas and Newport in considerable numbers in August 1915, while every lodging house was let at Goodwick in 1916.⁶⁶¹ New forms of leisure activity appeared during the war. In August 1917 a caravan camping party consisting of 'refined and educated people' holidayed in Newport in their unique mode of transport.⁶⁶² The tourist economy remained surprisingly resilient drawing as it did on the desire of people keen to forget everyday privation and worry for a comparatively cheap form of escapism.

The Employment of Women

A rigorous debate centres upon the extent to which the war changed the true nature and extent of female population, a reasonable corollary given the enlistment of five million men into the armed forces. Marwick's exuberant assertions accord the war a decisive status explaining how female participation was translated into an extension of social, political and economic gains.⁶⁶³ Inevitably the whole discourse of female employment has been ensnared in the wider expatiation of gender, politics and domesticity versus advocates of new female financial liberation. The consensus of current opinion accords the war no such special status in marking a decisive change in the way society viewed female employment. Beddoe notes the strength of those to

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 1 November 1917.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 3 October 1918.

⁶⁶¹ *CE*, 3 August 1916.

⁶⁶² Ibid., 9 August 1917.

⁶⁶³ Marwick, *A History of the Modern British Isles*, 95.

return to their former occupations, while Braybon sees the impact as broadly neutral although possibly liberating for some individuals. For Pyecroft the importance of female wartime and post-war experiences is of more value than rhetoric and she is clear that gratitude was not shown to women and their value was again placed on them as mothers and nurturers. The war was not decisive for women as workers. Monger does not detect dramatic changes in women's roles and work during the war although their contributions as citizens received greater recognition.⁶⁶⁴

There was no denying the phenomenon of expanded female employment, even if the war did impact on the cultural construct of feminism in multiple and contradictory ways.⁶⁶⁵ By 1915 the number of women in employment had reached 766,000.⁶⁶⁶ Overall the number employed rose to 7.3 million by 1918.⁶⁶⁷ The greatest advances were achieved in transport, commerce and munitions. Transportation saw a rise from 18,000 to 117,000.⁶⁶⁸ The traditional domestic service sphere declined sharply. The war remains the starting point for tracing the roots of women's social and economic emergence according to Saywell, a birth of consciousness not unlike a religious awakening.⁶⁶⁹ It is very difficult to define the psychological impact of even a short-term liberation. Marwick's assured optimism over female enfranchisement has been disputed by a raft of historians who have articulated the limitations of the watershed hypothesis. Such changes to female employment did so in highly circumscribed

⁶⁶⁴ Deirdre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty. Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (London, 1989); Gail Braybon, 'Women, War and Work', in Hew Strachan (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War* (Oxford, 1998), 149-162; Susan Pyecroft, 'British Working Women and the First World War', *Historian*, 56:4 (1994), 699-710; David Monger, 'Nothing Special? Propaganda and Women's Roles in Late First World War Britain', *Women's History Review*, 23:4, (2014), 518-42.

⁶⁶⁵ June Hannam, 'Women and Politics', in June Purvis (ed.), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 2004), 234.

⁶⁶⁶ Williams, *The Home Fronts*, 119.

⁶⁶⁷ Wilson, *Myriad Faces of War*, 719.

⁶⁶⁸ Susan Pyecroft, 'British Working Women and the First World War', *Historian*, 56:4, (1994), 704.

⁶⁶⁹ Claire A. Culleton, *Working-Class Culture, Women and Britain, 1914-1921* (Basingstoke, 2000), 176.

notions of traditional gender stereotypes. The mantra of hearth and home remained pre-eminent.

Nor is there incontrovertible evidence that women rejected the usual pattern of marriage and family to become wives and mothers. They remained icons of tradition fostering nostalgia for pre-war certainties fuelling a backlash of post-war conservatism and the old order.⁶⁷⁰ When viewed holistically, patterns of female employment hardly changed during 1911-31, pegged at 29.7 per cent.⁶⁷¹ Snook's analysis of Pontypridd leads her to the conclusion that for most women there the war was not an emancipating experience.⁶⁷² Pembrokeshire discloses a similar picture.

In 1911 Pembrokeshire had 11,475 employed women, 9,104 of whom were single. A further 1,071 married women held a job.⁶⁷³ The occupational structure conformed to the national pattern although the novelty of female employed can sometimes be overstated. There were 93 post office clerks with 33 'postmen' and so women on the beat were not a new phenomenon. Domestic service accounted for 3,721 which included charwomen, servants and 318 laundry workers. Other concentrations were agriculture, elementary schools, food and drink and hotels. Dressmaking engaged 1,351 women.⁶⁷⁴ How these principal sectors developed during the war reveals much about female fortunes.

A vast array of tasks lay under the appellation of agricultural work. In 1911 Pembrokeshire had 2,514 women employed in the pastoral sector, mainly farmers, or

⁶⁷⁰ Gerard DeGroot, 'The First World War as Total War', in Martin Pugh (ed.), *A Companion to Modern European History* (Oxford, 1997), 279.

⁶⁷¹ Sean Glynn and Alan Booth, *Modern Britain. An Economic and Social History* (London, 1996), 45.

⁶⁷² Lisa Snook, 'Out of the Cage?' 87.

⁶⁷³ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.5705) *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties and urban and rural districts.*

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

daughters of the same, with 210 labourers and a solitary market gardener.⁶⁷⁵ Female labour had contributed to rural household budgets for centuries through harvesting, poultry keeping and dairying but the increasing scarcity of male labour necessitated the recruitment of female substitutes, not just from necessity but perhaps also an evocation of nostalgia, a return to the lost pastoral idyll as Grayzell puts it.⁶⁷⁶ The major catalyst for promoting female labour was the Pembrokeshire War Agricultural Executive Committee. Miss Beatrice Chambers of Fishguard, daughter of a local worthy, went to a meeting of the hitherto all-male committee where it was resolved that 'ladies' in each rural district be appointed to make arrangements for the creation of a Women's Labour Committee for Pembrokeshire.⁶⁷⁷ As an inducement, armllets would be awarded to those who completed 30 days' work on the land. The county committee had previously written to all parish and district councils seeking their support of a canvass of local women to ascertain their preparedness to undertake farm work. The parochial replies were almost uniformly negative: Ambleston parish council, for example, replied how a survey would achieve no purpose.⁶⁷⁸ Llangwm parish council communicated how no women were available.⁶⁷⁹ St Dogwells council thought all their womenfolk were already doing their share of work when they wrote back to Mr Robert Wheatley the county agricultural committee secretary.⁶⁸⁰

A county conference to discuss women's agricultural work was held at Haverfordwest on 29 April 1916 which is highly revealing of gender roles and ideas of women's

⁶⁷⁵ PP. 1911 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911*.

⁶⁷⁶ Susan R. Grayzel, 'Nostalgia, Gender and the Countryside: Placing the 'Land Girl' in First World War Britain', *Rural History*, 10:2 (1999), 155.

⁶⁷⁷ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. War Agricultural Executive committee minutes 1912-18; 11 April 1916. Miss Beatrice Chambers, the daughter of local landowner Robert Chambers of Glyn-Y-Mel, Fishguard emanated from a well to-do- family. Miss Chambers was involved in much philanthropy and public service. Her status doubtless made her an acceptable female representative.

⁶⁷⁸ PRO SPC/4/2. Ambleston Parish Council minutes 1915-63; 16 February 1916.

⁶⁷⁹ PRO HSPC/9/1. Llangwm Parish Council minutes 1911-32; 28 February 1916.

⁶⁸⁰ PRO SPC/12/1. St Dogwells Parish Council minutes 1894-1962; 22 February 1916.

work. Doubts to their efficiency and willingness to engage with this kind of employment surfaced not just from men. Mrs Silyn Roberts derided those girls who preferred going to cinemas rather than work and she thought it high time they gave up their comforts.⁶⁸¹ Similarly Mrs Peerless deplored the packed picture houses where women squandered their allowances.⁶⁸² The fault lines of prejudice were not always on a male-female axis. Miss Chambers, who invoked religious language as self-confessed apostle of a new creed, made a plea for deep-seated hostility to be rooted out 'as carefully as she looked for dandelions in the garden.'⁶⁸³ Class antipathy coloured the debate on female roles in agriculture. The often well-to-do proponents set a bad example by only attending meetings themselves while 'graciously consenting to spare their servant maids to do the work.'⁶⁸⁴ Securing greater labour from women was only achieved in the teeth of frequent scepticism and happily less open hostility. Mr W.T. Davies suggested that farmers' daughters got the servants to do the real work.⁶⁸⁵ And yet work women certainly did. One female ploughman was observed ploughing expert furrows near Newport in 1915.⁶⁸⁶ Later, a number of women harvested four acres of hay placed at their disposal from one curious farmer, who wanted to see if they were up to the work. The hay was harvested in excellent order.⁶⁸⁷ The county agricultural executive was informed in March 1917 how 3,000 women were toiling on the land across the county.⁶⁸⁸ Others worked in forestry, like Annie Morgan of Llangwm. Such examples of women working on the land were promoted by newspapers to seek endorsement of their patriotic duties as well as

⁶⁸¹ *CE*, 4 May 1916.

⁶⁸² *H&MHT*, 6 May 1916.

⁶⁸³ *PCG*, 5 May 1916.

⁶⁸⁴ *CE*, 8 June 1916.

⁶⁸⁵ *PCG*, 12 March 1915.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 21 May 1915.

⁶⁸⁷ *PH*, 22 September 1916.

⁶⁸⁸ *H&MHT*, 21 March 1917.

seeking emulation from others. One unnamed worker was pictured in Britanniaesque pose armed with a sapling rather than a trident (Illustration 9).



Illustration: 9 Local Land Army Worker in uniform as photographed by Madame Higgs of Haverfordwest around 1917.

A number of local women served in the Women's Land Army which was established in 1917. Dressed in outfits more reminiscent of the Wild West, 40 women received their WLA stripes and service badges at a ceremony held at the Shire Hall on 13 December 1917. Their blithesome manners had ensured their popularity and 'conquered all foolish prejudice.'⁶⁸⁹ Clad in neat and useful garb they provided a sharp contrast to the frivolous and sybaritic giggles of the 'flappers.'⁶⁹⁰ Not all ladies were transgressors of sartorial elegance. One south of county lady never ventured into

⁶⁸⁹ *PCG*, 14 December 1917.

⁶⁹⁰ *PH*, 6 July 1917; Bonnie White explores the variety of motivations which prompted women to join the WLA in 'Sowing the Seeds of Patriotism? The Women's Land Army in Devon, 1916-1918', *The Local Historian*, 41:1 (2011), 13-27.

the field without her toilet accoutrements.⁶⁹¹ One long-standing area of work for females and one which did not generate opposition as it did in manufacturing or the professions, was that of elementary education.

The war confirmed female ascendancy in local elementary schools, already a highly gendered sphere, as increasing numbers of male teachers left for military service. In 1911 there were 453 female pedagogues in elementary and secondary sectors.⁶⁹² In Wales female preponderance was striking, providing 55 per cent of professionals.⁶⁹³ The national trend was exacerbated by the recruitment of 20,000 male teachers through voluntary and enforced military service.⁶⁹⁴ Salaries displayed an inverse tendency to the increase in the number of women employed. Those in elementary schools did worst of all.⁶⁹⁵ The average headmistress' wage was £126 while certificated assistants received £95.⁶⁹⁶ Low salaries were the corollary of low esteem and weak *spirit de corps*. Male salaries were assumed to represent a family wage while female salaries were only for the maintenance of themselves.⁶⁹⁷ Generally salaries received a major uplift with the Fisher Grant in the summer of 1918. In November 1918 a Board of Education circular 80/18 permitted special enhancements to uncertificated teachers on account of long service. One such eligible teacher was Amelia Griffiths who had completed 29 years' service.⁶⁹⁸ There is evidence that an increasing number of women teachers sought professional training during the war years, encouraged by the local education authority. Thus Hannah Morris of Saundersfoot Council School was allowed £5 towards her maintenance at college in

⁶⁹¹ *TO*, 18 July 1918.

⁶⁹² PP. 1911 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911*.

⁶⁹³ Sian Rhiannon Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales, c.1870-1950', *The Welsh Journal of Education*, 13:2 (2005), 70.

⁶⁹⁴ Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education*, 180.

⁶⁹⁵ Ferguson, 'Employment Opportunities and Economic Roles,' 60.

⁶⁹⁶ Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education*, 190.

⁶⁹⁷ Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics* (Manchester, 1996), 60.

⁶⁹⁸ PRO SSM/1/8. Begelly Group of School managers 1914-19; 5 November 1918.

1917.⁶⁹⁹

War conditions generated at least an acceptance of the notion of married women teachers' employment. Before the war, as Oram observes, teacher over supply saw the introduction of marriage bar regulations by at least a dozen local authorities (1908-9).⁷⁰⁰ The shortage of male teachers made some accommodation on this practice necessary. At Greenhill School, Tenby, in 1916 there were no male teachers left, resulting in an influx of married women and retired teachers.⁷⁰¹ The picture in Pembrokeshire is a mixed one. In December 1915 Miss Thomas who taught at Hubberston severed her connection with the school owing to her recent marriage.⁷⁰² Responding to the staff shortage obliged the education authority to look again and suspend regulations prohibiting the employment of married women. Although they did so with the proviso that the women had to have been married for twelve months, since, according to Alderman Robinson 'they don't know their heads from their knees for twelve months.'⁷⁰³ This was an example of the grudging acceptance of enhanced female roles, and a negative one at that. Elsewhere, the managers of the Haverfordwest group of schools were glad to hear that marriage would not deprive them of the services of Miss Williams of Dew Street.⁷⁰⁴ Some ambitious females applied for headships against their male colleagues. At Walwyn's Castle, three women were among eight applicants for the vacant headship in July 1918, although they appear to have been unsuccessful.⁷⁰⁵ They were not as forthcoming in the secondary sector. Overall, females increased in number, were better remunerated and

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁰ Oram, *Women Teachers*, 59.

⁷⁰¹ Gareth Elwyn Jones and Gordon Wynne-Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (Cardiff, 2003), 124.

⁷⁰² PRO SSR/1/132/1. Hubberston-Hakin Board School Logbook 1909-16; 22 December 1915.

⁷⁰³ *PCG*, 29 October 1915.

⁷⁰⁴ PRO SSM/1/13. Uzmaston (Haverfordwest) Group of School Manager's minutes 1915-24; 10 October 1916.

⁷⁰⁵ PRO HPR/59/10. Walwyns Castle National School Manager's minutes; 15 July 1918.

possibly increased professional awareness.

Nursing provided one source of growing employment which knitted neatly with male notions of acceptability and appropriate to the female characteristics as care-giver. In 1911 Pembrokeshire had 103 sick nurses or invalid attendants, plus 30 midwives.⁷⁰⁶ A decade later this had risen to 185.⁷⁰⁷ The advent of war greatly increased opportunities especially with the organisation of the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VAD). Some 67 per cent of their ranks were staffed by women, 46,741 in 1914.⁷⁰⁸ They paid for their own uniforms and generally came from a higher social stratum than professional nurses.⁷⁰⁹ Social distinction and antagonism surfaced between the volunteers and generally better-trained professionals of lower social cachet.⁷¹⁰ Their Red Cross uniform provided a powerful counterpoint to male khaki in exuding patriotism.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁷ PP. 1921 (Cd.1485). *Census of England and Wales. County of Pembroke.*

⁷⁰⁸ Janet S.K. Watson, 'The Social Construction of Medical Work in First World War Britain', *JBS* 41:4 (2002), 487.

⁷⁰⁹ Anita Sinner, 'Sewing Seams of Stories: Becoming a Teacher during the First World War', *History of Education*, 35:3 (2006), 384.

⁷¹⁰ Christine E. Hallett, 'The Personal Writings of First World War Nurses,' *Nursing Inquiry* 14:4 (2007), 321.

⁷¹¹ Jefferey S. Reznick, *Healing the Nation* (Manchester, 2004), 100.



Illustration: 10 Red Cross Nurses with their Commandant (centre) and patients at Cottesmore auxiliary hospital, *circa* 1916. (PRO HDX/690/1).

Pembrokeshire had twelve VADs, largely staffing military hospitals at Angle, Cottesmore (Illustration 10) and Pembroke Dock. Their duties included nursing patients, cooking, making garments and organising entertainments, activities which befitted their class. In almost every case the commandant was a member of the local gentry and aristocracy like Mrs Mirehouse of Angle or Countess Cawdor at Stackpole Court.⁷¹² The Pembroke Dock Military Hospital (Illustration 11) shows a spacious building in this clearly posed photograph. At Cottesmore auxiliary hospital, which opened on 28 May 1915, the rural bliss of quiet domesticity is evident in the diary of Miss Helena Reid of Boulston Lodge, whose nursing duties were interspersed with sketching, picnic lunches and tennis tournaments.⁷¹³ Illustration 10 shows a typical posed photograph of staff and patients. The activities of local nurses were

⁷¹² PRO HDX/719/1. Pembrokeshire Branch of British Red Cross Annual Report 1914.

⁷¹³ PRO HDX/690/1. Diary of Nurse Helena Reid at Cottesmore Auxiliary Red Cross Hospital 1918; 3 August 1918.

highly marketable news stories. Sister Jenkins of Fishguard was applauded for her work at Boulogne where she was engaged on patriotic duties.⁷¹⁴ Other local women were stationed at Plymouth, Cardiff, Liverpool and Sherbourne.⁷¹⁵ Others served with the YMCA, like Miss Lily Johns of Manorowen who went out to France in November 1917.⁷¹⁶



Illustration: 11 Pembroke Dock Military Hospital with nursing staff *circa* 1915.

Male attitudes to nursing in Pembrokeshire varied from the superficial and banal observations of how charming they looked in one Milford Haven procession, to a more sober realisation of them putting themselves in harm's way.⁷¹⁷ Nurse Parkinson was posted to the Dardanelles in November 1915.⁷¹⁸ Some local men who had failed to voluntarily enlist might have reflected on this example of female patriotism. One

⁷¹⁴ *CE*, 29 July 1915.

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 21 October 1915.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 29 November 1917.

⁷¹⁷ *PH*, 8 October 1915.

⁷¹⁸ *PCG*, 12 November 1915.

Pembrokeshire nurse, Miss Williams of Spittal, was nursing at an American military hospital which was bombed by the Germans in September 1917, and witnessed the first American fatalities of the war.⁷¹⁹ Nursing undoubtedly advanced women's own definition of patriotic service.⁷²⁰

The advent of women into hitherto male preserves is perhaps the most commonly cited evidence of change although the views of contemporary Pembrokeshire women are silent in this respect. They were covered, in prodigious detail, in both local and national press. They were in sectors where previously women had only established shallow bridgeheads at best and perhaps represented opportunities for adventure and change.⁷²¹ Women who responded to the national labour shortage were applauded as patriotic daughters of Britannia although the blurring of gender roles must have added to a psychology of confusion. Traditional gender roles were thrown into disarray, perhaps best demonstrated by the predilection of young females to get behind the wheel of a car.⁷²² Pyecroft notes how transportation-related employment rose by nearly 100,000.⁷²³

Other than the solitary female motor mechanic and railway points man women hardly featured in the Pembrokeshire transport scene. Even a decade later advances could be measured in single digits. Women made a much-publicised appearance at the county's railway stations. At Goodwick Miss Mansfield was clerk at the Harbour Station, while another acted in a similar capacity in the goods' department.⁷²⁴ A female presided

⁷¹⁹ Ibid., 21 September 1917.

⁷²⁰ Krisztina Robert, 'Gender, Class and Patriotism: Women's Paramilitary Units in First World War Britain', *IHR*, XIX (1997), 65.

⁷²¹ Robert, 'Gender, Class and Patriotism,' 59.

⁷²² Laura Doan, 'Premium Mobile: Women and Automobiles in the Era of the Great War', *Women: A Cultural View* 17:1 (2006), 28.

⁷²³ Pyecroft, 'British Working Women', 704.

⁷²⁴ *CE*, 2 December 1915.

over the Tenby station bookstall where there was also a female porter.⁷²⁵ Mr George Ace, a pioneer motor car proprietor, announced his intention to employ women chauffeurs, given the shortage of available males, and give them driving lessons.⁷²⁶ When one Tenby man doubted whether women could cope with the stress of a breakdown, one ‘lady chauffeur,’ Miss Lilian Wickham, retorted how she and her sister had both undergone a mechanical course conducted by the British School of Motoring and ‘if we drove cars in London traffic, either of us could manage a little Ford in Tenby’.⁷²⁷

Nevertheless it suited some men to belittle female abilities when convenient. When Alderman Sketch, chairman of the county military appeal tribunal sought to retain the service of his mineral works delivery driver he was pointedly asked why a ‘respectable young woman could not do the collecting?’⁷²⁸

Pembrokeshire females made a limited contribution to munitions works where the dangers of random explosions and TNT poisoning were all too apparent.⁷²⁹ Some doubtless found employment at the Pembrey works, a Government-controlled establishment which employed 11,000 people.⁷³⁰ Five Tenby ladies left to work in English munitions factories in September 1915.⁷³¹ The largest local source of female wartime industrial employment was at Pembroke Dockyard. Initial duties included serving light machines and lathes.⁷³² Later opportunities arose in the tracers

⁷²⁵ *PCG*, 13 April 1917.

⁷²⁶ *TO*, 17 June 1915.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, 16 March 1916.

⁷²⁸ *H&MHT*, 13 February 1918.

⁷²⁹ John Burnett, (ed.), *Useful Toil. Autobiographies of Working People from the 1820s to the 1920s* (Harmondsworth, 1984) 125-132.

⁷³⁰ Deidre Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows. A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2000), 61.

⁷³¹ *TO*, 16 September 1915.

⁷³² *PCG*, 31 March 1916.

department where 40 women competed for 12 vacancies.⁷³³ Women also worked in canteens, clerical and drawing offices. They often did creditably in competitive entry tests. Forty-two women achieved half marks in an examination held for dockyard writers.⁷³⁴ Franklin Roosevelt's celebrated visit in 1918 brought his recollection of how 500 women were employed in the yard, some doing arduous, taxing work helping moulders in the foundry.⁷³⁵ A sense of camaraderie and pride exudes from the females pictured in Illustration 12.



Illustration: 12 Female workers at the Pembroke Dockyard boiler shop in 1918 (PRO HDX/338/50).

The novelty of females entering into the wider fields of trade, commerce and finance can be exaggerated since they were already represented in these fields before the war. Pembroke had a number engaged in bakery and confectionery, 145 in 1911,

⁷³³ Ibid., 19 May 1916.

⁷³⁴ Ibid., 10 December 1915.

⁷³⁵ Phillips, 'Pembroke Dockyard', 170.

while there were 317 female grocers and 34 green-grocers.⁷³⁶ There was however a quantitative shift towards banking and insurance concerns. Haverfordwest acquired its first female bank clerk at the London Provincial Bank in 1915.⁷³⁷ Female insurance collectors were later observed on Fishguard streets.⁷³⁸ At Milford Haven, women letter carriers working from the main post office sometimes walked seventeen miles a day.⁷³⁹ Petticoat management prevailed at Oliver's shoe shops at Haverfordwest while there were six women employed at Pembroke Dock Lipton's store.⁷⁴⁰ The war heralded the arrival of the female office worker, bringing advances to 'white - bloused' clerical occupations which resisted the post-war retrenchment.⁷⁴¹ Female typists were 'requisitioned' early on at the county education offices after several males enlisted in December 1914.⁷⁴² The recruitment of a female typist by Eaton Evans and Williams' solicitors at Haverfordwest was treated as a newsworthy item by the press.⁷⁴³ At Milford Haven Miss Ruby Hanson was appointed assistant clerk to the urban district council.⁷⁴⁴

Pembrokeshire women often had their first taste of non-domiciliary responsibility in new employment. Miss Lewis of Manorbier secured the position as assistant parish overseer.⁷⁴⁵ Mr Summers, the Chief Constable, was permitted to employ two females (or non-military age males) to train as police clerks.⁷⁴⁶ This came some months after the Standing Joint Committee agreed to appoint suitably qualified women as police

⁷³⁶ PP. 1912-13 (Cd.5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties and urban and rural districts.*

⁷³⁷ *H&MHT*, 3 November 1915.

⁷³⁸ *CE*, 26 July 1917.

⁷³⁹ *PH*, 20 August 1915.

⁷⁴⁰ *PCG*, 25 May 1917.

⁷⁴¹ Waites, *Class Society at War*, 7.

⁷⁴² *H&MHT*, 23 December 1914.

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, 25 August 1915.

⁷⁴⁴ *PCG*, 27 July 1917.

⁷⁴⁵ PRO HSPC/25/3. Manorbier Parish Council minutes 1894-1951; 30 April 1917.

⁷⁴⁶ PRO PCC/SE/42/3. Pembrokeshire Standing Joint Committee minutes 1912-25; 10 February 1917.

constables. A great deal of male antipathy and old patriarchal attitudes might have been suppressed, but they were by no means difficult to detect.⁷⁴⁷ Female workers could be ridiculed in a variety of ways. Some correspondents complained of the penchant of females to take jobs which was ‘not playing the game.’ One ‘married patriot,’ writing in the *County Echo*, indignantly wrote how women should ‘offer their services to take the places of other women’s husbands and overlook the fact that they should first relieve their own husbands’⁷⁴⁸ Others deplored the new uppity attitude of some women.⁷⁴⁹ Simmering tensions existed not just between men and women but between women themselves. Alleged inexperience dictated how nature had not endowed women to do certain tasks. When two female builders sought to erect a structure they were mocked for neglecting to put in proper foundations.⁷⁵⁰ The war had even less of an influence on professional female numbers since that class hardly existed. There were no female lawyers, doctors or dentists in either 1911 or 1921, although a young woman was taken on as an apprentice chemist in Tenby.⁷⁵¹ Female employment did expand in Pembrokeshire although it was within tightly defined boundaries and the absolute numbers were small indeed.

Health Services and Housing

A study of wartime health services in Pembrokeshire provides useful insights into perhaps the most fundamental of living conditions which are difficult to abstract in more general studies. The county had a population of 90,480 in 1914, the majority of

⁷⁴⁷ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, 74.

⁷⁴⁸ *CE*, 8 June 1916.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 29 June 1916.

⁷⁵⁰ *PCG*, 5 May 1916.

⁷⁵¹ *TO*, 5 April 1916. In 1922 one of the first four females to sit the Law Society examination included a Pembroke Dock lady, Mrs Pickup who was married to a Birmingham solicitor; *PCG*, 4 November 1922. The first Pembrokeshire woman to qualify as a doctor was Miss Margaret Swete of Fishguard who qualified in 1924; *WT*, 23 April 1924.

whom, 51,253, lived in rural districts.⁷⁵² Population growth was most marked in areas of pronounced economic development. Fishguard and Milford Haven experienced significant rises (1901-11) of 1,153 and 1,297 respectively on account of ferry communications and the vibrant fishing industry.⁷⁵³ The war placed very palpable pressure on the provision of community health services in Pembrokeshire, but also promoted opportunities for innovation.

A mosaic of organisations and institutions provided a fragmentary and often overlapping range of health care services before the war. The county council employed a Medical Officer of Health, as too did the urban and rural district councils. The Milford Port Sanitary Authority employed a medical practitioner, while poor-law sick wards and charitable hospitals provided bed respite for short -and long-stay patients. Most parishes helped to maintain district nursing associations, while friendly and provident societies maintained their financial viability and working-class allegiance. A rudimentary state primary health care service of sorts emerged from Part I of the 1911 National Insurance Act. Contributions from working men, women, employers and the state gave those earning less than £160 a year access to a designated medical practitioner and a sanatorium if they were suffering from tuberculosis.⁷⁵⁴ Cherry has noted how inadequate hospital provision was one of the scheme's most critical flaws.⁷⁵⁵ Mutual aid societies were mustered to administer the scheme which however only extended to cover one seventh of the working population.⁷⁵⁶ Each panel doctor had an average of 2,500 panel patients.⁷⁵⁷ Less than

⁷⁵² PP. 1916 (Cd.8206). *Seventy-seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages (England and Wales) 1914*.

⁷⁵³ PP. 1912-13 (Cd. 5705). *Census of England and Wales, 1911. Administrative areas, counties, urban and rural districts*.

⁷⁵⁴ Harris, *British Welfare State*, 163.

⁷⁵⁵ Steven Cherry, *Medical Services and the Hospitals in Britain 1860-1939* (Cambridge, 1996), 5.

⁷⁵⁶ Catherine Rollet, 'The Other War I; Protecting Public Health', *Capital Cities at War*, 425.

⁷⁵⁷ Cherry, *Medical Services and Hospitals*, 52.

ten per cent of women derived cover from the Act.⁷⁵⁸

The Pembrokeshire Insurance Committee administered the provisions of the Act where there were 27 doctors and an average of 20,978 insured persons.⁷⁵⁹ The county had 35 chemists on the panel on which there were 15,619 men and 7,425 women in 1918.⁷⁶⁰ The main locations of domiciliary care were the Haverfordwest and Pembrokeshire Infirmary and the Tenby Cottage Hospital, both charitable institutions. When the war broke out the governors of the county hospital offered the infirmary as a base hospital for the military with 40 of the 60 beds.⁷⁶¹ The rising cost of food, coal and drugs offered a real test of managerial skills and fund-raising schemes. In 1915-16 the infirmary cared for 139 inpatients and 436 outpatients.⁷⁶² When income rose to nearly £1,000 in 1916-17, capital purchases of a new operating table and aspirator were facilitated.⁷⁶³ The name of the hospital was changed to the 'Pembrokeshire County Hospital' in February 1918, with the avowed aim to rebuild as a living monument to the fallen.⁷⁶⁴ The Tenby Cottage Hospital, governed by the local clergy, genteel ladies and civic worthies, faced a shortage of funds in 1916.⁷⁶⁵

A web of nursing associations represented the second major strand of the mixed economy of local health care. Dwork describes a veritable boom in wartime health visiting during the war.⁷⁶⁶ The work of the district nurse was enabled by large-scale fund raising. A bazaar for the Walwyn's Castle District Nursing Association in 1915

⁷⁵⁸ Barbara Harrison, 'Women and Health', *Women's History: Britain*, 179.

⁷⁵⁹ *H&MHT*, 2 February 1916.

⁷⁶⁰ *PCG*, 1 November 1918.

⁷⁶¹ *PH*, 14 August 1914.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, 3 March 1916.

⁷⁶³ *H&MHT*, 28 February 1917.

⁷⁶⁴ *PCG*, 1 March 1918.

⁷⁶⁵ *TO*, 13 April 1916.

⁷⁶⁶ Deborah Dwork, *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children. A History of the Infant and Child Welfare Movement in England 1898-1918* (London, 1987), 231.

made £150.⁷⁶⁷ The increasing municipal involvement in health care, often facilitated by grant aid from Westminster, gave greater encouragement and support for associations. The Pembrokeshire Local Education Committee provided a grant of £6 to the Manorbier association on account of school visiting while the council gave £20 to aid the work at Granston and St Nicholas.⁷⁶⁸ The county council's Public Health and Housing Committee provided funds to associations in respect of each birth registered in district council areas.⁷⁶⁹ At one quarterly meeting of the county council held in August 1918, the Rev Evans went so far as to suggest the funding of district nursing associations directly out of the rates.⁷⁷⁰

Perhaps the greatest tribulation to the maintenance of local health services lay in procuring sufficient numbers of medical practitioners, doctors and nurses in the face of competing military demands, although one historian has claimed this had only a marginal effect.⁷⁷¹ Nationally 12,284 doctors served in the armed forces, while 14,718 continued to practice at home.⁷⁷² Access to a general practitioner, and not just in rural areas posed real difficulties. Remedies for medical vacancies included the bringing of doctors out of retirement and substitution. The tenor of the challenge was demonstrated when Dr H.O. Williams, the county Medical Officer of Health, applied for three months' leave of absence to enable him to serve at a Red Cross Hospital at the Front. This was not acceded to although members later changed their minds.⁷⁷³ When Dr Havard, Medical Officer of Health for the St Dogmaels Rural District Council, presented his annual report in April 1915, he disclosed how no school eye

⁷⁶⁷ *PH*, 13 August 1915.

⁷⁶⁸ *PH*, 8 February 1918.

⁷⁶⁹ PRO PCC/SE/32/2 Pembrokeshire County Council Public Health and Housing Committee minutes 1912-19; 7 October 1916. Fees paid to nursing associations were 12. 6d. per birth.

⁷⁷⁰ *PH*, 9 August 1918.

⁷⁷¹ Peter Dewey, *War and Progress. Britain 1914-1945* (Harlow, 1997), 36.

⁷⁷² Winter, *Great War and the British People*, 138.

⁷⁷³ PRO PCC/SE/32/2. Pembrokeshire County Council Public Health and Housing Committee 1912-19; 9 January 1915.

specialist was available 'in consequence of his departure on military duties.'⁷⁷⁴ A scarcity of doctors was complained about at Narberth in 1918 although the situation in Neyland was rather worse. The urban district council complained about the local practitioner, Dr Mordaunt Dundas who merely drove through town 'like a bird of passage.'⁷⁷⁵ The situation deteriorated until there was no doctor in town earning a protest from the representative of local approved societies.⁷⁷⁶

At Fishguard the Local Government Board approved the appointment of Dr Owen to replace Dr O'Donnell who had joined up.⁷⁷⁷ The dearth of doctors presented a real problem to the Pembroke Rural District Council. Substitution was resorted to with an Egyptian doctor in the borough by March 1917. One member reflected stoically 'In this time of war we must do the best we can.'⁷⁷⁸ Often medical services would be restricted and were only rarely discontinued entirely. The county school medical officer reported how only infants and school leavers would be routinely examined owing to the impossibility of securing a doctor to undertake that type of work.⁷⁷⁹ War conditions also changed established working patterns. In 1916 the Pembroke Borough Medical Officer changed his usual method of calculating the population given its highly fluid and mercurial nature.⁷⁸⁰

The school medical service was one facet of local health care which registered perceptible wartime improvements, so that childhood dependence was assumed to be much more of the state's responsibility. Hirst has noted how local education authorities had a greater duty to provide services, consolidating and extending the

⁷⁷⁴ *CE*, 8 April 1915.

⁷⁷⁵ *PCG*, 8 September 1916.

⁷⁷⁶ *H&MHT*, 30 January 1918.

⁷⁷⁷ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16; 18 October 1915.

⁷⁷⁸ *PCG*, 9 March 1917

⁷⁷⁹ PRO PCC/ED/11/6. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee School Medical Officer Annual Report 1916.

⁷⁸⁰ PRO PEM/SE/14/24. Pembroke Borough Council Medical Officer of Health Report 1915.

School Medical Service which was established by the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act of 1907.⁷⁸¹ A Government grant was extended to cover all costs with the local clinic the favoured method of provision.⁷⁸² Treatment became favoured over mere inspection. George Newman, Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education, noted how the service had emerged from the war fully vindicating its existence as a national scheme of preventative medicine. The opening of new school clinics in the county was noted, with one such facility at Pembroke in 1914 treating minor ailments.⁷⁸³

Pembrokeshire's School Medical Officer, Dr Hugh Owen Williams, was assisted by two other practitioners and school nurses. All told, the cost of elementary medical services in 1914-15 stood at £873 15s. a substantial increase on the previous year's figure of £752 2s.⁷⁸⁴ Increasing pressures on budgets were evident as expenditure at this cost centre fell to £725 7s. 7d. (1916-17) and £525 (1917-18).⁷⁸⁵ In 1915 staff consisted of an oculist, full-time school nurse, clerk and fifteen part-time nurses, not a great abundance of resources to superintend the 126 elementary schools across Pembrokeshire. Some 196 youngsters attended the Haverfordwest clinic in the first year suffering from a variety of conditions including malnutrition, tuberculosis and skin diseases.⁷⁸⁶ Routine inspection of children was discontinued, although more full-

⁷⁸¹ J. David Hirst, 'The Growth of Treatment through the School Medical Service, 1908-18', *Medical History* 33:3 (1989), 319.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, 338.

⁷⁸³ PP 1916 (Cd. 8338). *Annual Report for 1915 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education*.

⁷⁸⁴ PRO PCC/ED/11/62. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee Elementary Schools Medical Services Report 1914-15.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁶ PRO PCC/ED/11/5. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee Annual Report of the School Medical Officer 1915

time nurses were recruited and four part-time dentists.⁷⁸⁷

The status of mothers and infants as representing the nation's future strength, received far greater state attention and active direct social action. This major theme of the war has received considerable attention from scholarship; especially Deborah Dwork.⁷⁸⁸ She describes the social policies which acted as catalysts including improved mothercraft and education programmes. More recently, Miller's analysis of child welfare in Wigan has detected the importance of wartime measures, even if some of the trends were pre-war.⁷⁸⁹ The chief medical officer of the Local Government Board declared how the war had focused attention on the means of improving the health of mothers and children during the crucial first year of life.⁷⁹⁰ The Notification of Births Act was amended in July 1915 to require compulsory registration of births within 36 hours, while midwife training was made far more rigorous from 1916. The Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 perhaps best reflected the increase in maternalism in creating grant-aided antenatal and child welfare centres. Before the war the bulk of such work had been the preserve of voluntary endeavour.⁷⁹¹ The number of full-time health visitors rose from 600 to 1,355 (1914-18).⁷⁹²

The County Council's Public Health and Housing committee declined to establish consultation centres 'when doctors and nurses are so scarce' but gave priority to

⁷⁸⁷ PRO PCC/ED/11/8. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee Annual Report of the School Medical Officer 1918.

⁷⁸⁸ Deborah Dwork. *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: A History of the Infant and Child Welfare Movement in England 1898-1918* (New York, 1987).

⁷⁸⁹ <http://www.erinashleymiller.com/writing/the-effect-of-the-first-world-war-on-infant-health-in-wigan-england-abstract>.

⁷⁹⁰ J.M. Winter, 'The Impact of the First World War on Civilian Life in Britain', *EcHR* 30:3 (1977), 496.

⁷⁹¹ Jane Lewis, *The Politics of Motherhood. Child and Maternal Welfare in England, 1900-1939* (London, 1980), 133.

⁷⁹² Pat Thane, *The Foundations of the Welfare State* (London, 1982), 135.

recruiting more health visitors to visit mothers in their own homes.⁷⁹³ Two health visitors were appointed by a joint meeting of the public health and education committees held on 25 May 1917. Their duties included the supervision of district nurses, midwives, school nurses and visiting in all cases of tuberculosis. By October 1918 infant welfare centres had been established at twelve locations with weighing machines provided by the committee.⁷⁹⁴ The county council received a steady stream of directives from the Local Government Board and from borough and district councils. The Haverfordwest Rural District Council called for the doubling of grants to nursing associations.⁷⁹⁵

Considerations of national efficiency and destiny were powerful inducements to the improvement of juvenile health care and the status of motherhood. One correspondent advocated greater government action to carefully husband human resources so as to safeguard Britain's place in the world.⁷⁹⁶ One comic card, Illustration 13 purporting from Pembroke Dock, explicitly articulates children as a future military resource and the pre-war debate over degeneration and concerns for national efficiency.

⁷⁹³ PRO PCC/SE/32/2. Pembrokeshire County Council Public Health and Housing Committee 1912-19; 7 October 1916.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁵ PRO HAR/SE/2/3. Haverfordwest Rural District Council minutes 1917-26; 18 September 1918.

⁷⁹⁶ *TT*, 7 April 1916.



Illustration: 13 The linking of birth with future military needs on a comic postcard 1917.

Infant mortality was viewed as a national peril contributed to by working-class mothers who were routinely castigated for their carelessness and ignorance.⁷⁹⁷ The rhetoric of class prejudice exudes from national and local health reports. In 1915 Dr H.O. Williams condemned the deaths of so many babies as being utterly avoidable, and attributed blame to ignorant mothers and inactive sanitary authorities.⁷⁹⁸ More perspicacious observers noted environmental factors as the cause of much mortality.⁷⁹⁹ A national baby week was inaugurated on 2 July 1917 promoted using a variety of propaganda techniques. Baby Shows became *de rigueur*. 'Pram parades' became some more of the picturesque features for popularising the cult of the child.⁸⁰⁰ At Fishguard the baby show (Illustration 14 displays an entry form with an overtly patriotic message) held on 11 July 1917 was hailed as a great success. Dr Brigstocke

⁷⁹⁷ Lewis, *Politics of Motherhood*, 61.

⁷⁹⁸ *CE*, 21 January 1915.

⁷⁹⁹ *TT*, 18 November 1916.

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 25 July 1918.

spoke of the great waste of human life during the war and the necessity of bringing up healthy children to carry on the Empire.⁸⁰¹ The fete and baby show at Haverfordwest attracted 100 entrants.⁸⁰² One facetious columnist ridiculed the current fad for weighing, sorting and measuring babies, accompanied by the pathetic sight of mother's mopping their eyes in proud joy.⁸⁰³ Solva's first baby show offered prizes of war savings certificates.⁸⁰⁴ The war generated much greater state and local interest in maternity and infant welfare across Pembrokeshire.

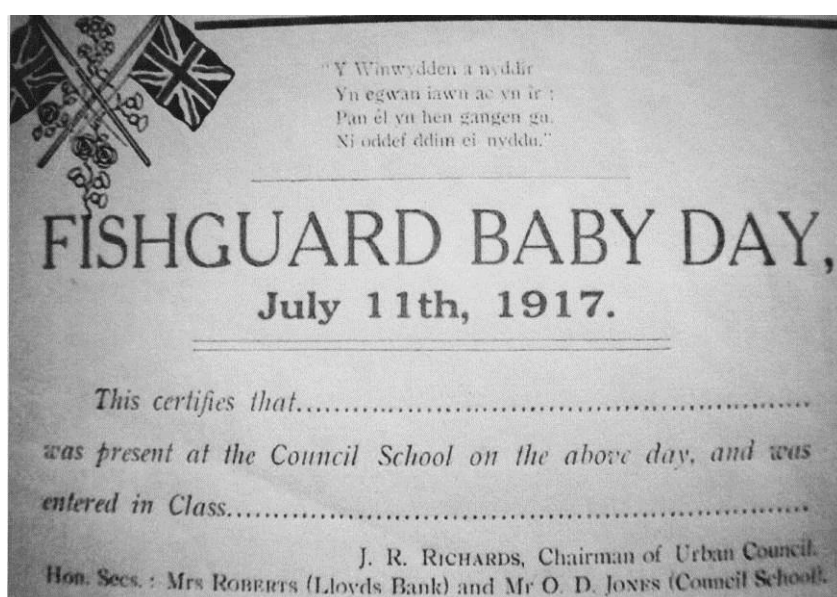


Illustration: 14 Entry form for the Baby Show at Fishguard, 11 July 1917 (Roy Lewis Collection).

Housing deficiencies, a major social problem before 1914, became a metaphor for the public health discourse which was widely articulated during wartime and a motif from hopes of Reconstruction.⁸⁰⁵ Wretched, insanitary living conditions were all-too common in Pembrokeshire, and indeed, Wales was seen as backward in terms of housing, becoming breeding grounds for all kinds of disease. Addressing a quarterly

⁸⁰¹ *CE*, 19 July 1917. John MacKenzie has demonstrated the widespread techniques in promoting the nationalist and imperialist ideologies, *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1986).

⁸⁰² *Ibid.*, 25 July 1918.

⁸⁰³ *PCG*, 6 September 1918.

⁸⁰⁴ *H&MHT*, 23 October 1918.

⁸⁰⁵ Philip Abrams, 'The Failure of Social Reform, 1918-20', *P&P*, 24 (1967), 44.

meeting of Pembrokeshire County Council in May 1918, General Sir Ivor Philipps considered the county to be in desperate need of new housing on a scale which would change the face of the whole county.⁸⁰⁶ There were few monthly or annual reports from medical professionals in council service which did not stress the need for better housing stock across boroughs, urban and rural districts. Even in salubrious Tenby the medical officer, Dr Knowling, reported on a number of dwellings unfit for human habitation.⁸⁰⁷

The Haverfordwest Medical Officer of Health, Dr Brigstocke, reported an alarming rise in tuberculosis, and the consequent closing of houses exacerbated the already chronic shortage of housing in the county town.⁸⁰⁸ A housing famine existed at Pembroke Dock with more than 500 names on the waiting lists of the Bush and Orierton estates.⁸⁰⁹ No houses had been built in the borough since 1911. Inspections revealed deficiencies even in better-condition stock. In the St Dogmaels Rural District Council, more than 600 house-to-house inspections carried out under the 1909 Town Planning Act, resulted in the issue of 183 statutory and 41 informal notices.⁸¹⁰ Rural housing was often every bit as insanitary and sub-standard as urban areas. The Pembroke Medical Officer of Health scrutinised 1,617 properties during the course of 1914-15.⁸¹¹ The development of the reconstruction agenda with proactive state planning and enablement employed an unabashed collectivist approach to this most basic societal problem. Two Local Government Board circulars of 28 July 1917 and 18 March 1918 related to schemes for the provision of working -class housing at the end of the war. The prospect of state aid to defray loan repayments was a major

⁸⁰⁶ *PH*, 10 May 1918.

⁸⁰⁷ *TO*, 28 January 1915.

⁸⁰⁸ *H&MHT*, 5 August 1914.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 25 July 1917.

⁸¹⁰ *CE*, 8 April 1915

⁸¹¹ PRO PEM/SE/14/24. Pembroke Borough Council Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1915.

catalyst in stimulating municipal interest.

A major housing conference of local authorities was held on 8 September 1917, when rural district councils especially were urged to bring forward schemes. The war did not create the novelty of council housing. The Haverfordwest Borough Council perhaps deserve the kudos as pioneers in this provision, considering selling property to release funds and later building Stepney Terrace at Prendergast in 1911-12. The Narberth Urban District Council erected twenty houses, although in the process were losing £30 a year on the project.⁸¹² The Haverfordwest Borough Council estimated their minimum need as 50 dwellings, while Milford Haven's was thought to be 200.⁸¹³ The Haverfordwest Rural District Council decided to build 160 houses, adding that private individuals ought to have the facility to borrow Government money in order to build in rural districts.⁸¹⁴ The Tenby Corporation made efforts to develop Broadwell Hayes before the war, but when they considered the matter again in 1918, the cost of their proposed fourteen houses had doubled to £6,000 from the pre-war estimate of £3,021.⁸¹⁵

Wartime opinion was expressed through the Housing and Town Planning Act which required local authorities to survey their needs and offered subsidies for the erection of working- class housing. Pembrokeshire councils submitted schemes with alacrity to the new Ministry of Health (which succeeded the Local Government Board) with 113 schemes covering 68.60 acres.⁸¹⁶ Milford Haven made a start by borrowing £50,000

⁸¹² *PCG*, 14 September 1917,

⁸¹³ *H&MHT*, 25 July 1917,

⁸¹⁴ PRO HAR/SE/2/3. Haverfordwest Rural District Council minutes 1917-26; 9 October 1917.

⁸¹⁵ *TO*, 3 October 1918.

⁸¹⁶ PP. 1920 (Cd. 510, 512, 596, 649, 728, 809, 883, 938, 979) *Housing Schemes submitted to the Ministry of Health by local authorities and public utility societies up to 29 November 1919.*

from the Public Works Loans Works in 1920-21.⁸¹⁷ Nationally, the ambitious house-building programme became a major casualty of the public spending post-war economies. Only 223,000 new houses were constructed (1918-23) a mere 23 per cent of the estimated shortage calculated in 1919.⁸¹⁸ Haverfordwest Rural District Council did not achieve their contemplated 160 dwellings. In fact only twelve were ever constructed by 1920 with most of the earmarked sites being abandoned. More might have been achieved if the district surveyor had not exhibited singular carelessness in allowing plans to drop out of the hood of his car and subsequently lost.⁸¹⁹

Perhaps the most popularly remembered single feature of wartime and immediate post-war health experience was the terrible influenza pandemic of 1918-19.⁸²⁰ The visitation had no overt connection with military hostilities striking neutrals and belligerents alike other than perhaps one of sheer contingency. The ‘Spanish flu’ or ‘Flanders’s fever’ was particularly virulent in the county in two waves, July and October 1918.⁸²¹ Young women were particularly vulnerable. Nationally the epidemic claimed 228,917 victims. The visit of the ‘Spanish lady’ became an intrinsic part of the community folk-memory even if direct correlation to the war is difficult to sustain.⁸²² At Newport the pestilence struck down Russian Finns felling timber at

⁸¹⁷ PP. 1921. *Public Works Loan Board. Forty-sixth annual report of the Public Works Loan Board 1920-21.*

⁸¹⁸ Stephen Merrett, *State Housing in Britain* (London, 1979), 41.

⁸¹⁹ H.J. Dickman, *Haverfordwest Rural District Council. History of the Council 1894-1974* (Haverfordwest, 1976), 37.

⁸²⁰ The pandemic has generated much academic research in recent years including Nial Johnson, *Britain and the 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic: A Dark Epilogue* (London, 2006) which also examines the cultural dimensions; John M. Barry, *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* (2009); E.C. Rosenow and S.H. Shakman, *Studies in Influenza and Pneumonia: Pandemic 1918-1919* (2014). The major early text was Richard Collier, *Plague of the Spanish Lady: Influenza Pandemic, October 1918- January 1919* (1974). Most historians agree that although not directly attributable to the war, the war nevertheless imposed strain upon medical services which made them less able to cope.

⁸²¹ Rollet, ‘The Other War: II’, *Capital Cities at War*, 482.

⁸²² Alice Reid, ‘The Effects of the 1918-19 Influenza Pandemic on Infant and Child Welfare in Derbyshire’, *Medical History*, 49 (2005), 30.

Llwyngwair woods and caused the cancellation of concerts and empty classrooms.⁸²³

Pembrokeshire schools were badly affected, a phenomenon which was county wide and as true for rural and urban areas alike. For example at the rural Barham School, fully 80 per cent of the pupils had come down with the illness in December 1918.⁸²⁴

A review of living and working conditions reveals how varied the social impact of the war in Pembrokeshire was. The prosperity of the agricultural sector did not outlive the 1920s so that by the end of the decade a slump had certainly set in. Likewise the decline in the incidence in poverty seemed a remote hope during the 1930s following the closure of Pembroke dockyard, when a full third of the national insurance payers in Pembroke Borough were without employment. The lowest paid in Pembrokeshire did experience greater relative gains than others. There was a serious outflow of population during the decade. The municipal interest in corporate built housing did not persist beyond the early 1920s, when national government initiated a programme of austerity and retrenchment. Nor did female employment in the county experience anything like liberation, as the Pembrokeshire County Council voted to dispense with the services of married women teachers in 1922.⁸²⁵ Modest long-term changes included the renewed interest in pre-and post-natal health services, building on the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918. Thus Pembrokeshire did not witness long-term war-driven change in the fundamentals of agriculture, employment or living conditions.

⁸²³ *CE*, 31 October 1918.

⁸²⁴ PRO SSR/1/136/2. Llanfairnantygof-Barham Voluntary School logbook 1902-21; 5/6 December 1918.

⁸²⁵ *PT*, 25 January 1922.

Chapter III

Military Recruitment

The enlistment of five million men into the armed services, whether as volunteers or conscripts, perhaps offered the greatest scope for social change through labour displacement and concomitant economic and political adjustment. Every sinew of the national and local state was stretched to ensure the provision of recruits without a deleterious effect on munitions output or foodstuffs to maintain the home front. One of the most enduring cultural metaphors of twentieth-century British history is of massed crowds of enthusiastic young men besieging recruiting offices, the most visible expression of war fever or enthusiasm. The motivation of individuals to join up during the years of voluntary enlistment, and then the apparatus and operational effectiveness of the military service tribunals, are important aspects of First World War historiography.⁸²⁶ Pennell's recent work has made an important contribution in understanding national responses in recent years.⁸²⁷ This chapter explores the impact of voluntary and compulsory military service and how the treatment of conscientious objection articulated societal, religious and cultural attitudes. Key to understanding recruitment in Pembrokeshire is the extent of conformity to the national pattern of

⁸²⁶ Dewey alludes to the enlistment of one million men by the end of 1914, 'Military Recruiting and the British Labour Force during the First World War', *HJ* 27:1 (1984), 199; Grieves similarly cites evidence of mass enthusiasm in a rural context in 'Lowther's Lambs': Rural Paternalism and Voluntary Recruitment in the First World War', *Rural History* 4:1 (1993), 58. More recently Gregory has dismissed war enthusiasm as a phenomenon and gives a good deal more weight to ambivalence and ambiguity in typical responses to the conflict. *The Last Great War. British Society and the First World War* (2008), 33. The social aspects of the army are comprehensively covered 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). In the volume Simkins has analysed the interface between soldiers and civilians through billeting, 165-192. Simkins has contributed *Kitchener's Army: The Raising of the New Armies, 1914-1916* (Manchester, 1988). Likewise, Pennell's review article in *War in History* (2009) makes an important contribution as does her analysis of *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012).

⁸²⁷ Catriona Pennell, 'British Society and the First World War', in *War in History*, 16:4 (2009), 506-18; 'Why we are at War: Justifying War in Britain, 1914,' in David Welch (ed.), *Justifying War: Propaganda, politics and the Modern Age* (Basingstoke, 2012) 95-108; *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012).

recruiting trends with reference to a locality and, after 1916, with the congruity of Pembrokeshire tribunals with their national counterparts. The extent of female military participation in a comparatively remote locality as Pembrokeshire is considered in the wider debate of female encroachment on hitherto male spheres. The whole business of recruitment connected class, age, religious affiliation and occupational function, as well as classifying and constructing male bodies according to their bodily utility for war. Much of the information in this chapter is gleaned from local newspapers, composite documents which combined editorial control, correspondence, reportage and a variety of sub-genres.

Voluntary Enlistment 1914-16

Gregory alludes to the remarkable resilience of the myth of widespread bellicosity perpetuated by Parker, Reader and a host of other historians who accepted the idea of unfettered enthusiasm arising from the declaration of war on 4 August 1914.⁸²⁸ Leed views the events that month as the last encounter with the ‘people’ as a moral entity.⁸²⁹ Ferguson questions the very existence of war enthusiasm, offering his alternative explanation of anxiety, trepidation and even of religious millenarianism.⁸³⁰ Pennell’s recent study has disclosed a far from uniform response from across Britain and Ireland.⁸³¹ As Evans has shown for Wales, despite the much vaunted patriotism, responses were not ones of universal and non-critical enthusiasm.⁸³² An examination of the patterns of military recruitment in Pembrokeshire suggests that, as elsewhere,

⁸²⁸ Adrian Gregory, ‘British War Enthusiasm’ in 1914: a Reassessment’, in Gail Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History and the Great War* (Oxford, 2003), 67.

⁸²⁹ Eric J. Leed, *No Man’s Land. Combat and Identity in World War I* (Cambridge, 1979), 39.

⁸³⁰ Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, (Harmondsworth, 1998) 177.

⁸³¹ Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012).

⁸³² Neil Evans, ‘Loyalties: State, nation, community and military recruitment in Wales, 1840-1918’, in Matthew Cragoe and Chris Williams (eds.), *Wales and the War. Society, Politics and religion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cardiff, 2007), 46.

military recruitment was expressed as a response to social, political, economic and cultural factors which will be explored.⁸³³

Townsley makes a plea for the place of region to be emphasised within First World War British literature. The local needs to be fully appreciated as areas of economic and social individuality which are cohesive with a specific cultural identity. They can do much to clarify and inform national experiences of war.⁸³⁴ The regional Welsh response, and that of Pembrokeshire, draws attention to different regional and local patterns which help us to understand the importance of the local as well as regional barriers to recruitment. Here the rejoinder to national emergency was grounded in religious, cultural and linguistic contexts. During the first sixteen months of war, Wales produced 122,995 recruits or 21.5 per cent of the adult male population, similar to the United Kingdom average.⁸³⁵ Some 12,724 joined the Welsh Territorial forces during the first quarter of the war.⁸³⁶ Barlow takes issue with Morgan's depiction of a unified nation throwing themselves into it with gusto amidst heights of hysteria 'rarely matched in other parts of the kingdom.'⁸³⁷ Rather, Wales was a laggard compared to England and Scotland, with Barlow suggesting that a high proportion of Welsh enlistees were English.⁸³⁸ It would be dangerous to assume the ethnicity of enlistees even in predominantly Welsh-speaking areas. Evans detects slow recruitment in Anglesey and west Wales with initial recruitment rates being distinctly

⁸³³ Nicholas Mansfield, *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism 1900-1930* (Aldershot, 2001), 79.

⁸³⁴ Helen Townsley, *The First World War and Voluntary Recruitment: A Forum for Regional Identity? An Analysis of the Nature, Expression and Significance of Regional Identity in Hull 1900-1916*. PhD Thesis, University of Sussex (2008), 39.

⁸³⁵ Mari A. Williams, 'In the Wars: Wales 1914-1945,' in Gareth Elwyn Jones and Dai Smith (eds), *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), 181.

⁸³⁶ *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire in the Great War* (London, 1922), 365.

⁸³⁷ Robin Barlow, 'Did Wales Go Willingly to the First World War?' in H.V. Bowen (ed.), *A New History of Wales. Myths and Realities in Welsh History* (Llansydul, 2011), 150.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*, 154.

shallow.⁸³⁹ This is corroborated by Parry's study of Gwynedd where only 60 recruits were obtained in Caernarvonshire over a ten-day period.⁸⁴⁰ The general rural versus urban dichotomy is amply demonstrated in south Wales where something more like enthusiasm prevailed.⁸⁴¹ According to the *Western Mail*, Cardiff experienced a strong wave of patriotism in August.⁸⁴² A month later there seemed no diminution in the temper where the call to arms met with a ready response.⁸⁴³ Some of this can doubtless be attributed to wartime hyperbole with exaggeration to encourage emulation in other localities. At Swansea 'unbounded' energy of recruitment saw around 4,000 men enlist.⁸⁴⁴

Although the county did have a long tradition of military service with paternalistic gentry-tenant relations, especially in the south, a number of different factors affected recruitment. Measuring the phenomenon of war-enthusiasm in Pembrokeshire is a difficult task given the paucity of central recruiting records. In Pembrokeshire there was no immediate rush to the colours, but rather a rush to the coastline to garrison the necklace of Palmerston-era forts. The most noticeable military activity lay in the call up of reservists. At Tenby 28 reservists of the Royal Navy Reserve received notices to join the Fleet.⁸⁴⁵ At Haverfordwest the Territorials were given an enthusiastic send-off from the Drill Hall.⁸⁴⁶ The open area was ideal for military displays, such public demonstrations representing a subliminal recruiting opportunity while advertising the martial credentials of the county town, for centuries the hub of local defence forces

⁸³⁹ Evans, 'Loyalties, State, Nation', 58.

⁸⁴⁰ Cyril Parry, 'Gwynedd and the Great War, 1914-1918', *WHR*, (1987), 88.

⁸⁴¹ Chris Williams discusses the 'Welshness' of various regiments during the war in 'Taffs in the Trenches: Welsh National Identity and Military Service, 1914-18', in Cragoe and Williams (eds), *Wales and the War*, 126-164.

⁸⁴² *WM*, 6 August 1914; According to Terry Charman some 1,544 recruits joined up at Cardiff between 23 and 29 August, Terry Charman *The First World War on the Home Front* (London, 2014), 41.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, 4 September 1914.

⁸⁴⁴ *SWDN*, 12 September 1914.

⁸⁴⁵ *TO*, 6 August 1914.

⁸⁴⁶ *PH*, 7 August 1914.

(Illustration 15). It was several weeks before there were significant enlistments and the immediate public impact was limited.



Illustration: 15 Troops of the 5th Welsh, parade outside the Drill Hall, Jubilee Gardens, Haverfordwest, in April 1915.

The chronology of voluntary enlistments in Pembrokeshire discloses a similar chronology to the national and regional scene, with heightened activity in late August and early September, although it is difficult to be precise about the proportion of the overall male population who responded to the recruiting call. A recruiting office was opened in the main population centres including Pembroke Drill Hall.⁸⁴⁷ Another opened at Goodwick police station around the same time.⁸⁴⁸ By 9 September 1914 around 300 men had enlisted in the New Army through Haverfordwest, with no fewer

⁸⁴⁷ *TO*, 20 August 1914.

⁸⁴⁸ *CE*, 20 August 1914.

than 21 recruits being adherents of the Haverfordwest Wesleyan Methodist Chapel.⁸⁴⁹ The total rose to 500 by 23 September.⁸⁵⁰ At Milford Haven there was marked enthusiasm with 64 recruits coming forward (Illustration 16) at a meeting, although a significant number had been rejected on medical grounds.⁸⁵¹ By any peacetime standards these figures would represent an abnormal degree of recruitment and therefore demonstrate a local response to the national emergency. The Pembrokeshire Yeomanry and Royal Garrison Artillery drew a high percentage of local enlistments during the era of elective military service. The extent of local recruiting was revealed by Sir Charles Philipps, when he announced in late August, how the county had contributed 250 men to the Yeomanry, 215 to the RGA, 252 to the 4th Welsh and a further 411 army reservists.⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁹ *H&MHT*, 16 September 1914.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 23 September 1914.

⁸⁵¹ *PH*, 11 September 1914.

⁸⁵² *H&MHT*, 26 August 1914.



Illustration: 16 The batch of new recruits, who stepped forward at the recruiting rally at Milford Haven in September 1914, are accompanied to the station by enthusiastic crowds. (Photograph courtesy of Milford Haven Museum).

Local recruitment rates declined sharply with the introduction of minimum height restrictions. At Haverfordwest the recruiting sergeant rejected a dozen short, thick-set, robust men from Milford Haven, otherwise of fine physique, an oblique reference to the physiology of many working-class volunteers.⁸⁵³

A considerable debate rests upon what motivated men to join the armed forces in such unprecedented numbers, which, despite regional and local variations, encompassed common stimuli. Beckett has identified the importance of patriotism, the militarisation of schools and youth organisations before the war and the role of press

⁸⁵³ *H&MHT*, 23 September 1914. This debate is well covered in Roderick Floud, Kenneth Wachter and Annabel Gregory, *Height, Health and History. Nutritional Standards in the United Kingdom 1750-1980* (Cambridge, 1990),

and popular literature.⁸⁵⁴ Farr considers a straightforward and unquestioning patriotism as the primary inducement to enlist, together with the allure of adventure and desire to escape the drudgery of working-class life. Some sectors of employment witnessed high recruitment rates. By July 1916 the average sector enlistment rates for commerce, manufacturing and agriculture were 41, 30 and 22 per cent respectively.⁸⁵⁵ For Dewey the age-structure of employment explains differences.⁸⁵⁶

The total absences of personal records indicating what factors motivated Pembrokeshire recruits is a serious handicap, and we rely upon a variety of nationally-cited factors which are often cited. The enlistment of meek, hollow-chested and morally fallible clerks into the vanguard of Kitchener's New Armies became a classic cultural stereotype of the new volunteerism.⁸⁵⁷ The best analysis of working-class attitudes to the war has been contributed by Silbey. He detects a genuine nationalism rather than the product of social imperialist manipulation.⁸⁵⁸ Men alluded to a variety of motives to justify their voluntarism including a belief in defending family, neighbourhood and class obligations. Travel offered tempting possibilities for adventure while strong anecdotal evidence suggests strong economic motives, regular wages, as a powerful factor.⁸⁵⁹ A sense of filial obligation and personal loyalty to localities could be an important factor. No herd instinct was manifest in the rush to the colours but rather an internal impetus which came from within individuals and not necessarily a response to outside pressures.⁸⁶⁰ Barlow suggests that despite its

⁸⁵⁴ Beckett, 'The British Army, 1914-18: the Illusion of Change', 103. The key text in the debate on the militarisation of society before the war belongs to Ann Summers, 'Militarism in Britain Before the Great War', *History Workshop* 2, (1976), 104-123.

⁸⁵⁵ P.E. Dewey, 'Military Recruiting and the British Labour Force during the First World War,' *HJ* 27:1 (1984), 204.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 218.

⁸⁵⁷ Jonathan Wild, 'A Merciful and Heaven-Sent Release?' *Cultural and Social History*, 4:1 (2007), 73.

⁸⁵⁸ David Silbey, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War 1914-1916* (London, 2005), 8.

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 124.

emotional intensity, recruiting appeals seemed misplaced in broadly Liberal, Nonconformist Wales.⁸⁶¹ The complete lack of diaries from Pembrokeshire recruits ensure we have the unsatisfactory task of looking at the overall context.

Nevertheless press and pulpit appeals were probably influential. Given the overall socio-economic composition of the county, we can be reasonably assured that working-class men constituted the great majority of enlistees. A list of 166 recruits who joined at Haverfordwest during the first week of September 1914 reveals their homes to be in distinctly artisanal areas like Merlin's Bridge, Albert Town, St Thomas Green, North Street and Castle Back.⁸⁶² There is evidence of clerical staff responding to the call for recruits. Two sons of the Haverfordwest Borough toll collector, one a commercial clerk and the other a solicitor's clerk, joined up in early September.⁸⁶³ Numbers of local businesses did experience serious depletion of labour as a result of the sharp rise in enlistments in early September. The local *Telegraph* soon had five men serving with the army.⁸⁶⁴ A spatial, occupational and occasionally religious solidarity was often expressed through enlistments. Communities were praised for sending a high percentage of men to the colours. The village of Hubberston, Milford Haven, had 34 residents on active service, of which one had been killed by March 1915.⁸⁶⁵ With a population of only 580, Manorbier had sent in 70 recruits of whom eighteen were actually at the front.⁸⁶⁶ Similarly, St Ishmaels and Lamphey parishes, with populations of 315 and 230 respectively had 39 and 32 men serving.⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶¹ Barlow, 'Did Wales Go Willingly to the First World War?' 151.

⁸⁶² *H&MHT*, 9 September 1914.

⁸⁶³ *PH*, 4 September 1914.

⁸⁶⁴ *H&MHT*, 9 December 1914.

⁸⁶⁵ *PH*, 12 March 1915.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 April 1915.

⁸⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 26 February 1915.

A web of recruiting agents and committees often rendered the decision to volunteer a parochial affair, although in Pembrokeshire little structure was in place until March 1915 when the supply of recruits started to dwindle. Many borough and parish councils formed themselves into recruiting committees in response to appeals from the PRC or Lord Lieutenant. In 1915, Newport parish council appointed a recruiting committee.⁸⁶⁸ Parish clerks often doubled up as the local agent, as occurred at Lampeter Velfrey.⁸⁶⁹ Llangwm, Angle, Martletwy, Bletherston, Templeton and Jeffreyton followed suit, but not all responses were so positive, perhaps reflecting some sparsely populated parishes where all men folk were working the land. St Nicholas and Granston council advised that there were no local men available who could be spared without neglecting the farms.⁸⁷⁰

The dynamics of traditional hierarchical power relationships between landowners and tenants can be inferred in some rural recruiting. Grieves discusses the possible moral direction by men of influence, where the prestige of land ownership still had a military equivalence.⁸⁷¹ Several employees of the Picton Castle Estate had volunteered by early September, while in February 1915 one gamekeeper and two gardeners from the Williamston Estate, Burton and two carpenters from St Bride's had joined up.⁸⁷² These were estate home farm enlistments and not tenants' sons. Landowner influences were often crucial in rural areas, although the numbers enlisting could be seen as a response to the escape from the land, especially since the consensus of opinion points to the declining influence of the landed classes in

⁸⁶⁸ PRO SPC/1/1. Newport Parish Council minutes 1894-1931; 19 April 1915.

⁸⁶⁹ PRO HSPC/3/1. Lampeter Velfrey Parish Council minutes 1895-1925; 22 March 1915.

⁸⁷⁰ PRO SPC/29/1. St Nicholas and Granston Parish Council 1894-1974; 27 March 1915.

⁸⁷¹ Keith Grieves, 'Lowther's Lambs': Rural Paternalism and Voluntary Recruitment in the First World War', *Rural History*, 4:1 (1993), 58.

⁸⁷² *H&MHT*, 10 February 1915.

Wales.⁸⁷³ At best this influence can be judged to be circumstantial, with the absence of direct landowner pressure on tenant.

Behind the appeal for volunteers for military service lay a complex network of agencies and organisations, which can be delineated from the national Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (PRC) at one end of the spectrum, right down to parish committees and village recruiting agents at the other. Thus recruiting in Pembrokeshire was a locally-organised affair. The PRC was represented by committees in each Parliamentary constituency. Pembrokeshire thus had two parallel bodies, one of the County and the other Boroughs. Nor were rallies and public agitation necessarily as potent in persuading young men to join up. The antidote to a recruiting slump was unlikely to be countered by military bands, whose morale-boosting qualities were strictly transient.⁸⁷⁴ Gregory sees a certain congruity between recruiting meetings and religious revivals where decisions being taken in public were vital parts of the meeting dynamic.⁸⁷⁵

The local experience was that heightened rhetoric at recruiting meetings rarely translated into large numbers of volunteers. The meeting at Milford Haven, when 65 recruits came forth, seems exceptional in that respect.⁸⁷⁶ Illustration 16 captures a rare image of a number of these recruits marching to the railway station. A few recruits were secured at Newport, when local worthy Mr G.B. Bowen of Llwyngwair and the local member, Mr Walter Roch addressed the crowd with ‘eloquent and impassioned speeches’.⁸⁷⁷ A great recruiting effort at Fishguard Temperance Hall on 5 December

⁸⁷³ David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1990) gives a national perspective which was undoubtedly true of the Welsh experience.

⁸⁷⁴ *TT*, 11 November 1914.

⁸⁷⁵ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 75.

⁸⁷⁶ *H&MHT*, 9 September 1914.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 16 September 1914.

1914 came complete with impassioned pleas from Baptist, Calvinistic Methodist and local Anglican clergy for young men to do their duty, although the success of this effort is impossible to judge.⁸⁷⁸ Some effort was made to engage audiences in the Welsh language through special posters which were distributed in north Pembrokeshire in January 1915.⁸⁷⁹ In Pembrokeshire there is some evidence for a revival in recruiting by the spring of 1915, but nothing approaching the levels of the previous autumn. Using the example of Gwynedd, Parry notes how recruiting had become a much more difficult business by then.⁸⁸⁰ In February 1915 there were 87,896 enlistments which rose to 113,907 the following month.⁸⁸¹ It rose to 135,263 in May, although with the Gallipoli campaign in full swing, even these levels were insufficient.

In Pembrokeshire voluntary enlistment improved up to the summer of 1915, perhaps on the slipstream of the *Lusitania* outrage on 7 May. Thanks to the exertions of Major Eaton Evans, the local recruiting officer, some 21 recruits signed on at Haverfordwest in one week, the most for some time.⁸⁸² Overall, 42 men enlisted over a ten-day period with a couple of dozen at Narberth.⁸⁸³ At Fishguard 21 men had volunteered over a three-week period, possibly influenced by a recruiting meeting where one speaker described the victims of the *Lusitania* crying out for vengeance.⁸⁸⁴ The dying moments of a wounded soldier, graphically portrayed by a Corporal at Tenby's third wartime rally on 26 June 1915, although edifying, were with hindsight perhaps not the best means of inducing men to come forward. Six did so, but only three actually

⁸⁷⁸ *CE*, 10 December 1914.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1915.

⁸⁸⁰ Parry, 'Gwynedd and the Great War', 88-89.

⁸⁸¹ Reader, *At Duty's Call*, 102.

⁸⁸² *PCG*, 19 February 1915.

⁸⁸³ *H&MHT*, 24 February 1915.

⁸⁸⁴ *CE*, 10 June 1915.

followed up their promise on the Monday morning.⁸⁸⁵ The Yeomanry and Territorials continued to be the favoured destination for recruits. Nearly 30 Saundersfoot men joined the Pembrokeshire RGA in July 1915.⁸⁸⁶ By the summer of 1915 around 900 local men had enlisted, excluding the aforementioned units, with the county toll of fallen amounting to five officers and 64 men.⁸⁸⁷

Individual responses to appeals for voluntary enlistment would determine whether society would bestow its approbation or censure on the subject. A moral chasm separated the volunteer from the ‘shirker.’ Those who volunteered for military service were hailed as fulfilling the duties of both masculinity and citizenship. Their selflessness saw the triumph of patriotic ideals and helped to shape, as Watson and Porter describe, the ideology of sacrifice.⁸⁸⁸ The latter was a diffuse body of values, concepts and themes culminating in the righteousness of laying down one’s life for a greater cause.⁸⁸⁹ The British soldier, the honest Tommy (as pictured by a private in the 4th Welsh in Illustration 17), was portrayed as a brave knight on a chivalric crusade, which Bet-El states, created the synonymy of masculinity and soldiering.⁸⁹⁰ A clear and distinct social classification equated the volunteer with manliness and sacrifice while the shirker was portrayed as less than a man, selfish and sybaritic. The latter was described as the ‘Can’t Leave Mother Brigade,’ which included eligible Pembrokeshire farmers’ sons whose mothers would not let them enlist which ‘makes

⁸⁸⁵ *TO*, 1 July 1915.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 July 1915.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 20 August 1915.

⁸⁸⁸ Alexander Watson and Patrick Porter, ‘Bereaved and Aggrieved: combat motivation and the ideology of sacrifice in the First World War’, *HR* 83:219 (2010), 147.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁰ Ilana Bet-El, ‘Men and Soldiers: British Conscripts, Concepts of Masculinity and the Great War’, in Billie Melman (ed.), *Borderlines, Genders and Identities in War and Peace, 1870-1930* (London, 1998), 74; Anthony Fletcher discusses the concepts of manliness and patriotism built upon Christian gentility and Social Darwinism, in the wider context from the Victorian period up to the 1930s and argues how the Great War activated notions of patriotism but tested them to the utmost, *Journal of the Historical Association* 2014, 140-150.

people who hate the word conscription begin to think that nothing else will cause the burden of national defence to be fairly adjusted'.⁸⁹¹ Farmers were accused in the press of getting their sons to work on the farm and in so doing release their labourers for the front.

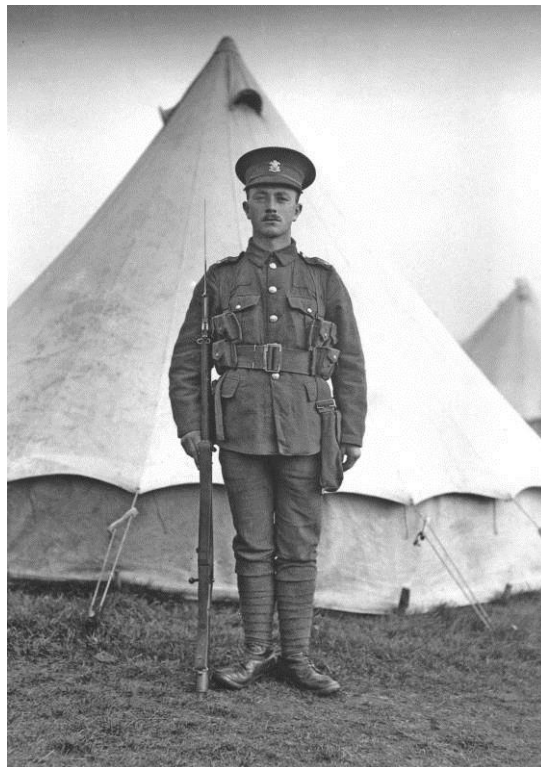


Illustration: 17 Private Francis of the 4th Welsh, Haverfordwest, the epitome of the honest patriotic citizen and volunteer.

In Pembrokeshire, laudable examples of voluntary enlistment, or merely the offer of service were given widespread currency in local press so as to serve as an example which young men should aspire to. At Fishguard 80-year old Charles Lawrence, a veteran of Sevastopol (1855), offered himself to the state as an example to younger men to come forward.⁸⁹² Adolescent recruits marked the other end of the spectrum. In Fishguard fourteen-year old Willie Hier became the county's youngest-known

⁸⁹¹ *PCG*, 21 May 1915.

⁸⁹² *PH*, 21 August 1914.

recruit.⁸⁹³ Families with a high number of men folk in khaki were highlighted in the local press as offering powerful proof of nobility and, above all, that most versatile and inclusive term, patriotism. The Lewis family of Fishguard (Illustration 18) was exceptional with seven sons serving or offering to serve.⁸⁹⁴ Special favour was bestowed upon those who left comfortable employment to enlist, and newspaper coverage was prominently given. In November 1915, James Folland of Hook, who was earning £9 10s. a month in the United States, returned of his own volition to join the Royal Navy when war broke out.⁸⁹⁵ Despite having a wife and seven children, Mr John of Penally, a gardener, enlisted and was applauded for his patriotic act.⁸⁹⁶ Voluntary enlistment received powerful endorsement from schools and local authorities. At Croesgoch in November 1914, two male teachers were congratulated when they enlisted.⁸⁹⁷ The rector of Prendergast praised the 100 local men on active service with unbridled religiosity, as elevating, purifying and leavening society by their spirit of sacrifice.⁸⁹⁸

⁸⁹³ *CE*, 24 September 1914.

⁸⁹⁴ *CE*, 4 November 1915.

⁸⁹⁵ *H&MHT*, 10 November 1915.

⁸⁹⁶ *TO*, 28 January 1915.

⁸⁹⁷ PRO SSM/1/108. Croesgoch Council School Manager's minutes 1904-20; 12 November 1914.

⁸⁹⁸ PRO HPR/71/8. Prendergast Parish minutes and accounts 1898-1918; 5 April 1915.

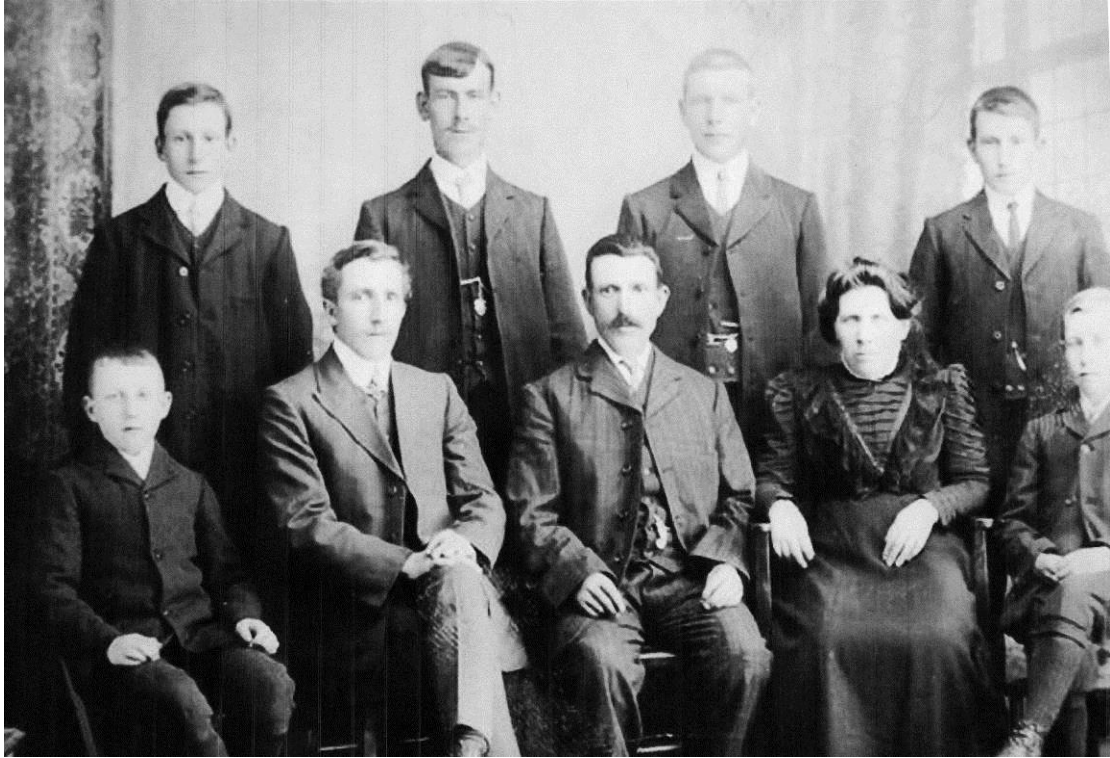


Illustration: 18 The patriotic Lewis family of Fishguard, who had seven sons in military service. (Photograph courtesy of Mr Roy Lewis).

Not everyone who heard the call responded. When a recruiting meeting at Neyland only produced one recruit, the local Presbyterian minister overcame his Nonconformist conscience and expressed himself in favour of Conscription.⁸⁹⁹ Bitter invective was used against those who chose not to enlist and take a share in the defence of their country.⁹⁰⁰ Gregory alludes to the emergence of new terms of social opprobrium, noting ‘shirker’ (first recorded 29 August 1914) and ‘slacker’ (5 September).⁹⁰¹ At some point in 1914-15, he asserts, every fit man of military age would have to rationalise to himself why he was not in uniform. Action to tackle the ‘loafers’ came from the popular press.⁹⁰² In Pembrokeshire, many hundreds of young single men of military age who were not in uniform still had time to attend

⁸⁹⁹ *PCG*, 4 June 1915.

⁹⁰⁰ *TT*, 27 August 1914.

⁹⁰¹ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 90.

⁹⁰² Silbey, ‘Bodies and Cultures.’ 72.

agricultural shows which continued to be held into 1915. As elsewhere, they were depicted as the antithesis of manly courage.

Although the county had responded fairly well, with the towns generally being more receptive than rural areas to the volunteering campaign, much more, it was felt by senior military and civic leaders, could be done. Apathy was the prevailing emotion in some parts of west Wales with few public meetings or responsible committees.⁹⁰³ In such matters the urban seemed always to chide the countryside. Major Delme Davies of the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry expressed his exasperation at the slow recruitment, with the regiment 260 men short of its establishment.⁹⁰⁴ Lord St David's was outspoken in his opinion of how laggard the agricultural community had been.⁹⁰⁵ He deplored the keeping back of farmers' sons by the parents. There was a remarkable growth in the avocation of shepherding amongst such young men, for whom a suit of khaki was considered more appropriate attire.⁹⁰⁶ There was intense demand for the male body and its appropriation for clothing with the sign of community defence. Numbers of farm labourers had indeed taken the King's shilling, but only a few, it was claimed, were actually Pembrokeshire men.⁹⁰⁷ The presence of hundreds of single men at the major agricultural fairs was roundly condemned.⁹⁰⁸ The Pembrokeshire response during the first year of voluntary enlistment, as can be elucidated principally from newspaper sources, was distinctly patchy. Urban areas responded better than rural ones, although this may have been a reflection of demographics and the labour-intensive nature of agriculture. The last phase of voluntary enlistment came with the compilation of the National Register, an assessment of the manpower pool, since

⁹⁰³ *PH*, 4 December 1914.

⁹⁰⁴ *WM*, 1 October 1914.

⁹⁰⁵ *H&MHT*, 4 November 1914.

⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 February 1916.

⁹⁰⁷ *PCG*, 19 February 1915.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 21 May 1915.

purely voluntary means of enlistment had reached their limit.

The National Register

The National Register of 15 August 1915 was, according to Asquith, a means for the 'better guiding of voluntary enlistment, military and industrial'.⁹⁰⁹ Thirty-five million forms placed males in 46 occupational groupings with those who were not to be recruited, on account of doing work of national importance, being starred. The Register was the vital prerequisite for the Group or Derby Scheme, named after the Earl of Derby who became the Director General of Recruiting on 5 October 1915. The scheme entailed a personal canvass of single and married men, urging them to attest to military service when called upon in turn, and ran from 11 October to 11 December. Each attestee received half-a-crown and an armband which became his symbol of active citizenship.⁹¹⁰ During the currency of the Derby Scheme, 215,431 men voluntarily enlisted, numbers which made the demise of the voluntary system inevitable.⁹¹¹ In short, it could not. If, as Adams maintains, both pro- and anti-conscriptionists saw the Derby canvass as a means to vindicate their stance, then the latter's cause was doomed by the poor rate of attestation among young single men.⁹¹² The results disclosed a total of 5,011,411 men of military age, which, after deducting the enlisted, attested and medically rejected, still left 2,182,178 others.⁹¹³

Considerable efforts were made in Pembrokeshire, to avoid compulsory military service if at all possible, perhaps a reflection of its strong Liberal and Nonconformist traditions. There was an active and well-orchestrated campaign to promote the last

⁹⁰⁹ Elliott, 'An Early Experiment in National Identity Cards', 147.

⁹¹⁰ R.J.Q. Adams and Philip P. Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1900-1918* (Basingstoke, 1987), 120.

⁹¹¹ Bilton, *The Home Front*, 42.

⁹¹² R.J.Q. Adams, 'Asquith's Choice. The May Coalition and the Coming of Conscription, 1915-16', *JBS* 25 (1986), 254.

⁹¹³ Adams and Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy*, 135.

great effort of voluntarism rather than the ushering in of conscription with its attendant political and religious controversies. A series of co-ordinated meetings were held across the county on 2 October 1915 but they singularly failed to match expectations. At Maenclochog the meeting was abandoned when no one turned up.⁹¹⁴ Addressing the Fishguard rally, twice-wounded Sergeant Cooper of the Welsh regiment thought the dropping of a few bombs from Zeppelins might wake people up.⁹¹⁵ It was estimated that there were 7,000 eligible unstarred men in both Pembrokeshire parliamentary constituencies.⁹¹⁶ The number of unstarred men stood at 3,063 in the County of Pembroke area.⁹¹⁷ Each canvasser was allotted a number of names who would be approached and asked to consent to future military service. At Haverfordwest, even before the canvass was complete, it was considered how the results hardly justified the labour and expense incurred. Thirty-eight recruits were obtained in one week. Those who declined often asked the rhetorical question: ‘How about the farmers, they don’t seem to be doing much.’ This antipathy to the agricultural sector was entirely typical of the national scene. One canvasser thought those offering excuses were suffering from ‘white liver’ or ‘chicken hearted disease’.⁹¹⁸ By early December, the Boroughs PRC reported how 3,142 cards had been sent out with a total of 2,987 returned. Some 513 men had enlisted or attested while 528 considered themselves as indispensable in their employment. A blank refusal came from 433 men.⁹¹⁹ In Tenby, of the 370 men who were canvassed, 150 had attested.⁹²⁰ There was recrimination and bitterness in the press over alleged abuses in starrng, while an unauthorised statement issued by Edward Marlay Samson

⁹¹⁴ *H&MHT*, 6 October 1915.

⁹¹⁵ *CE*, 7 October 1915.

⁹¹⁶ *PCG*, 5 November 1915.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12 November 1915.

⁹¹⁸ *H&MHT*, 24 November 1915.

⁹¹⁹ *PH*, 10 December 1915.

⁹²⁰ *TO*, 16 December 1915.

regarding the position of unattested men and their rights before the recruiting tribunals added to the confusion. The County of Pembroke PRC had distributed 4,964 cards with 473 men enlisting or attesting.⁹²¹ These figures were significantly boosted by a feverish rush to attest in the final days and hours of the scheme. At the Haverfordwest Drill Hall clerical staff were obliged to work until midnight to process attendees.⁹²² At Fishguard an eleventh-hour rush saw the number of attested men reach 400-500 under the Group system, with a marked willingness of married men rather than single to attest.⁹²³

By January 1916, when the Military Service Bill was introduced, around 2,100 men in the County constituency had attested or been medically rejected out of a possible total of 3,200 with 300 definite refusals.⁹²⁴ The attested men sought recognition of their status through the wearing of a khaki armband, a ribbon loaded with an extraordinary symbolism. A tremendous 'rush and crush' occurred at Milford Haven when the armbands were distributed. Those unfit to serve were given badges lest they were accused of being shirkers, a highly derogatory social classification.⁹²⁵ They sought the public approbation of volunteers even if their personal circumstances had prevented their earlier enlistment.

Ascertaining the exact numbers of Pembrokeshire men who voluntarily enlisted during 1914-16 is difficult. One indication can be gleaned from the county-wide school roll of honour of serving ex-pupils. In August 1915 there were 2,215 names on the list, and this was doubtless a considerable under-estimate.⁹²⁶ Enlistees had a

⁹²¹ *H&MHT*, 1 December 1915.

⁹²² *Ibid.*, 15 December 1915.

⁹²³ *CE*, 16 December 1915.

⁹²⁴ *PCG*, 7 January 1916.

⁹²⁵ *H&MHT*, 19 January 1916.

⁹²⁶ *PH*, 13 August 1915.

decided preference for the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry, Royal Garrison Artillery and the 4th Welsh. In his analysis Williams reveals an unusually high proportion of Welsh-born men in the 1/4 Welsh of 79.1 per cent.⁹²⁷ Despite the hyperbole of recruiting rhetoric there was genuine appreciation of the volunteer as noble defender. At a meeting of the Narberth Urban District Council on 3 August 1915, the council passed a resolution applauding the pluck and patriotism of local men who had left the shores of the country ‘to fight for their homes and liberty of the world’.⁹²⁸

Military Service Tribunals 1916-18

When conscription finally arrived in January 1916 it was, surprisingly, a highly devolved matter, grafted on to existing institutions. Despite the increasing size and scope of wartime government, it was local registration authorities, borough, urban and rural district councils, who constituted Military Service Tribunals which heard appeals for exemption from compulsory military service. The work of the tribunals was difficult; legislation broadly defined their role but the policy and interpretation of statute was essentially a matter for them. The examination of the tribunals which adjudicated whether the individual ought to serve in the armed forces has acquired increased attention in recent years, especially through the efforts of McDermott and Gregory, since they provide an opportunity to view in microcosm the tensions, priorities and personalities which often mediated national directives. Key questions to pose in this section relate to how the tribunals operated in Pembrokeshire; workload, how they were staffed and the treatment which appellants received.

They had no *de jure* obligation to answer for their decisions.⁹²⁹ For Gregory the

⁹²⁷ Williams, ‘Welsh National Identity’, 143.

⁹²⁸ PRO NAU/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council minutes 1911-20; 3 August 1915.

⁹²⁹ James McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals, 1916-1918* (Manchester, 2011), 4.

tribunals were the ultimate example of civil society in action, a judgement which was true for Pembrokeshire.⁹³⁰ The tribunalists, overwhelmingly men (as was the Pembrokeshire experience) but occasionally women, were a much-abused body; pleasing no one, being variously accused of either being complicit and craven with the War Office, or else of parochially defending local rather than the national interest. The introduction of the Military Service Act on 5 January 1916 (enacted on 27 January as the so-called 'Bachelors' Bill) assumed the enlistment of all single men and childless widowers up to the age of 41 and their immediate transfer to the Army Reserve.

British society had just become familiar with the concept of tribunals adjudicating on military service, although those established under the Derby Scheme were different in a number of key respects. The principle of appeal was established, allowing attested men to be re-grouped on personal or business grounds. The Derby Tribunals were established by Local Government Board circular R1 dated 26 October 1915 which delineated their functions, constitution and procedures.⁹³¹ They were not adversarial in nature and possessed wide discretionary powers to put men back to lower priority groups, being staffed by five members and having the power to 'unstar' men.⁹³² Further appeals went to a Central tribunal on points of law.⁹³³ The tribunals were assisted by local advisory committees composed of men with detailed local knowledge. Local authority members predominated on the Derby tribunals. Most were chosen at council meetings, being appointed as they would normally be on to

⁹³⁰ Adrian Gregory, 'Military Service Tribunals: Civil Society in Action, 1916-1918', In Jose Harris (ed.), *Civil Society in British History. Ideas, Identities, Institutions* (Oxford, 2003), 177.

⁹³¹ James McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals during the First World War: Experiences in Northamptonshire', *War in History* 17:1, 62.

⁹³² K.R. Grieves, 'Military Tribunal Papers. The Case of Leek Local Tribunal in the First World War', *British Records Association* 16:70 (1983), 145.

⁹³³ Douglas, 'Voluntary Enlistment in the First World War', 581.

any ordinary council committee. At Tenby two aldermen, one councillor and two external members adjudicated on the issue as to who were properly starred and therefore indispensable.⁹³⁴ Haverfordwest Borough Council went for the standard matrix of mayor, clerk, and three councillors when they met.⁹³⁵ Pembroke Rural District Council went for six council members and no co-optees.⁹³⁶ In the north one tribunal was appointed by a National Registration Committee rather than the full council which prompted an angry exchange with the LGB.⁹³⁷ The notion of elected politicians deciding upon claims by their constituents was not universally popular. At Fishguard two members previously nominated, refused to serve.⁹³⁸ Farmers featured prominently on the rural tribunals, especially in the north. The different make-up of the panels demonstrates a certain degree of local latitude and local discretion.

The cadre of Pembrokeshire's Military Service tribunalists were prominent men in their localities. On 8 February 1916, the Fishguard Urban District Council authority nominated the existing members 'with power to add to their number'.⁹³⁹ The old Derby tribunal continued at Milford Haven with others, including the representatives of labour. Each tribunal was served by an advisory committee who were intended to possess local knowledge and to be well acquainted with the dynamics of the local economy. One rural north Pembrokeshire committee consisted of farmers and the manager of the Porthgain quarries.⁹⁴⁰ A member's degree of managerial experience was usually gleaned in municipal administration, although the board was staffed by representatives of industry, the professions and an abundance of justices of the

⁹³⁴ *TO*, 11 November 1915.

⁹³⁵ PRO HAM/SE/1/8. Haverfordwest Borough Council minutes 1908-17; 1 November 1915.

⁹³⁶ PRO PER/SE/2/3. Pembroke Rural District Council minutes 1914-19; 6 November 1915.

⁹³⁷ PRO HAR/SE/2/2. Haverfordwest Rural District Council minutes 1909-17; 1, 15 December 1915.

⁹³⁸ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16; 25 November 1915.

⁹³⁹ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16.

⁹⁴⁰ *CE*, 13 January 1916.

peace.⁹⁴¹ Farmers tended to outnumber other sectors on the rural Pembrokeshire tribunals although borough and urban ones had a wider diversity of representation. The Haverfordwest Borough Tribunal, for example, was chaired by a distinguished solicitor and town clerk, Mr. R.T.P. Williams. His colleagues included a prominent local publican and Mr Richard Sinnett, a postal worker.⁹⁴² When the Tenby Borough Tribunal first sat on 21 February 1916 a well-known local land agent, Mr C.W.R Stokes, took charge.⁹⁴³ The Neyland Urban Tribunal was perhaps the most egalitarian and certainly the most proletarian: the occupational background of members included a station master, local district surveyor, grocer, ironmonger and retired post master, prominent but unexceptional individuals who were very much of their communities. They first sat in February 1916 to consider six claims for exemption.⁹⁴⁴

A week after the Military Service Act became law on 27 January 1916, LGB Circular 36 (dated 3 February) was issued to local authorities technically disbanding the Derby tribunals and outlining a greatly expanded competence for the new bodies.⁹⁴⁵ The new tribunals were enlarged by up to 25 members and could grant absolute, conditional or temporary exemption to appellants. Grounds of appeal included financial hardship, ill health, occupational indispensability and conscientious objection. Applications often cited a combination of different grounds. A military representative from the local recruiting office was in attendance to cross-examine appellants in a hearing which could be highly adversarial. Tribunalists were desired to have judicial, unprejudiced minds, independent of vested interests.⁹⁴⁶ Representatives of labour were appointed to each tribunal along with occasional female representatives. At least three women sat

⁹⁴¹ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 17.

⁹⁴² *H&MHT*, 22 March 1916.

⁹⁴³ *TO*, 24 February 1916.

⁹⁴⁴ *PCG*, 3 March 1916.

⁹⁴⁵ McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals', 63.

⁹⁴⁶ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 104.

on Pembrokeshire tribunals. In terms of membership there seems to have been a high degree of continuity with the Derby tribunals.

The tribunals were required to not only deal with complex and multitudinous issues with dispatch and detachment, but also grapple with the shifting policy imperatives which Government passed on to them.⁹⁴⁷ For McDermott, the tribunals were the discretionary mechanism which assessed the competing claims of the domestic economy and military requirement versus personal circumstance.⁹⁴⁸ Their alleged muddling, inconsistency and partiality was chiefly born of their alleged ill-treatment of conscientious objectors and socialists. Gregory, and more recently McDermott, present a more nuanced and positive picture with fewer anomalies arising from greater professionalism and growing self-confidence.⁹⁴⁹ This appears to be the Pembrokeshire experience also.

No coherent system that provided consistency and congruity of decision by the military service tribunals was achieved. With over 2,000 such panels and an approximate membership of 40,000, provided with vague oversight, they faced almost insuperable obstacles in their work. For Gregory the tribunals represented a negotiation between a national pattern coupled with local ways of doing things.⁹⁵⁰ They operated in a highly localised context balancing military needs with the caprice of individual circumstances.

Parliament clearly set the parameters of their duties. The first Military Service Act encompassed all males aged eighteen to 41 and was succeeded by a second Act in May 1916 which conscripted all men within this age- range regardless of their marital

⁹⁴⁷ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 228.

⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁹⁴⁹ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 228.

⁹⁵⁰ Gregory, 'Military Service Tribunals in Civil Society', 183.

status. Subsequent revisions were calculated to widen the net for recruits. The Military Service (Review) of Exemptions Act intended to comb out industry, agriculture and mining which was only partially successful. Further legislation in 1918 extended conscription to all males aged 41-50 and cancelled a number of existing exemptions.⁹⁵¹ Few tribunals seemed willing to conscript men of the maximum age of 51 although the law allowed them to do so.⁹⁵² The tribunals were subject to increasing Government micro-management of their decision making, with 244 separate circulars issued which were intended to tighten perceived loopholes and proscribe tougher limits on eligibility for exemption.⁹⁵³

The adjudication of the tribunal was conditional on appellants being found medically fit for service. Between January 1916 and November 1917 men were ranked according to alphabetical category, 'A' being the highest level of fitness. In November 1917 the Ministry of National Service Medical Boards replaced the former military ones and a new system of grading, I, II, III and IV (fail) instituted.⁹⁵⁴

Appeals against local tribunal rulings could be made to the County Appeal Tribunal which was constituted under LGB Circular R41.⁹⁵⁵ In Pembrokeshire this body was chaired by Alderman S.B. Sketch, a senior council member and mineral water proprietor, and included a retired colonel, barrister-at-law, clerk to the county council and builder. They sat alongside Mr. J.H. Griffiths, a representative of the Board of Agriculture.⁹⁵⁶ Miss Beatrice Chambers was the only female member who patriotically knitted soldiers' comforts between cases. A few other women sat on local

⁹⁵¹ Beckett, 'The Nation in Arms', 14.

⁹⁵² McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 28.

⁹⁵³ Winter, *Death's Men*, 30.

⁹⁵⁴ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, vii.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 20.

⁹⁵⁶ *H&MHT*, 3 May 1916.

tribunals including Miss Millward at Tenby and Miss Jane Evans at St Dogmaels Rural Tribunal. The latter had a furious set-to with the local military representative, each threatening to report each other to the Army Council and LGB respectively complaining about the other's attitude.⁹⁵⁷

Tribunals' relationship with the military representatives attracted caustic comment over alleged over-familiarity and cosiness so as to compromise the tribunals' supposed impartiality and detachment. McDermott disagrees with the idea of subservient tribunals who were far from overawed or collusive with the military authorities.⁹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, in an adversarial system in which a man's life and liberty were at stake, appellants were seldom legally represented with the military representative occupying the post of *de facto* inquisitor. In Pembrokeshire the principal local recruiting officer was himself a local solicitor, Major William George Eaton Evans, a professional advocate more articulate and thoroughly used to court and tribunal process than the ordinary appellant, a material advantage for the military. The representatives must have possessed a formidable intelligence network. When Alfred Stephens, 29, a Milford Haven fish merchant, medically classified as 'A,' appealed on the grounds of hardship, Major Eaton Evans quizzed him about his not being too busy to attend the Manchester races, which involved eighteen hours on a train and about comments he was alleged to have made during the journey.⁹⁵⁹ This statement says much about the informal information gathering networks which reached the representative's office.

McDermott alludes to the time- pressures whereby applicants had only a few minutes to present their case for exemption. This time- pressure contributed to the perception

⁹⁵⁷ *CE*, 8 June 1916

⁹⁵⁸ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 229.

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 22 May 1917.

of peremptory decision making.⁹⁶⁰ For Gregory the tribunal system was anything but a model of bureaucratic anonymity (and indeed it was not so in Pembrokeshire). Nevertheless, the scale of work was so immense that a brief appearance lasting minutes might well result in a literal life or death decision. Ascertaining individual workloads is difficult given the chimerical survival rates of minute books. Most papers were deliberately destroyed on the instructions of the Ministry of Health in 1921. Of Pembrokeshire's eleven military service tribunals, seven were urban; Haverfordwest, Milford Haven, Tenby, Fishguard, Narberth, Neyland and Pembroke. The others reflected the rurality of the county; namely Haverfordwest rural district, Pembroke rural district, Narberth rural district and St Dogmaels. Of these only the proceedings of the Milford Haven and Pembroke rural tribunals have survived complete. For the others, we only have newspaper accounts which provided a very good but not necessarily complete account of their activities.

Pembrokeshire tribunals had heavy workloads. The Milford Haven tribunal first sat as the Derby incarnation on 15 December 1915 and held its final hearing on 26 September 1918. It was in session 38 times and adjudicated on a total of 990 cases including adjournments and renewing temporary certificates of exemption.⁹⁶¹ The Pembroke Rural District Tribunal heard 376 cases over a period covering 16 March 1916 to 12 November 1917, the vast majority being agricultural appeals.⁹⁶² Initially, the north county tribunals were deluged with appeals. The St Dogmaels tribunal heard 215 cases between 11 a.m. and 9.40 p.m., an average of three-and-a-half minutes per case.⁹⁶³ Two later sessions required their determination of 65 and 60 cases

⁹⁶⁰ McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals,' 63.

⁹⁶¹ PRO MHU/SE/11/1. Milford Haven Urban District Council Military Service Tribunal 1915-18.

⁹⁶² PRO PER/SE/8/1. Pembroke Rural District Council Military Service Tribunal 1915-18.

⁹⁶³ *CE*, 16 March 1916.

respectively.⁹⁶⁴ The sheer number of agricultural appeals made rural district tribunals perhaps even more challenging than urban ones. Urban tribunals seldom had so many, but they were far from inactive. The Haverfordwest Borough Tribunal heard 50 appeals which lasted for four hours and twenty minutes in late February 1916.⁹⁶⁵ Fishguard's tribunal had 48 cases on the list when it first convened.⁹⁶⁶ In comparison, Tenby Borough Tribunal, whose first sitting lasted three hours, had 15 and 17 cases in its subsequent meetings.⁹⁶⁷ The tribunal workload was often determined by revisions to exemptions previously granted, as Government shifted the reserved occupational goal posts to make them much more restrictive.

Although tribunals were, by the nature of their jurisdiction, rooted in their localities, and usually did their work in the full glare of publicity, this was not always so. Initially some of the tribunal anomalies accountable to such a hasty transformation in the recruitment process took time to rectify.⁹⁶⁸ The attitude towards the press was one such contention, where some tribunalists, nervous of the effects of their deliberations upon local opinion, sought to keep their proceedings entirely hidden from public scrutiny.⁹⁶⁹ Initially a number met in camera. The Haverfordwest Borough Tribunal did so at its initial meeting on 18 February 1916 but quickly reversed this policy on account of critical press comment.⁹⁷⁰ Other tribunals seem to have been content to meet in public, except for the Haverfordwest Rural District Tribunal which was most trenchant in its refusal to admit the press, passing a resolution that it was inexpedient to do so, ignoring a plea from Captain Leslie the military representative.⁹⁷¹ The move

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 8 June 1916; 6 July 1916.

⁹⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 1 March 1916.

⁹⁶⁶ *CE*, 9 February 1916.

⁹⁶⁷ *TO*, 2 March 1916; 9 March 1916.

⁹⁶⁸ *TT*, 24 February 1916.

⁹⁶⁹ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 103.

⁹⁷⁰ *PH*, 25 February 1916.

⁹⁷¹ *CE*, 24 February 1916.

was deplored, one newspaper correspondent pronouncing the maxim ‘clear daylight never harmed a square deal’.⁹⁷² There was a suspicion that the tribunal was a cabal for farmers to reciprocate favours for each other. An article reminded them how they sat not as farmers’ advocates but as umpires and judges in which the free air of publicity could dispel suspicions which gathered at meetings held behind closed doors.⁹⁷³ They eventually relented and admitted the press on 27 March 1916.⁹⁷⁴ The grounds for appeal provide us with an insight of the tensions between individual circumstances, and the broader needs of the state in taking men from civilian life.

The most widely cited grounds for exemption was that of occupation and indispensability in carrying on local businesses, indicative of local power structures. Lists of reserved occupations were meant to ensure a balance between the needs of the military and local economies. The list of certified occupations was revised four times during 1916-17 alone, culminating in a whole range of exemptions being cancelled by Royal Proclamation in April 1918.⁹⁷⁵ The immense difficulty of ensuring consistency in the ‘wide-meshed net’ of reserved occupations caused anxiety early on to those charged with filling up the ranks.⁹⁷⁶ From the institution of conscription up to 30 April 1917, some 372, 979 applicants received conditional exemption on occupational grounds.⁹⁷⁷ The list of reserved occupations was severely pruned in 1917 in an effort to net the target of 940,000 men of all categories which the army estimated it needed for 1917.

Local tribunals sought to mediate the needs of army, maintenance of local economic

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*, 2 March 1916.

⁹⁷³ *PCG*, 3 March 1916.

⁹⁷⁴ *PH*, 31 March 1916.

⁹⁷⁵ Dewey, ‘Military Recruitment and the British Labour Force’, 215.

⁹⁷⁶ *TT*, 19 February 1916

⁹⁷⁷ *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire*, 367.

activity and personal circumstances. Initially those involved in maintaining food supplies found conditional exemption fairly straightforward. For example, at the Haverfordwest Borough Tribunal in February 1916, Robert Noot and William Davies, bakers, received such protection on account of their reserved occupations.⁹⁷⁸ The important fishing industry at Milford Haven saw around 100 appeals during one hearing alone, with around 70 from the Fish Market which had been much depleted by voluntary enlistments.⁹⁷⁹ The advisory committee recommended temporary exemption to employees of the steam trawler and smack owners and fish merchants. Yet, even exempted occupations were subject to a tightening of the screw. Iron moulders and employees of the Vickers works at Newton Noyes were refused exemption.⁹⁸⁰ The increasing number of women in the workplace vitiated against the strict limits of occupational exemption. At Fishguard, Joseph Griffiths, 31, received four months' temporary exemption although his employer's claim that women could work in a bakery rang hollow.⁹⁸¹

No more frequent grounds for exemption were invoked than those of personal hardship or indispensability. Tribunals considered the peculiar circumstances of each business, whether it could be restarted after the war without 'grave difficulty', amount of capital and the age and domestic situation of the applicant.⁹⁸² Individual merits had to be weighed up as well as issues of local supply and distribution. The vast majority of cases of financial hardship lay in the ability of a family to support itself in the absence of the primary breadwinner.⁹⁸³ The panels had to evolve their own definition of hardship to families, a subjective judgement and a measure which varied from

⁹⁷⁸ *H&MHT*, 1 March 1916.

⁹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 31 May 1916.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 27 March 1918.

⁹⁸¹ *CE*, 3 July 1917.

⁹⁸² McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 142.

⁹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 158.

tribunal to tribunal. Grocers and those involved in food production and distribution, stood a better than average chance of at least temporary exemption. The spectre of businesses having to be closed down was raised by many appellants. Vincent Davies aged 39 of Haverfordwest, grocer and father of five children, claimed financial ruin if he was called up. He received conditional exemption.⁹⁸⁴ Seraphine Frank of the same town, a marine store dealer, with a delicate wife and four children, received quite a different response, being told he would have to serve from 1 February 1917.⁹⁸⁵ Differences in decision making seem difficult to discern and occasionally mere whim and caprice might have been the deciding factors. At St David's Samuel Richards, aged 28, whose business handled 500-600 pounds of butter and 4,000 eggs weekly pleaded that his wife and children be not left 'stranded.'⁹⁸⁶

Tribunals could be inconsistent in recognising the caring responsibilities of appellants. Thomas Evans of Spittal, a weaver with seven children at home, received temporary exemption with permission to apply again.⁹⁸⁷ At Milford Haven, William Jenkins, aged 41 with five children, pleaded his case, adding for good measure that he conducted a fifteen-mile bread round.⁹⁸⁸ Jenkins secured three month's conditional exemption. Edward Fishlock, postman and chip potato vendor, the sole provider for his mother, was refused deferral of military service.⁹⁸⁹ Likewise, John Morse of Haverfordwest, aged 31, with a wife and three children and invalid mother at home with a business of 'small dimensions', was refused.⁹⁹⁰

A number of appellants justified their cases in terms of utility to the local military

⁹⁸⁴ *PCG*, 30 June 1916.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 24 November 1916.

⁹⁸⁶ *H&MHT*, 28 March 1917.

⁹⁸⁷ *PH*, 13 October 1916.

⁹⁸⁸ *H&MHT*, 2 January 1918.

⁹⁸⁹ *PCG*, 29 September 1916.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16 February 1917.

garrisons. Ernest Lowe of the Palace Cinema, Haverfordwest, pointed to the business revenues and rates he paid and the importance of his establishment for soldiers.⁹⁹¹ Before the Neyland tribunal, Walter Hagggar estimated a full 60 per cent of his clientele to be soldiers.⁹⁹² At the Narberth Rural District tribunal, one 20 year-old applicant of the Gelli Mills managed 25 looms and was currently engaged in fulfilling a contract for the Romanian Government.⁹⁹³ Howard Jenkins of the Merlin's Bridge Steam Laundry alluded to the military hospitals which would be hit if he had to go. He was sent to the Medical Board for examination nonetheless.⁹⁹⁴

Local tribunals seemed impervious to expressions of public support and were not democratically accountable. Local petitions sought to invoke community support for certain individuals whose skills were seen as essential to that community. One appellant, E.R. Thomas of St Nicholas, a tailor, had the benefit of a petition signed by 130 people, but he was nevertheless refused exemption.⁹⁹⁵ Petitions were attempts to maintain local economies and services as an example of community solidarity. No contemporaneous notes of tribunal discussions have survived and we are left to speculate as to the determinants of an appellant's success. For McDermott, mood, prejudice, external pressures and the impression which the personal appearance of the applicant made in his few brief minutes ultimately determined his fate.⁹⁹⁶ The actual mechanics of decision making remain lost to us, although the vote, when it came, represented a collective action of unequal parts, a haphazard journey to consensus.⁹⁹⁷

Local tribunals displayed a variable attitude towards applicants who sought more time

⁹⁹¹ Ibid., 5 May 1916.

⁹⁹² Ibid., 9 June 1916.

⁹⁹³ Ibid., 13 April 1917.

⁹⁹⁴ *H&MHT*, 24 January 1917.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid., 23 May 1917.

⁹⁹⁶ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 176-177.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid., 221.

in which to complete terms of apprenticeship or educational courses. Alfred James of Wolfscastle, motor engineer apprentice, aged eighteen, with Messrs Bland's of Haverfordwest, the only son of a widowed mother, was refused permission to complete his indentures when he applied for conditional exemption from the Haverfordwest Rural District Tribunal.⁹⁹⁸ The same tribunal refused to allow Victor Morgan of Johnston extra time to complete his apprenticeship as a blacksmith.⁹⁹⁹ The British Army was overwhelmingly horse powered with plenty of work for skilled blacksmiths. In other cases tribunals were more accommodating and granted some respite. At the County Appeal tribunal, John Saunders, motor apprentice with George Ace, successfully argued for six months temporary exemption.¹⁰⁰⁰

The precepts of equal sacrifice and proportionality were illustrated in painful cases when it came to taking last sons from some families for military service and the admissibility of taking wider family service into account. Initially the tribunals did lend considerable weight to a good family record when this was raised during an individual's appeal as a material consideration. Frederick Lloyd, a general dealer from Pembroke Dock had three brothers, one of whom had been killed, and a cousin serving. The County Appeal Tribunal considered this family record of service 'well enough' and the military appeal was dismissed.¹⁰⁰¹ Military representatives became more robust in arguing against taking family service into account. One of the harsher adjudications was that of W.J. Williams, eighteen, a GWR porter. He had lost a brother killed in action while another died in training and another was serving in Salonika. His mother had died leaving his sister to manage a small holding of seven

⁹⁹⁸ *H&MHT*, 11 October 1916.

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2 May 1917.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *PH*, 29 June 1917.

¹⁰⁰¹ *PCG*, 25 May 1917.

acres. His appeal was unsuccessful.¹⁰⁰²

The raising of the military recruitment age to 51 in May 1918, a measure of the crisis precipitated by the German Spring offensives, brought the issue of the conscription of older males, especially the ‘directing heads’ of larger businesses and single person enterprises, to the fore. McDermott sees the issue as one of the most difficult delegated to the tribunals, with few insensitive to the problem.¹⁰⁰³ Public opinion would necessarily be hostile if special treatment was accorded to businessmen and so the balance was to allow incremental periods of exemption in which they could settle their affairs.¹⁰⁰⁴ Most Pembrokeshire press comment was in favour of retaining small businessmen so as to protect the local economy from the most deleterious effects of recruitment. Many tribunals balked at impressing men aged 41-51 when so many single men enjoyed protection from military obligations. When H.J. Harries, a 41-year old clerk sought time to wind up his affairs, the Haverfordwest Borough Tribunal chairman complained about the Grade ‘A’ in uniform stationed locally who had never seen active service.¹⁰⁰⁵ One Tenby tribunal complained about their calling up men of 45 ‘with children behind them’ while so many single men were left untouched.¹⁰⁰⁶ Another correspondent deplored the raids on middle-aged one- man businesses and queried ‘how long can normal economic and industrial life be maintained’ in the face of such interference.¹⁰⁰⁷ When the Milford Haven tribunal held its first meeting to review the older men aged 43-48 in July 1918 all were granted six months exemption. When 48-year- old Neyland builder Thomas D. Harries appeared before his tribunal he retorted how the Government should conscript young Irishmen rather than going

¹⁰⁰² *CE*, 17 May 1917.

¹⁰⁰³ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 131-132.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *PCG*, 15 March 1918.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *TO*, 27 June 1918.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 9 May 1918.

after people of his age.¹⁰⁰⁸

Genuine unease prevailed over the depletion of existing businesses as enterprises ran with a fraction of the usual staff. From landed estates down to small grocery and drapery shops, the haemorrhage of men from civilian life into the military was considerable. By May 1916 the Llewellyn churnworks at Haverfordwest which formerly employed 32 men had to make do with 20, plus three boys.¹⁰⁰⁹ When Sir Charles Philipps of Picton Castle applied for his gamekeeper he revealed to the Narberth rural tribunal how seventeen estate workers had enlisted.¹⁰¹⁰ No sector was spared. At the Yarmouth Stores, Milford Haven, eight men had left and been replaced by three women.¹⁰¹¹ Meanwhile, on the Bush Estate, the bailiwick of the Meyrick family which had a complement of 45 men before the war, had been whittled down to thirteen, including two lads.¹⁰¹² Even before the restrictions became more exacting, Mr Sketch, county appeal chairman, deplored the depletion of small businesses in the county of whom he was one such proprietor.¹⁰¹³

Medical factors were another key determinant of a man's ability to perform military service. The system of medical examinations was central to the process of conscription, although the tardy examination of applicants often blighted the relationship between the tribunals and central authorities. Ill- health and infirmity were major grounds of appeal for exemption. The paucity of medical facilities placed an increasing burden on an already creaking system. McDermott alludes to the tribunals' loss of faith in the motives and competence of the Army Medical Boards in

¹⁰⁰⁸ *PCG*, 9 August 1918.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 9 May 1916.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9 June 1916.

¹⁰¹¹ *Ibid.*, 15 June 1917.

¹⁰¹² *Ibid.*, 24 August 1917.

¹⁰¹³ *PH*, 27 June 1917.

passing men graded 'A' when they were palpably nothing of the sort.¹⁰¹⁴ The civilian medical boards which replaced them in November 1917 gave applicants a more thorough examination, although with only 2,500 doctors available, consultations must have still been cursory. There was a striking reduction in the percentage of first-rated men.¹⁰¹⁵ Some 2.5 million examinations were carried out during November 1917-18.¹⁰¹⁶ Just as at the time of the Boer War, they revealed the poor physical condition of a significant proportion of the adult male population. Around one million men were rejected for military service during this period.¹⁰¹⁷ Numbers of applicants represented their physique in less than glowing terms as to reduce their chances of being called up. Before the Pembroke Tribunal James Griffiths, a student teacher was described as a 'miserable specimen'.¹⁰¹⁸ The appearance of Cecil W. Rowland of Neyland at the county appeal tribunal disclosed how he had been seen by a dozen different doctors resulting in a veritable shower of medical certificates. One member sarcastically remarked 'Wonder he's still alive.'¹⁰¹⁹ At Pembroke, one C1 applicant was described as of 'no more military use than a four pence rabbit.'¹⁰²⁰ Some appellants found themselves frequently before the Medical Board. Leslie H. Ellis of Haverfordwest, C2, car salesman, claimed to have been rejected no fewer than eight times.¹⁰²¹ Later, one tribunal chairman referred to Ellis and others as 'old familiar friends' due to their regular appearances.¹⁰²² Reginald Thomas, Grade 3, had gone before the Board five times before he was sent to the army.¹⁰²³ One wag remarked how 'crocks never

¹⁰¹⁴ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 181.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 191.

¹⁰¹⁶ J.M. Winter, 'Military Fitness and Civilian Health in Britain during the First World War', *JCH*, 15:2 (1980), 222.

¹⁰¹⁷ Beckett, 'A Nation in Arms', 13.

¹⁰¹⁸ *PCG*, 31 March 1916.

¹⁰¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15 December 1916.

¹⁰²⁰ *Ibid.*, 22 June 1917.

¹⁰²¹ *H&MHT*, 27 June 1917.

¹⁰²² *Ibid.*, 30 January 1918.

¹⁰²³ *Ibid.*, 10 April 1918.

hugged their ailments as they do at present'.¹⁰²⁴

Being a network of essentially local institutions it might be assumed that the tribunals showed undue deference and partiality to socially prominent applicants. McDermott believes some tribunals did exhibit this trait within the milieu of class perceptions despite the theory of conscription levelling class.¹⁰²⁵ With a few glaring exceptions this does not appear to have been the case in Pembrokeshire. At Tenby the mayor, Captain Hughes-Morgan's gardener was refused exemption.¹⁰²⁶ Likewise at Haverfordwest, the claim of Colonel Williams of Haroldston for his groom and stud man was dismissed.¹⁰²⁷ Perhaps the most celebrated incidence where social standing was difficult to resist was when Sir Charles Philipps of Picton Castle appealed for exemption for his butler and personal attendant, Joseph Edwards. This was acceded to despite strong War Office objection.¹⁰²⁸ The local press were indignant at this partiality and there were doubtless complaints of one rule for the elites and another for the rest of society. There could be question marks over probity and governance when the applicants were tribunalists themselves. At Haverfordwest, Councillor Palmer's case was heard in camera and the military application to review was rejected.¹⁰²⁹ L.J. Meyler of Milford Haven, local chemist and urban council tribunal member, was one of only a few applicants to receive absolute exemption.¹⁰³⁰ Although Alderman Sketch dutifully vacated the chair and took no part in the proceedings, as county appeal tribunal chairman, his application on behalf of his mineral water delivery driver (Thomas Llewelin, aged 21) was surprisingly granted.¹⁰³¹ Perhaps the most

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*, 7 November 1917.

¹⁰²⁵ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 176.

¹⁰²⁶ *TO*, 25 May 1916.

¹⁰²⁷ *H&MHT*, 20 September 1916.

¹⁰²⁸ *PH*, 8 September 1916.

¹⁰²⁹ *H&MHT*, 21 March 1917.

¹⁰³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2 May 1917.

¹⁰³¹ *PCG*, 15 February 1918.

blatant example of bias occurred in March 1918 when the Haverfordwest rural tribunal peremptorily cancelled the exemption of Thomas Francis, aged 34, secretary of the Solva branch of the Agricultural Workers Union.¹⁰³² This could have been an expression of the divide between farmers and their labourers which was discussed in Chapter II.

Agricultural appeals represented the most complex and challenging cases which came before the tribunals, especially in north Pembrokeshire where dairying, grazing and stock-keeping were more important, occurring as they did amidst the shifting national priority accorded to food production and distribution. The first reserved occupational list issued after the introduction of the Derby Scheme recognised agriculture's special status, with 23 designated categories of skill which initially at least received more absolute exemptions than were intended.¹⁰³³ Even after the greater emphasis on food production in 1917, military raids on workers still persisted so that military representatives argued strongly for substitution. On 20 April 1918, a proclamation removed agricultural exemptions granted to men below the age of 23.¹⁰³⁴ Local advisory committees played a crucial role in determining minimum levels of labour required, which were parts of a dynamic and competitive process also involving the tribunals, Board of Agriculture, War Agricultural Executives and War Office. The tribunals often viewed the number of adult males in a farming family and insisted that at least one must serve. The county appeal tribunal dismissed the appeal of Albert Thomas, a Llangwm teamsman, one of five brothers none of whom was in the army.¹⁰³⁵ The latitude exercised by tribunals extended to the imposition of sometimes arbitrary conditions to secure a conditional exemption. When Elizabeth Stephens of

¹⁰³² *PH*, 8 March 1918.

¹⁰³³ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 98.

¹⁰³⁴ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁰³⁵ *PCG*, 11 August 1916.

Solva applied on behalf of an eighteen-year old ploughman, exemption was granted provided an extra 45 acres of land on her 130- acre holding were put under cultivation.¹⁰³⁶

Younger males stood a better than average chance of securing exemption if they could prove their indispensability on the farm. The Haverfordwest Rural Tribunal exempted 26 young men described as ploughmen, teamsmen, stockmen and an ‘all round man on the farm,’ while a carpenter, blacksmith and tailor received short periods of temporary exemption.¹⁰³⁷ Substitution of labour provided a partial solution to the problem. A girl substitute was to be found to enable the enlistment of an eighteen-year old cowman of Clarboston Road in March 1917.¹⁰³⁸ Farmers were often scathing about the quality and competence of substitute labour. The penchant for shepherding among farmers’ sons did not go unchallenged. The local advisory committee was requested to ask ‘How long has a boy of 18 been a teamsman and shepherd?’¹⁰³⁹ The inference was obvious. Tribunals did not operate in a vacuum and were susceptible to the wider court of public opinion, which often vilified farmers and their sons. One correspondent styled ‘Attested Married Man’ condemned them as selfish and alluded to Newport where only one tiller of the soil had enlisted, ‘content to let other people fight for them’.¹⁰⁴⁰ Later, a Private in the 23rd Welsh thought a diet of bully beef would soften their hearts.¹⁰⁴¹ Despite periodic agricultural comb-outs there was a persistent view (echoed in other national studies) of how farmers dispensed with hired

¹⁰³⁶ *H&MHT*, 28 March 1917.

¹⁰³⁷ *PCG*, 7 December 1917.

¹⁰³⁸ *PH*, 30 March 1917.

¹⁰³⁹ PRO D/LJ/945. Correspondence and papers of W.R. James, clerk, Narberth Rural District Council, 1916. Notes for tribunal 7 March 1917. George Garfield Davies of Templeton worked with his father on 200 acres with 60 head of cattle. The applicant received conditional exemption.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *CE*, 23 March 1916.

¹⁰⁴¹ *H&MHT*, 6 December 1916.

labour in order to keep their sons at home.¹⁰⁴² These sentiments were stimulated by seemingly over-generous exemptions to farmers' sons in their guises of cowmen or shepherds.¹⁰⁴³

No subject more inflamed passionate public discussion and debate than the position of Pembroke Dockyard which was widely seen as a place of refuge from military service by many local tribunals. Such criticism does appear to be purely a wartime phenomenon. This seems an attitude commonly found towards other dockyards across the country. The presence of so many eligible single men, highly paid and safe from military appropriation, in that establishment, was widely deplored even by military representatives. During an application by Albert George Thomas aged eighteen, before the Haverfordwest Rural tribunal it transpired that one of his brothers had secured work there in September 1915. According to Major Eaton Evans he fled there like a frightened rabbit to get out of joining up.¹⁰⁴⁴

Stories of high wages for little work abounded, not helped by stories of 'dockyard sprees' to Saundersfoot where alcohol-laden youths made an exhibition of themselves.¹⁰⁴⁵ It was believed that in this shirkers' paradise, Admiralty badges protected the wearers at a facility where 4,000 men did the work of 2,000 and where 'officials go the government about every matter in a most wasteful and thriftless way'¹⁰⁴⁶ When the Admiralty did de-badge men, which made them eligible for military service, those selected were older men with larger families whose cost to the state in Separation Allowances would be considerable. In May 1917, 38-year-old Rees Smith of Neyland, with eight children, appeared before the tribunal but even the

¹⁰⁴² *Ibid.*, 19 June 1918.

¹⁰⁴³ *TT*, 24 February 1916.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *PH*, 21 July 1916.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 31 August 1917.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *PH*, 11 May 1917.

military representative conceded 'I am not pressing for this man'.¹⁰⁴⁷ The voluble protests from local tribunals eventually extracted a promise of a comb-out from the dockyard with 300 men being made available. By degrees this number was whittled down to just fourteen and eventually nil.¹⁰⁴⁸ An exasperated chairman remarked 'Why doesn't Sir Auckland Geddes comb out dockyards? They are full of able bodied men.'¹⁰⁴⁹ A newspaper editorial considered how a battalion could easily be spared from Pembroke without any diminution of work and attributed the inaction to jealousy within Government departments fighting for the privilege of retaining their own men.¹⁰⁵⁰

The ethos of equal service and sacrifice vitiated against tribunals remaining silent on activities which employed large numbers of single men who enjoyed official protection. Pembroke Dockyard was not alone in this respect. The Milford Haven tribunal clashed with the Port Labour Committee and Milford Dock Company despite the desire to work in harmony with the tribunal. The latter were dissatisfied finding that the Port Labour Committee had arranged the exemption of so many men who were eligible for military service.¹⁰⁵¹ The docks had 149 employees in March 1916. The presence in town of so many single men created tensions and compelled the tribunal to adjourn cases in anticipation of Government action to declare them liable for service. The tribunal showed considerable independence of spirit in adjourning the cases of all married men *sine die* until single men had been released. In June 1917 the Milford Haven tribunal again put off consideration of all cases of married men which prompted a LGB inspector to visit. On 3 July 1917 the tribunal expressed its

¹⁰⁴⁷ *H&MHT*, 9 May 1917.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 27 June 1917.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 June 1917.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 10 July 1918.

¹⁰⁵¹ PRO MHU/SE/11/1. Milford Haven Urban District Council Military Service Tribunal minutes 1915-18; 4 January 1917.

exasperation with the system and resolved to write to the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Admiralty, LGB and Board of Trade in that vein.¹⁰⁵² Rising tensions and resentment were all too obvious when the county appeal tribunal went on strike in the summer of 1917; they resolved not to deal with the cases of any more married men until the 300 Pembroke dockyard employees had been recruited.¹⁰⁵³ The issue was never satisfactorily settled, so in July 1918 they once again resolved not to consider cases of men aged 36-41.¹⁰⁵⁴ Further, some of the individual tribunals displayed hubris in their relationship with the county body, especially when their original decisions were overturned.¹⁰⁵⁵

The operation of the apparatus of conscription was not without its tensions and disagreements, which sometimes spilled over into choleric outbursts against other tribunals, the county appeal tribunal, Local Government Board or other agencies of Government. One initial controversy questioned the propriety and fairness of the county appeal tribunal which first met on 22 March 1916. Being composed entirely of monoglot English speakers from a small geographical area of Pembrokeshire, it was argued that primary Welsh speakers would not receive proper justice through a fundamental language barrier. Questions were raised about the 'secret and mysterious County Appeal Tribunal.'¹⁰⁵⁶ Local authorities were at the forefront of the agitation campaigning for Welsh speakers to be appointed. The Haverfordwest Rural District Council, which covered the area from St David's to Newport, entered their emphatic protest against the unfairness to Welsh-speaking appellants along with complaints at

¹⁰⁵² Ibid.

¹⁰⁵³ *CE*, 28 June 1917.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *PCG*, 12 July 1918.

¹⁰⁵⁵ *TT*, 11 June 1917.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *PCG*, 7 April 1916.

the lack of farming representation on the appeal tribunal.¹⁰⁵⁷ Narberth Rural District Council thought the tribunal wholly unrepresentative of large parts of the county.¹⁰⁵⁸ The Member for Pembrokeshire, Walter Roch, questioned the secretary of the LGB over the issue. Within a month he was asked to nominate two Welsh speakers to the appeal tribunal which was seen as a notable local victory.¹⁰⁵⁹

The tribunals had considerable latitude regarding imposing conditions requiring exempted men to join the Volunteer Training Corps (VTC). The advent of thousands of new 'volunteers' passed over to them by the tribunals marked a watershed in the volunteer movement.¹⁰⁶⁰ In 1917 Sections 'A' and 'B' were intended to distinguish those who might eventually undertake full military service, with those in section 'A' expected to undertake fourteen drills a month until they became 'efficient'.¹⁰⁶¹ It was much harder to expect rural dwellers to undertake such drills given their rurality and difficulties with travelling. The Military Service Act 1918 gave tribunals the power to make volunteer duties compulsory, although policing outcomes were anything but conscientiously followed up.¹⁰⁶² The Milford Haven tribunal resolved to insist on single men enjoying exemption of two months or more to join the volunteer corps from 4 January 1917.¹⁰⁶³ The Haverfordwest Borough tribunal imposed the VTC condition and warned that those given exemption would be judged in the light of it during further appeals.¹⁰⁶⁴ Pembrokeshire tribunals relaxed the VTC condition throughout 1918 especially for older applicants. Thus the Milford Haven tribunal

¹⁰⁵⁷ PRO HAR/SE/2/2. Haverfordwest Rural District Council Minutes 1917-26; 22 March 1916.

¹⁰⁵⁸ PRO NAR/SE/2/4. Narberth Rural District Council minutes 1914-19; 27 March 1916.

¹⁰⁵⁹ CE, 27 April 1916.

¹⁰⁶⁰ K.W. Mitchinson, *Defending Albion. Britain's Home Army 1908-1919* (Basingstoke, 2005), 147.

¹⁰⁶¹ McDermott, *British Military Service Tribunals*, 199.

¹⁰⁶² *Ibid.*, 211.

¹⁰⁶³ PRO MHU/SE/11/1. Milford Haven Urban District Council Military Service Tribunal minutes. 1915-18.

¹⁰⁶⁴ PCG, 26 October 1917.

removed the imposition entirely for older men in the summer.¹⁰⁶⁵ Men aged 43-48 were excused the condition at the same time they received six months' exemption.¹⁰⁶⁶ The record of the tribunals is much more nuanced than might be previously thought, although it was their attitude to conscientious objectors which earned them the obloquy of later generations.

The operation of the local tribunals bore a remarkable degree of congruity with the national scene. Their task was a seemingly impossible one, yet they did not flinch from such an arduous duty and largely performed the task to the best of their ability with only occasional lapses to occupational bias, as with the Haverfordwest Rural Tribunal which was seen as a farmers' clique. Protest regarding provision of Welsh language and the failure to comb out government establishments of eligible men did provoke protest and a tribunal 'strike' in the summer of 1918, demonstrating that the process did provoke resentment against perceived injustice and unfairness and that Pembrokeshire tribunals were anything but passive tools of government direction.

Conscientious Objection

The mental picture of the conscientious objector standing stoically before the Military Service Tribunals has become a powerful image in the public perception of the First World War.¹⁰⁶⁷ The introduction of the Military Service Act contained a unique exemption, clause s.2 (1) (d), which provided for exemption for those who possessed 'genuine objection' to military service, although the definition was not explicitly

¹⁰⁶⁵ PRO MHU/SE/11/1. Milford Haven Urban District Council Military Service Tribunal minutes 1915-18; 9 July 1918.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *PH*, 19 July 1918.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gregory, 'Military Service Tribunals', 177.

described.¹⁰⁶⁸ McDermott asserts how modern empathy with pacifist principles lead to an almost mandatory depiction of the objector as a victim and martyr of a rapacious spirit of militarism.¹⁰⁶⁹ Early literature established an orthodoxy in which tribunals were inveterately hostile towards the objector as demonstrated by Beatrice Webb's depiction of the tribunals as 'a scandalous example of lay justice.'¹⁰⁷⁰ McDermott supplies a more nuanced analysis in which the tribunals were faced with the impossible task of assuaging public opinion which was generally hostile to conscientious objectors, with justice to individual sensibilities. The tribunals' record is not as damning as previously maintained, and not as deserving of their reputation for bias and injustice.¹⁰⁷¹ Tribunalists were sensitive to charges of going soft but they nevertheless came to some accommodation with the majority of objectors through conditional exemption.¹⁰⁷²

Bibbings describes how conscientious objectors were viewed as a culturally aberrant form of manhood, degenerative, sybaritic, cowardly and oblivious to calls of duty and obligation to country.¹⁰⁷³ Even the very existence of a 'conscience clause' was seen as a 'slacker's charter' by many.¹⁰⁷⁴ It was assumed how 'normal' men, repelled by wartime violence, could be cured so as to recover their natural bellicosity.¹⁰⁷⁵ In the lexicon of manliness the volunteer soldier was the apogee, while the objector (often

¹⁰⁶⁸ Lois Bibbings, 'Images of Manliness: The Portrayal of Soldiers and Conscientious Objectors in the Great War', *Social and Legal Studies* 12 (2003), 340.

¹⁰⁶⁹ McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals', 63-64.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men*, 73.

¹⁰⁷¹ John Rae, *Conscience and Politics* (London, 1970), 60.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁰⁷³ Bibbings, 'Images of Manliness,' 343.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Thomas C. Kennedy, 'Public Opinion and the Conscientious Objector, 1915-1919', *JBS*, 12:2 (1973), 108.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Joanna Bourke, 'Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of 'Shell Shocked men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914-39', *JCH*, 35:1 (2000), 59.

viewed as parasitic and feminised) was excluded from any form of masculinity.¹⁰⁷⁶

Conscientious objectors came from a broad spectrum of economic and social backgrounds although overall numbers were small. Nationally some 16,500 cases have been identified, one third of one per cent of all appeals.¹⁰⁷⁷ The vast majority accepted non-combatant service in the Non Combatant Corps or useful work of national importance as a *quid pro quo* for exemption. Numbers coming before tribunals were usually very small. Slocombe has identified 27 out of 1,500 cases before Wiltshire tribunals and notes the reasonable treatment which they received.¹⁰⁷⁸ With only 106 appeals out of 6,801 Northamptonshire cases, McDermott sees their rarity as explaining apparent inconsistencies in treatment.¹⁰⁷⁹ Spinks notes the very small numbers of objectors in his analysis of military service tribunals in south Warwickshire.¹⁰⁸⁰ In Pembrokeshire only 20 cases of conscientious objection have been traced, the vast majority in 1916 when the conscience issue was at its most bitterly contested and debated. At a local level there was probably a degree of underreporting. Rural and town dwellers are almost equally represented. As with the national picture, very few absolute exemptions were encountered. Clergymen were exempted from military service. For example, William Vaughan, the lay minister of Pontfaen, was able to satisfy the recruiting officer before the St Dogmaels Rural District Tribunal that as a *bona fide* minister of religion he was entitled to unfettered exemption.¹⁰⁸¹ The aggressive line of questioning of appellants, usually during the

¹⁰⁷⁶ Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men*, 95.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Kennedy, 'Public Opinion and the Conscientious Objector', 105.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ivor Slocombe, 'Recruitment into the Armed Forces during the First World War. The work of the Military Tribunals in Wiltshire, 1915-1918', *Local Historian*, 20 (2000), 111.

¹⁰⁷⁹ McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals', 68.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Philip Spinks, 'First World War Conscientious Objection in South Warwickshire', *The Local Historian*, 42:4 (2012), 287.

¹⁰⁸¹ *CE*, 18 May 1916. The only source for discovering instances of conscientious objection come from the five local newspapers. Even when cases are found in the rare surviving tribunal minutes there is no detail disclosed.

first six months of conscription, did much to colour the tribunals' reputation for bullying, earning them a rebuke from Walter Long who advocated a less harsh tone.¹⁰⁸² The often quoted verbal abuse of objectors, as only being fit to be on the end of a German bayonet, caused considerable unease.¹⁰⁸³ This notorious derision is not encountered in any Pembrokeshire press coverage. The standard moral test posed to applicants was to raise the quandary of their behaviour if a German attacked their mother. It was not until May 1916 that a list of approved questions was distributed to tribunals to formalise the interview of applicants who invoked the conscience clause of the MSA.¹⁰⁸⁴

Pembrokeshire appellants cited a variety of religious, moral or political grounds for their objection. At the Tenby tribunal on 6 March 1916, George E. Wood, a window cleaner, stated his objection to military service and his inactivity should a German land and be intent on murdering his mother. An exasperated military representative retorted: 'What is the good of arguing with a man who would do such a thing?'¹⁰⁸⁵ There was no other vituperation of Wood although he was passed for non-combatant service. At the Haverfordwest Borough tribunal in February 1916, William Rees, aged 22, a tailor, applied for exemption on the grounds of ill-health and his objection to taking life. He was unwilling to 'go for' a German who attacked his sister.¹⁰⁸⁶ A number of local objections were based on moralistic rather than overtly religious grounds. Thomas Reynish, a merchant's clerk, recapitulated his reasons to the Haverfordwest tribunal as being humanitarian and also his objection to non-combatant

¹⁰⁸² Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men*, 73.

¹⁰⁸³ Turner, *Dear Old Blighty*, 175.

¹⁰⁸⁴ McDermott, 'Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals', 67.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *TO*, 9 March 1916.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *H&MHT*, 1 March 1916.

work.¹⁰⁸⁷ Ernest Charlton of Milford Haven told his local tribunal how he would run away if the Germans landed and how he was not ‘cut out for military life.’¹⁰⁸⁸

McDermott has alluded to the difficulty which faced objectors who based their claims on secular or political moral principles.¹⁰⁸⁹ Political objectors were often viewed as distasteful and usually had their claims rejected out of hand. William Owen of Milford Road, Haverfordwest, and a member of the NCF and of the ILP, initially applied on conscientious grounds but expressed his willingness to join the Royal Army Medical Corps.¹⁰⁹⁰

For a county where Liberalism and Nonconformity were deeply engrained in society, the issue of conscientious objection was one which exercised the scruples of local religious denominations, although their assertion of the rights of conscience was still robustly expressed. At the quarterly meeting of the Pembrokeshire Baptist Association in April 1916 the president, the Rev Owen D. Campbell of Haverfordwest, addressed the issue of the tribunals. He conceded how shirkers, anxious to save their own skins, could invoke the conscience argument. Conversely the sneers of some tribunal members had awakened in many minds fears of religious tolerance, which their Puritan forefathers suffered for; liberty of conscience was seriously endangered. He warned against the recrudescence of militarism.¹⁰⁹¹ What constituted proper religious ministry made occasional cases far from clear cut. In April 1916, for example, L.J. Lloyd of Brymaston appealed for exemption on the grounds he was practically doing the work of a fully ordained minister of the Gospel. This equivalence was not fully accepted and he received three months’ temporary

¹⁰⁸⁷ *PCG*, 10 March 1916.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 24 March 1916.

¹⁰⁸⁹ McDermott, ‘Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals’, 76.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *PH*, 17 March 1916.

¹⁰⁹¹ *H&MHT*, 19 April 1916.

exemption.¹⁰⁹²

Those claiming exemption on religious grounds could expect close scrutiny as to the timing of their calling or avocation. R.J. Watson, a YMCA student at West Blockhouse, had given up a college career in preparation for the mission field. He was granted exemption from combatant service.¹⁰⁹³ At Neyland a Seventh Day Adventist of ten years standing and a strict Sabbatarian also received excusal from combatant duty but no absolute exemption.¹⁰⁹⁴ There were some forthright expressions of hostility against any form of military service. At Crymych nineteen-year-old Thomas Thomas told the Fishguard tribunal that khaki was the anti-Christ and he would save neither wife nor mother if he was obliged to wear it in so doing.¹⁰⁹⁵ Some of the appellants had their own standard of the term 'conscience'. At the County appeal tribunal in April 1917, Clement Davies of St Dogmaels, a theological student, caused considerable amusement in his alleged willingness to fight savages 'but not against Germans.'¹⁰⁹⁶ He was passed to the NCC with no right of appeal to the Central tribunal in London.

The interests of the appellant under the MSA were protected by the right of appeal to the county appeal body. Over an eighteen-month period one objector, George E. Wood of Tenby displayed the opportunities and safeguards which the system did have in place to the individual. He appealed against the initial ruling of the Tenby tribunal.¹⁰⁹⁷ His appeal to the county appeal tribunal was dismissed. Even so, by April 1917, Wood again applied for absolute exemption on account of that being in the

¹⁰⁹² *H&MHT*, 12 April 1916.

¹⁰⁹³ *PH*, 14 April 1916.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *PCG*, 23 June 1916.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3 March 1916.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *CE*, 19 April 1917.

¹⁰⁹⁷ *TO*, 9 March 1916.

army was not in accordance with the ‘Divine Power’.¹⁰⁹⁸ His appeal was further dismissed.¹⁰⁹⁹ Although cases heard on the grounds of conscientious objection were small indeed nationally, they represented the meeting of class, political and religious belief, versus state necessity. The negotiation of these competing interests was by no means unsuccessful in Pembrokeshire, where considerable latitude was afforded those who were prepared to serve other than by bearing arms. The war also ushered in the novelty of female military service, part of the changing dynamic of gender roles which proved highly contentious in its own right.

Female Military Service

During the war female patriotic national service challenged traditional gender boundaries by contradicting their presence in only the domestic sphere: firstly as advocates of male military enlistment in 1914 and then, from 1917, as active participants in paramilitary units themselves. The research of Robert, Noakes and Lamm has seen much greater emphasis on the concept and role of the female ‘warrior’ even though they were never in combatant service and performed auxiliary functional roles.¹¹⁰⁰ These two phases of female articulation to direct involvement are evident in Pembrokeshire. Female pressure was a highly potent force during the eighteen months of voluntary recruitment; the image of female pugilism encouraging less-than-willing males is a frequently encountered one and is one of the five key

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 21 June 1917.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 16 August 1917.

¹¹⁰⁰ Krisztina Robert, ‘Gender, class and Patriotism in Women’s Paramilitary Units in First World War Britain’, *IHR*, 19:1 (1997); Lucy Noakes, ‘Demobilising the Military Woman: Constructions of Class and Gender in Britain after the First World War’, *Gender and History* 19:1 (2007); Doron Lamm, ‘Emily Goes to War: Explaining the Recruitment to the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps in World War I’, in Billie Melman (ed.), *Borderlines. Gender and Identities in Peace and War* (London, 1998).

influences prompting enlistment identified by Ferguson.¹¹⁰¹

Women's physical and rhetorical power was soon harnessed in the service of the state, both as the voice of male duty and as objects for which men were being encouraged to fight to defend.¹¹⁰² In the autumn of 1914, propagandists encouraged women to shame men into enlisting by questioning their masculinity.¹¹⁰³ The strident message encouraged wives and sweethearts to send their men folk cheerfully on their way, while other girls should 'refuse to be seen in the company of any young man who does not wear the khaki hallmarks of manhood'.¹¹⁰⁴ Those lacking the trappings of manhood did not deserve female attention.¹¹⁰⁵ Doubtless some of these endeavours were ill-advised and counter-productive, although Noakes points to the female desire to do something rather than evidence of their aggressive jingoism.¹¹⁰⁶

Reminders of duty and manly patriotism from female proponents of enlistment appear early on in Pembrokeshire. Engagement in public debates was rare before the war and certainly women would have been unlikely to share platforms with members of Parliament as they did after 1914. At an open-air meeting at Newport, Miss Blanche Bowen delivered an eloquent and impassioned address attracting a wary comment from Walter Roch MP, who had fallen foul of the Suffragettes in 1908, on how such oratory might well be used against him after the war.¹¹⁰⁷ Local women did not spare their criticism of those men whom they considered were lacking in patriotism. They were scathing in their criticism of the continuance of rugby football matches even

¹¹⁰¹ Ferguson, *Pity of War*, 205.

¹¹⁰² Nicoletta F. Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the memory of the Great War', *JBS*, 36:2 (1997), 183.

¹¹⁰³ Bonnie J. White, 'Volunteerism and Early Recruitment Efforts in Devonshire'. 664.

¹¹⁰⁴ Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army. War and the Gentle Sex 1907-1948* (Abingdon, 2006), 43.

¹¹⁰⁵ Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men', 189.

¹¹⁰⁶ Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 44.

¹¹⁰⁷ *H&MHT*, 16 September 1914.

after the outbreak of war.¹¹⁰⁸ At the great Tenby recruiting rally in September 1914 the only female speaker made a direct appeal to the women in the audience not to make their men into cowards and shirkers, and to encourage them to enlist ‘even in the face of certain danger and possible death’.¹¹⁰⁹

The critical role of women in the domestic sphere was acknowledged by General Ivor Philipps when he blamed sluggish recruiting on the influence of women in stopping the men from going.¹¹¹⁰ One St David’s woman wrote a penny pamphlet entitled ‘A Duty Call’ in order to stimulate recruitment and swell the coffers of the County War Fund at the same time, although no copy of it has been traced.¹¹¹¹ The explicit role of women as recruiting sergeants was acknowledged at a meeting held at the Haverfordwest Drill Hall on 25 June 1915. Major Eaton Evans referred to ‘English’ boys stepping forward to fight, whereas Welsh ones, presumably meaning Welsh-speaking ones, were still to be seen loafing about the streets smoking cigarettes. He thought the local girls could point them in the direction of their duty. At the same meeting a Captain stated how no decent girl should be going out with a medically fit man not in khaki. Any girl who did was a disgrace to her country.¹¹¹² Women’s immediate role in voluntary recruitment was one involving personal sacrifice. One mother, ‘in a humble rank of life’, pondered the departure of her two sons on military service, adding ruefully how it would have been wrong for her to stop them ‘and if I had they would never have forgiven me’.¹¹¹³

The participation of women in military spheres extended from one of mere advocacy

¹¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 September 1914.

¹¹⁰⁹ *TO*, 1 October 1914.

¹¹¹⁰ *H&MHT*, 9 December 1914.

¹¹¹¹ *PCG*, 26 February 1915.

¹¹¹² *PH*, 2 July 1915.

¹¹¹³ *H&MHT*, 27 October 1915.

for men to one of active participation by them from 1917. Fewer conscripts than expected from conscription combined with heightened casualties in a series of offensives from the Somme to Passchendaele and the need to maintain food supplies led to a fundamental reappraisal of the army's support services, an evaluation which saw a large-scale use of female labour which is seen in Pembrokeshire. Female auxiliary military service had emerged gradually since 1914, but the creation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps by Army Council Instruction 573 in March 1917 was a novel departure from former experience.¹¹¹⁴ This body was supplemented by the Women's Royal Naval Service and Women's Auxiliary Air Service in January and April 1918 respectively.¹¹¹⁵ The WAAC eventually consisted of 37,848 privates or 'members' by 1918 with 1,272 officers or 'officials'. The organisation was re-named Queen Mary's Auxiliary Army Corps in 1918.¹¹¹⁶ They offered the same opportunity of release from tedium as men had experienced in 1914 and the attraction was not as one-dimensional as enthusiastic Ruby Ord's declaration 'It was all patriotism'.¹¹¹⁷ Enhanced employment prospects and opportunity for Foreign Service must have been attractions.¹¹¹⁸

The WAAC personnel were clerical workers, clerks, cleaners, cooks, waitresses, mechanics, telephonists and drivers. Members were generally recruited from the working class and it was marked by a conventional and conservative class hierarchy. This prejudice was never more clearly expressed than in the appropriation by women of military-style uniform, which was a visible reminder of shifting gender roles in

¹¹¹⁴ Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 68.

¹¹¹⁵ Beckett, *Home Front*, 73.

¹¹¹⁶ Lucy Noakes, 'Demobilising the Military Woman: Constructions of Class and Gender in Britain after the First World War', *Gender and History*, 19:1 (2007), 148.

¹¹¹⁷ Krisztina Robert, 'Gender, Class and Patriotism in Women's Paramilitary Units in First World War Britain', *IHR* 19:1 (1997), 52.

¹¹¹⁸ Doron Lamm, 'Emily Goes to War: Explaining the Recruitment to the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in World War I', in Billie Melman (ed.), *Borderlines*, 391.

wartime. Female uniforms, although a sign of patriotism, could easily be construed as a loss of femininity, frivolity, selfishness, promiscuity and contravening acceptable norms of conduct.¹¹¹⁹ Even well-meaning comment scarcely implied respect. When female clerks at the Royal Air Force headquarters at Haverfordwest received new uniforms in November 1918 (Illustration 19) they were described as looking ‘very nice and charming’ in their new rig-outs.¹¹²⁰



Illustration: 19 Miss Nellie Dempster of Wiston, an early recruit in the Women's Auxiliary Air Service in 1918. Studio portrait by Madame Higgs of Haverfordwest .

Discourses of class, gender and respectability emerge in the appearance of female paramilitary units in Pembrokeshire. An initial meeting at Tenby was held for the

¹¹¹⁹ Lucy Noakes, ‘Playing at Being Soldiers?’ British Women and Military Uniform in the First World War’, in Jessica Meyer (ed.), *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, 2008), 140-144.

¹¹²⁰ *PCG*, 22 November 1918.

purpose of explaining the new units. It apparently received little attention.¹¹²¹ Similar meetings were held across the county at Haverfordwest, Tenby, Neyland, Milford Haven and Fishguard. The first substantial allocation of female staff across camps, forts and other military establishments came in early November 1917 when 200-300 women were expected.¹¹²² A Pembroke Dock meeting attracted a decent attendance of around 300-400 in which appeals were made to those women not doing work of national importance to join up.¹¹²³ A follow-up meeting was held in the same town on 12 December 1917 and brought forward a further explanation about uniforms, wages and postings while Miss Andrew, head recruiting officer for Wales, gave an assurance that the Corps was properly conducted and suitable for young women.¹¹²⁴ The latter was an allusion to persistent rumours of sexual immorality in the WAAC which research has demonstrated to be largely groundless.¹¹²⁵

Considerable employment opportunities existed in the local military centres so that south Pembrokeshire produced a number of recruits for a number of local army camps whereas hardly any came from the north.¹¹²⁶ One woman who responded was Miss Parry Davies, the daughter of the vicar of Puncteston, who was based at the RGA Signal depot, Chatham. She urged her fellow women to share the hardships, trials and sacrifice of ‘our beloved brothers and friends.’

CONCLUSION

During the era of voluntary recruitment the response from Pembrokeshire was similar to other regions bearing like geographical, economic and occupational structures;

¹¹²¹ *TO*, 4 October 1917.

¹¹²² *CE*, 25 October 1917.

¹¹²³ *PCG*, 19 October 1917.

¹¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 14 December 1917.

¹¹²⁵ Joyce Marlow (ed.), *The Virago Book of Women and the Great War 1914-18* (London, 1998), 312.

¹¹²⁶ *CE*, 8 November 1917.

being relatively remote, with a scattered rural population, did not lend itself to the highest level of voluntary recruitment. This study allows an in-depth view of the recruitment processes from a local perspective, which was highly distinctive through the position of the Welsh language and particulars of religious Nonconformity. Implicit in the rhetoric and practice of recruitment were debates over the male body where clothing in khaki became almost an act of benediction. Gender, economy, politics and regional identity also came into play. Moreover the reference to the huge naval facility at Plymouth immediately removed a significant amount of manpower from the local recruitment pool. Similar characteristics of rurality and the presence of Pembroke Dockyard make comparison with the Pembrokeshire experience a meaningful one.¹¹²⁷ Bonnie White describes the contentious issue of the ‘dockyard umbrella’ at Devonport as sheltering workers during the Derby Scheme and conscription era, arguments highly pertinent in Pembrokeshire where Pembroke dockyard was thought to provide a similar bolthole.¹¹²⁸

The dominant position of agriculture, fishing and existing military facilities were unlikely to provide the context for record-breaking recruitment. Perceived slow response from rural districts and bitter invective against farmers and their sons, made the Pembrokeshire narrative congruous with the national picture.¹¹²⁹ When the opportunity presented itself, many farm labourers did enlist and were indeed ‘damned glad to get off the farms.’¹¹³⁰ Local newspapers gave widespread coverage to farmers’ alleged hostility to local recruiting agents. During the Derby Scheme, one Dale farmer

¹¹²⁷ Andy Gale, *The West Country and the First World War: Recruits and Identities*. PhD Thesis (Lancaster, 2010), 120.

¹¹²⁸ Bonnie J. White, ‘Volunteerism and Early Recruitment Efforts in Devonshire, August 1914-December 1915’, *THJ*, 52:3 (2009), 650.

¹¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 651.

¹¹³⁰ Mansfield, *English Farmworkers*, 90.

apparently warned off the canvasser: 'Go Back, Don't come here'.¹¹³¹ Rural enlistments were appreciably slower than the towns, reflecting the demands of the agricultural seasons, harvesting, haymaking and so on. Nor should it be assumed that the public were mere passive recipients of recruiting propaganda. One north Pembrokeshire correspondent writing in the *Pembrokeshire Herald* explained the poor response of his neighbourhood as driven by hostility to the hectoring, bullying recruiting methods which were entirely counter-productive.¹¹³² Such conditions were an irrelevance when the state imposed an obligation of military service on all adult males beginning in March 1916.

Military Service Tribunals sent in a considerable number of recruits to the army but not as many as the promoters of conscription had hoped for. Nationally some 371,500 men were conscripted between 1 March 1916 -31 March 1917, less than half the number of exemptions granted.¹¹³³ Numbers did increase when military crises warranted desperate measures. In May 1918, 82,214 men were taken by compulsion.¹¹³⁴ Across Pembrokeshire, the number of men taken by conscription is impossible to calculate other than the decisions of individual tribunals as reported in the press. The Pembrokeshire tribunals were not cowed and as discussed earlier did not hesitate to strike when they perceived injustice to married fathers, while comb-outs of Pembroke Dockyard and Milford Docks never materialised. Nor is there any evidence of a cosy relationship with the tribunal military representatives. They represented the public face of the process and were in no way mere adjuncts of the military edifice. Pembrokeshire tribunals attempted to maintain the precarious balance between domestic economy and needs of the state. They prioritised food production

¹¹³¹ *H&MHT*, 27 October 1915.

¹¹³² *PH*, 20 November 1914.

¹¹³³ Beckett, 'The Nation in Arms', 13.

¹¹³⁴ *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire*, 219.

and transportation sectors and sole business proprietors. Nor were they respecters of persons, with some well-publicised refusals to socially elite appellants. They were far from infallible but even they felt like helpless cogs in a gigantic machine. Some Neyland tribunalists complained about ‘influences at work’ which translated certain men into Pembroke Dockyard, making a farce of their sittings.¹¹³⁵ Operating within a decentralised framework gave tribunals considerable powers of discretion which perhaps accounts for charges of inconsistency against tribunals from critics in the press and general public. Each seems to have adopted their own standard with regard to the enforcement of exempted men to join the Volunteer Training Corps, effectively the home army. This represented a *quid pro quo* for at least some service in return for exemption.

Nor should we passively assume that Pembrokeshire conscripts matched the stereotype of their national equivalents, universally disgruntled and pitiful characters. This does not necessarily accord with the sense of pride which military service could engender.¹¹³⁶ One school teacher, A.B. Cattanach of Rosemarket, writing in the school log on 18 April 1917 explained: ‘I consider it my duty to serve without further appeal’.¹¹³⁷

Although the fire had gone out of the controversy after 1916 there was still clear antipathy and hostility to appellants raising the conscience clause. At the county appeal tribunal in 1918, Ivor Driscoll, who already held a war agricultural voucher keeping him on the land and out of the army, sought exemption as a conscientious objector. He received short shrift from the tribunal as the chairman retorted: ‘You

¹¹³⁵ PCG, 27 October 1916.

¹¹³⁶ Gale, *The West Country and the First World War*, 135.

¹¹³⁷ PRO SSR/1/120/1. Rosemarket National School Logbook 1913-31; 18 April 1917.

won't get one from us'.¹¹³⁸ Quantitatively the issue of conscientious objection in Pembrokeshire was not significant. Given the public hostility towards the 'do nothings', local tribunals dealt with the rare cases without the savage denunciation which has entered the mythology of the tribunals, often without justification. In almost every case the Pembrokeshire tribunal imposed some lateral obligation, usually non-combatant duty in recognition of their avowed moral and religious scruples. The First World War brought forward the novelty of conscription and the legislative safeguards which sought to protect, within strict limits, the consciences of the religious community.

Female military service in Pembrokeshire could also be said to be equally marginal despite the active steps to promote the WAAC. Numbers who enrolled are difficult to gauge. One measure is their presence on the Absent Voters List (presumably of females aged 30 and above) in December 1918. The members were employed in canteens, nursing and munitions centres. Annie Williams of Cresselly was employed at the canteen at Bush Camp while Martha Rees of Prendergast had enrolled in the Queen Alexandra's Nursing Service.¹¹³⁹ Female roles in military recruitment evolved from ones of advocacy and apology for male service to their own involvement in paramilitary units sanctioned by the state, although their status and claims of equal citizenship (as expressed through political rights) did not equate with those of men. Those remembering female pugnacity in calling men forward in 1914 had the opportunity of firing back some invective of their own in 1917. An 'Old Soldier', still smarting from the impertinence of challenging men in mufti by 'officious young women', could now legitimately ask: 'Why are you not in khaki?' He added that the Mayor of Haverfordwest, who had two strapping daughters, should set an example by

¹¹³⁸ *PH*, 4 October 1918.

¹¹³⁹ PRO D/LJ/739. Register of Absent Voters for Pembrokeshire December 1918.

putting them in the army. He could then speak with some authority.¹¹⁴⁰ Class antagonism was apparent in complaints made by ‘A Woman War Worker’ at the elaborate clothing worn by some of the main instigators of the WAAC cause at Tenby. Despite strictures about wartime economy those who sought to send off women from humbler walks of life into the armed forces flaunted their expensive finery. These displays were ‘bad form’ from those whose patriotism consisted solely ‘of inducing others to do what they themselves ignore’.¹¹⁴¹ In Pembrokeshire, ‘Eve in khaki’ was a very rarely encountered sight.

Military recruitment was the most fundamental requirement for the nation state at war and the four years of war resonated with the terms of volunteer, sacrifice, duty and patriotism which the enlistees of 1914-15 were held to demonstrate. The constitutional innovation of conscription exposed widespread communal, economic and social tensions during the operation of tribunals and expectations of male military service which the concept of manhood required. Those who chose to challenge them on conscientious grounds were condemned for their deviance, while women, upon whom there was no compulsion, were praised for their voluntary response. Military service provided the blank canvas for expressions of patriotism, conscience and community cohesion. Nor was this entirely personal. There were a variety of dispositions and identity formations based on class, politics and religious affiliation, while the symbolism of khaki assumed hugely significant proportions in the classification of the male body and the esteem and worth it was endowed with.

The chapter on recruitment in Pembrokeshire has displayed the tensions arising from taking large numbers of men from the local economy and the animosity felt towards

¹¹⁴⁰ *PH*, 7 December 1917.

¹¹⁴¹ *TO*, 1 November 1917.

the agricultural sector though the perception of shirking, while the conduct of the military service tribunals fail to show the widespread excesses and partiality which the historiography has traditionally asserted. That said, the Haverfordwest Rural District Tribunal was a glaring exception by their spiteful cancellation of the exemption granted to the Solva branch secretary of the Agricultural Labourers' Union, a reflection of their bitterness towards labourers for forming trade unions. A similar vindictiveness was shown in neighbouring Cardiganshire in the case of Richard Llewellyn-Jones, an early member of the Llanilar farm labourers' union established in late 1917.¹¹⁴²

Besides the maritime and remote western location of the county rendering it distinctive, the linguistic divide within Pembrokeshire too, was a particular trait which could give rise to tensions. The Welsh-speaking north, following intense public protests belatedly saw provision for the appointment of Welsh-speaking representatives onto the County Appeal Tribunal, while in January 1915 Welsh-language recruiting posters were distributed. This research is a valuable local study of wartime recruiting in a peripheral rural and semi-urban context, in microcosm showing how no 'typical' experience can really be stated since the economic and social determinants of locality were so often singular and distinct. The unprecedented military expansion of 1914-18 which created a vast infrastructure of training camps and military bases had, and continues to have, an impact in terms of Pembrokeshire community facilities in 2015. The activities of the War Office Disposal Board in selling military assets led to the local acquisition of huts and buildings which served

¹¹⁴² David W. Howell, 'Labour Organization Amongst Agricultural Workers in Wales 1872-1921', *WHR*, 16, (1992-3),

as town and village halls, mission churches, school woodworking classrooms and British Legion clubrooms.¹¹⁴³

¹¹⁴³ *PCG*, 13 February 1920. The Ministry of Munitions in one sale at the Transport Depot, Neyland, included the auctioning off of sixteen army huts and other living quarters including Regimental Institute and guard hut.

Chapter IV

Changing Identities and Personal Expressions of Patriotism

Individuals, no matter what their economic status, gender, class, occupation or religious adherence, nevertheless still experienced the First World War, as Noakes observes, within a common framework and shared sense of national testing and endurance.¹¹⁴⁴ This chapter investigates differing ideas of identity and citizenship across social groups in Pembrokeshire, and also selected cross cutting themes which provide an insight into how age, gender or social groups fared during the war. It looks variously at women's behaviour, sexual mores, customs and their assumption of limited political rights, adolescent behaviour, and questions, as contemporaries feared, whether the war led to a rising tide of youthful criminality. The identity of the ruling elite, who suffered disproportionately high fatalities in the officer ranks and bore a high percentage of wartime taxation, were similarly transformed by loss of political and economic hegemony. Yet, as Barham points out, just as the war shaped identities it also generated an emerging culture of social citizenship.¹¹⁴⁵ Practically expressed, these forms of patriotism were manifest in increased philanthropy and charitable activity, patriotic movements such as the Volunteer Training Corps and the popularity of 'democratic' agriculture, the allotment movement. These disparate groups demonstrate some of the variety of responses to the war and demonstrate the changing identities and extend the current historical debate thereby, which is considered at the introduction to each section. Each of these areas has important questions relating to the social impact of the war.

¹¹⁴⁴ Lucy Noakes, 'Demobilising the Military Woman: Constructions of Class and Gender in Britain after the First World War', *Gender & History*, 19:1, (2007), 143.

¹¹⁴⁵ Peter Barham, *Forgotten Lunatics of the Great War* (London, 2004), 3.

Charitable Endeavour

The war provided a powerful stimulus to charitable activity which represented personal solidarity with the national war effort and empathy with those who directly suffered in the conflict. Although the vibrancy and success of nineteenth-century fund raising had itself involved raising millions of pounds, and also demonstrated a strong local dimension, Gregory describes the scale of voluntary action during the war as ‘breathtaking,’ with local initiatives becoming a testing ground for highly effective voluntary action.¹¹⁴⁶ By 1920, some 17,899 war charities were in existence, nearly half the total number of charities that had existed before the war.¹¹⁴⁷ That said, the patterns of activity reflected the ebb and flow of public support for the war, with a remarkable burst of activity during the early months and renewed efforts in the summer of 1918. Around £30 million was raised in the first fifteen months of the war including £6-7 million for Belgian relief funds.¹¹⁴⁸ This was not at the expense of existing charities. Grant detects only limited decline in support for existing pre-war charities but rather an expansion into new war-related activities.¹¹⁴⁹ This activism can be interpreted as an expression of the mobilisation of philanthropy which mirrored the mustering of the civilian army.¹¹⁵⁰ The patriotism of donors in wishing to assist the state but also their fellow citizens was in keeping with earlier traditions.¹¹⁵¹

Wartime press coverage in Pembrokeshire, as elsewhere, was literally saturated with appeals and accounts of charitable activity; this good copy demonstrated a motivated civilian population and encouraged imitation in other communities. Charitable activity

¹¹⁴⁶ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 99.

¹¹⁴⁷ Peter Grant, ‘An Infinity of Personal Sacrifice:’ The Scale and Nature of Charitable Work in Britain during the First World War’, *War & Society*, 27:2 (2008), 69.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵¹ Beckett, *Home Front, 1914-1918*, 108.

often reinforced norms of gender, class and respectability. The preponderance of middle-class volunteers was noted in the press, who tended to concentrate on the efforts of local dignitaries.¹¹⁵² Beddoe refers to Welsh upper- and middle-class women as tireless fund raisers.¹¹⁵³ Their efforts were prominently promoted across Pembrokeshire. The Commandant of the Red Cross auxiliary hospital at Cottesmore was Gladys Philipps of Picton Castle (daughter of Sir Charles) and she was succeeded by Octavia Higgon of Scolton, the latter one of Pembrokeshire's first female magistrates. They occupied many honorific posts, while their status provided social authority in the quest for funds. The VADs across the county were invariably headed by the wives of local gentry or principal public officials, like the wife of the Chief Constable, Mrs Fred Summers, although middle-class women not infrequently headed working parties, patriotic guilds and organising committees. Given the social and economic composition of Pembrokeshire's population, working-class support and participation was quantitatively greater than from any other social group.

Nor was there any discreet and absolute separation between charitable and state activity, a continuation of the 'mixed economy' of welfare. The nature and work of the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association (SSAFA), for example, demonstrated the symbiotic relationship of both sectors, whereby the latter acted as the administrative agent of the War Office in the payment of Separation Allowances. By 1915 there were 900 branches staffed by 50,000 voluntary workers.¹¹⁵⁴ The local Pembrokeshire machinery was practically in place by early September 1914 with

¹¹⁵² Ibid.

¹¹⁵³ Deirdre Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows. A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2000), 53; Storr examines the work of British women in voluntary refugee relief efforts and notes complicated degrees of distinctions based on class and nationality versus 'enemy aliens,' *Excluded from the Record. Refugees and Relief, 1914-1929* (Oxford, 2010).

¹¹⁵⁴ Susan Pedersen, 'Gender, Welfare and Citizenship in Britain during the Great War', *AHR*, 95:4 (1990), 992.

parochial SSAFA representatives co-operating with local chairmen of parish councils. The work was seen as suitable for local women and entailed ‘many a weary walk,’ sacrifices which were felt to pale into insignificance when compared to the soldiers’ daily lot.¹¹⁵⁵

Perhaps the most prominent and certainly best publicised focus of charitable endeavour centred upon the Belgian refugees who started arriving in the country some weeks after the commencement of hostilities. The German invasion of Belgium precipitated the flight of around one in seven of the population, with one million refugees entering Holland and a further 200,000 in France. More than 200,000 sought refuge in the United Kingdom.¹¹⁵⁶ Purseigle describes the Belgians as disseminating images of brutality, confronting British communities with the realities of modern warfare.¹¹⁵⁷ Presented as heroic victims of German militarism their arrival stimulated around 2,500 local relief committees, in most cases, spontaneous creations on the initiative of local charities, worthies or institutions.

Despite Kushner’s description of state ambivalence towards the migrants, the Belgians were enlisted as powerful symbols in the moral war against Germany.¹¹⁵⁸ They emanated from an essentially urban, Flemish and white -collar class.¹¹⁵⁹ Around two-thirds came from the provinces of Antwerp, Limberg, East and West Flanders.¹¹⁶⁰ Before relations cooled with their hosts in 1915, the overwhelming attitude towards them was one of sympathy. Support for Belgian refugees became a totem of community patriotism, with many Pembrokeshire towns and villages keen to

¹¹⁵⁵ *H&MHT*, 2 September 1914.

¹¹⁵⁶ Peter Gatrell, ‘Refugees and Forced Migrants during the First World War’, *I&M*, 26:1-2 (2008), 83.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 436.

¹¹⁵⁸ Tony Kushner, ‘Local Heroes: Belgian Refugees in Britain during the First World War’, *I&M*, 18:1 (1999), 11.

¹¹⁵⁹ Anne J. Kershen, ‘Immigrants, Sojourners and refugees: Minority Groups in Britain’, in Chris Wrigley (ed.), *A Companion to Early Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2003), 144.

¹¹⁶⁰ Kushner, ‘Local Heroes’, 4.

accommodate Flemish émigrés. Around 1,500-2,000 arrived in total. Nor were the first such visitors from Continental Europe. Back in the early twelfth century thousands of Flemish colonists in the south of the county gave the area its unique sense of consciousness, language, customs and traditions, themes which were invoked to emphasise the historical connections between Flanders and Pembrokeshire. There were at least half a dozen active Belgian charities in Pembrokeshire raising funds for the sustenance of the displaced. Around a dozen Belgian women and children, ‘respectfully dressed,’ together with their household prerequisites, arrived on trawlers from Ostend at Milford Haven, although they at least had had no actual experience of war and its devastations.¹¹⁶¹ Their number was augmented on an almost daily basis mainly by boat and occasionally by train. Some 150 Belgian women and children were by then resident in the town with 280 men engaged on trawlers.¹¹⁶² Outside the County War Fund the charitable effort for Belgian refugees was perhaps the most vigorously supported in Pembrokeshire, at least for the first two years of war.

On 16 October 1914, the ‘invasion’ of refugees severely tested the capacity of Milford Haven to absorb them as sobbing children, worn and tired, driving many of the townsfolk to compassionate tears. One eye witness wrote how ‘the streets presented a new sight and everyone feels for the stranger within the gates.’¹¹⁶³ When admitting fifteen Belgian children to Hubberston School, the Head Teacher dolefully recorded how the new students were destitute of necessities, including clothing.¹¹⁶⁴ Public appeals were strongly supported. A Belgian Flag and Favour Day at Milford Haven attracted a bevy of young female collectors who took £33 13s. 7 ½ d.¹¹⁶⁵ A similar

¹¹⁶¹ *H&MHT*, 16 September 1914.

¹¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 21 October 1914.

¹¹⁶⁴ PRO SSR/1/132/1. Hubberston-Hakin Council School Logbook 1909-16; 23 October 1914.

¹¹⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 2 December 1914.

exercise for Belgian orphans netted £10 4s. 6d at Haverfordwest.¹¹⁶⁶ Demasure alludes to the vital importance of the herring fishery to the host ports and to the Belgian civilian population. In 1917 there were 31 Belgian fishing boats at Milford Haven.¹¹⁶⁷

Although Belgian refugees were to be found, initially at least, across the county in main urban centres, they penetrated into smaller villages and hamlets such as South Cuckoo, Wiston, Nevern, Newport and Letterston. They became a Pembrokeshire rather than purely a Milford Haven phenomenon with charitable activity identifiable at each location. Some 30 refugees were housed at Narberth. Six more found shelter at Saundersfoot.¹¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the great preponderance remained at Milford Haven where numbers peaked at 1,500, swelling the town's pre-war population of 7,500. One in five of the town's inhabitants was a refugee. Ports and seaside resorts were particularly favoured destinations.¹¹⁶⁹ Thirty-seven refugees received an enthusiastic welcome at Fishguard where they were greeted by an unprecedented number of conveyances to take them to the Drill Hall.¹¹⁷⁰ An energetic fund-raising campaign was convened, including weekly subscriptions and a grand concert, so that the weekly dole of five shillings per adult and half-a-crown per child could be maintained.¹¹⁷¹ At Dinas an enthusiastic public meeting pledged itself to the care of a number of refugees.¹¹⁷² The refugees were the recipients of bumper Christmas hampers at Letterston during that first wartime Christmas.¹¹⁷³ The Fishguard and Goodwick Committee expended £188 13s 2d. on their care for a 25-week period, although £52

¹¹⁶⁶ *PH*, 8 January 1915.

¹¹⁶⁷ Brecht Demasure, 'Fisheries and the First World War 'Herring Saved our Lives', <http://belgianrefugees.blogspot.co.uk/2014-08-01>.

¹¹⁶⁸ *TO*, 10 January 1915.

¹¹⁶⁹ Bilton, *The Home Front in the Great War*, 223.

¹¹⁷⁰ *CE*, 22 October 1914.

¹¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 5 November 1914.

¹¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 12 November 1914.

¹¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1915.

6s. 10 1/2 d. was reimbursed from the wages of Belgian men who had found employment locally.¹¹⁷⁴ Tenby's first Belgians who were received by the Benedictine monks of Caldey Island arrived on 10 September 1914.¹¹⁷⁵ Tenby's Belgian Refugee Fund was exceptionally well patronised, rising from £192 16s. 3d. in October 1914 to £925 14s. 1d. by late October 1915.¹¹⁷⁶ This was doubtless a reflection of a traditionally affluent area, although the geography of giving discloses no great difference between rural or urban giving. Cahalan notes how refugee relief was primarily the work of private charity rather than government agency.¹¹⁷⁷

Despite the charitable inclinations of Haverfordwest residents, their earnest desire to succour Belgian refugees (a fashionable accessory for the patriotically-minded) was met with confusion and farce. Expectant crowds besieged the railway station for non-existent refugees leading the local press to conclude how the town had been fooled.¹¹⁷⁸ The Haverfordwest Belgian Refugee Committee accumulated £229 13s. 11d., spending some £52 16s. 2d. of it and the balance transferred to the Haverfordwest Borough Council when the fund was wound up in early 1915 (when there were only two Belgian families remaining).¹¹⁷⁹

Outside Milford Haven the Belgian refugees were transient guests. Many travelled to England, largely to seek employment. One Belgian refugee secured the position of postman at Narberth.¹¹⁸⁰ The Newport refugees departed for Chiswick in search of

¹¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 22 April 1915.

¹¹⁷⁵ *TO*, 17 September 1914.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 28 October 1915.

¹¹⁷⁷ Peter James Cahalan, *The Treatment of Belgian Refugees in England during the Great War*, PhD thesis (McMaster University, Ontario, 1977), iii.

¹¹⁷⁸ *PH*, 23 October 1914.

¹¹⁷⁹ PRO PCC/SE/63/52. Haverfordwest Belgian Refugees Committee 1914-15. By the end of June 1915 there was still a substantial balance in hand of £176 17s. 9d.

¹¹⁸⁰ *CE*, 18 March 1915.

work in the munitions factories.¹¹⁸¹ Those at Tenby had dwindled to 20 by July 1915.¹¹⁸² By the end of 1915 there were nineteen refugees at Narberth whereas there had been 46.¹¹⁸³

Once the novelty had worn off and notwithstanding the kindness of Welsh patrons detected in 1916 by the Rev Morgan, attitudes changed.¹¹⁸⁴ The alleged ambivalence of the refugees to the British war effort coincided with greater casualties and material privations, creating resentment among many British hosts. Local populations no longer ascribed to them dignifying qualities as many were accused of excessive comfort-seeking, idleness and grim opportunism from 1915.¹¹⁸⁵ Such hostility was displayed by the Pembrokeshire Chief Constable at a meeting of the County War Fund, when he thought Belgians would not work if they could live ‘on the charity of the English.’¹¹⁸⁶ The end of the war saw their swift return to Belgium, so that nationally there were only 9,892 Belgians still living in the United Kingdom in 1921.¹¹⁸⁷ Those domiciled at Milford Haven erected a polished red granite obelisk with granite kerb and three-step base as a thank offering for their succour and support in a moving ceremony held in 1919. Belgian refugees were the recipients of conspicuous charity, especially until 1916 by which time the novelty had worn off. The benefits were not one-sided. The donators found an outlet to demonstrate their patriotic credentials in assisting the displaced of Britain’s stricken ally.

Women and Charity

Pembrokeshire women found self-expression though active participation in the

¹¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 7 October 1915.

¹¹⁸² *TO*, 15 July 1915.

¹¹⁸³ *PCG*, 24 December 1915.

¹¹⁸⁴ Morgan, *The War and Wales*, 129.

¹¹⁸⁵ Purseigle, ‘A Wave on to Our Shores’, 442.

¹¹⁸⁶ *PCG*, 13 August 1914.

¹¹⁸⁷ Kershen, ‘Immigrants, Sojourners and Refugees’, 144.

working parties making comforts for the troops, an activity which at times seemed to become a national mania and a powerful and universally accepted example of war work. According to Fowler the activity assumed an almost quasi-religious character with the knitting of badges, socks, headgear, mittens and other military articles.¹¹⁸⁸ Snook considers the 'needlework mania' as being consistent with the accepted role of the female as nurturer.¹¹⁸⁹ Pembrokeshire women were clearly not lacking in this regard. Red Cross working parties, using materials purchased by fund raising or utilising grants from the County War Fund, made comforts for men at the Front or in hospital. They were usually headed by the wives of the local elites. At Haverfordwest Mrs W.J. Jones, wife of a local territorial colonel and lawyer, was elected secretary. Meeting in St Mary's schoolroom they sent in over one period, 36 flannel shirts, bed jackets, pillow cases, belts, socks and knitted belts.¹¹⁹⁰ Similar activity was repeated across Pembrokeshire. Using seed corn funding of a little over £100, the Llangwm working party produced over 1,000 articles by October 1916.¹¹⁹¹ With 33 local men serving, the Newport working party had ample motivation, solidarity with absent men folk, to make 780 items over six months, although there was a panic when it was rumoured they had been using German wool, any link with the demonised enemy was anathema.¹¹⁹² By February 1916 there were 31 working parties with 2,000 active participants producing 10,429 articles at a cost of £257.¹¹⁹³ Such determined good works was well in evidence in a photograph taken at Moat House where the female workers were engaged with their sewing machines (Illustration 20).

¹¹⁸⁸ Fowler, 'War Charity Begins at Home', 208.

¹¹⁸⁹ Snook, 'Out of the Cage?', 77.

¹¹⁹⁰ *H&MHT*, 9 December 1914.

¹¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 4 October 1916.

¹¹⁹² *CE*, 13 January 1916.

¹¹⁹³ *PH*, 11 February 1916. During 1918 a total of 13,490 garments were produced by working parties across the county, no fewer than 9,015 from the Haverfordwest Working Party; *H&MHT*, 12 February 1919.



Illustration: 20 A well-attended sewing class at Moat House, New Moat, kindly made available by Sir Owen Scourfield *circa* 1915. This is clearly an inter-generational effort given the age ranges of the workers.

Charity and Community Cohesion

Street and house- to- house collections, concerts, fetes, subscription lists and a host of other fund-raising activities, which followed well-established pre-war methods, became a constant call on the purses and wallets of Pembrokeshire residents. One flag- day raised £60 including 5,460 coppers.¹¹⁹⁴ Solidarity with Britain's allies was acknowledged by local flag days for the French, Romanian, Italian and Russian Red Cross societies. One flag day for the Russian Red Cross at Pembroke Dock made the healthy sum of £66 7s. and a further £5 14.s 6d was raised from a concert.¹¹⁹⁵ A public collection for the French Red Cross in Tenby included the ordering of such

¹¹⁹⁴ *H&MHT*, 20 October 1915.

¹¹⁹⁵ *PCG*, 26 November 1915.

paraphernalia as ‘gun’ brooches, ‘bullet’ brooches and 5,000 cardboard medallions.¹¹⁹⁶

Appreciation of the sacrifices, solidarity and community cohesion between civilians and serving soldiers found a ready response in the sending of parcels to those on active service or in hospital. Seldom has such accord been so clearly expressed through nicotine, eggs, chocolate and general groceries. Wilson notes how Christmas 1915 was the greatest parcel-sending time of the war.¹¹⁹⁷ The BFPO handled around 60,000 parcels daily.¹¹⁹⁸ Duffett has identified an extraordinary attachment which soldiers had with their food and the emotional resonance coupled with its acquisition and consumption.¹¹⁹⁹ Similarly, cigarettes assured a higher sense of well-being among the troops, a shortage of which was sheer agony for those on the front line.¹²⁰⁰ Pembrokeshire communities were fully alive to these material needs, the meeting of which absorbed much of their philanthropic activity through ‘Our Boys’ funds. The local press continually appealed for donations for the supply of cigarettes. In 1915 some 200 Haverfordwest soldiers were made the recipients of such packages.¹²⁰¹ At Milford Haven the ‘Our Boys’ Fund sent out 225 parcels containing cigarettes and woollens at an average cost of 8s. 3d., some £215 8s. 9d. in total.¹²⁰² A ‘Smokes for Soldiers’ appeal at Haverfordwest raised £29 6s. 4 ½ d.¹²⁰³ There is ample evidence that the soldiers appreciated the viands and delicacies contained in parcels, a measure of sacrifice and self-denial from civilian well-wishers. Writing to his parents at Narberth in 1917, Private Stephens expressed his thanks for his parcel and how he and

¹¹⁹⁶ TMAG TEM/SE/30/15. Tenby Borough Council, miscellaneous papers; 19 August 1918.

¹¹⁹⁷ Wilson, *Myriad Faces of War*, 159.

¹¹⁹⁸ Alan Weeks, *Tea, Rum & Fags. Sustaining Tommy 1914-18* (Stroud, 2009), 87.

¹¹⁹⁹ Rachel Duffett, ‘A War Unimagined: Food and the Rank and File Soldier of the First World War’, in Jessica Meyer (ed.), *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, 2008), 48.

¹²⁰⁰ George Coppard, *With a Machine Gun to Cambrai* (London, 1969), 44.

¹²⁰¹ *H&MHT*, 5 January 1916; 3 January 1917.

¹²⁰² *Ibid.*, 21 November 1917.

¹²⁰³ *PH*, 19 April 1918.

his pan enjoyed the rabbit which came as a welcome change to the usual stew.¹²⁰⁴

Huge quantities of eggs, perhaps to emphasise civilian self-denial to servicemen, were collected and sent to France or local military hospitals. In one week, 571 eggs were sent to the Pembroke Dock Military Hospital.¹²⁰⁵

Perhaps the best supported wartime charity in Pembrokeshire was the County War Fund, probably due to the endorsement of the Lord Lieutenant and on account of its county-wide status with organisational capacity, which was established in August 1914 for the relief of distress with a munificent donation of £1,000 from Lord St David's. It was localism writ large with seemingly every parish council brought into the occasional collections. On 23 October the Lord Lieutenant's Committee and the Local Representation Committee were combined so as to avoid confusion and duplication.¹²⁰⁶ Over four years the fund made disbursements to Red Cross Working Parties, Belgian Refugee funds, Prisoners of War maintenance and sundry other war-related charitable relief. By November 1914 the committee was 100 strong and representative geographically, politically and denominationally.¹²⁰⁷ Up to the end of June 1916 £18,749 had been collected.¹²⁰⁸ Of this, a disproportionate amount, the sum of £10,381 was raised in the five months of 1914 reflecting war enthusiasm if anything did.¹²⁰⁹ Pay deduction schemes were instituted, although whether they were enforced or entirely voluntary is impossible to ascertain. The employees of the South Wales Ice Company at Milford Haven had one- and- a -half per cent of their wages deducted which raised £417 for charity, with £120 being devoted to the County War

¹²⁰⁴ NM NARB/37C/1997. Correspondence of Pte. W.B. Stephens 1917.

¹²⁰⁵ *TO*, 15 July 1915.

¹²⁰⁶ *H&MHT*, 28 October 1914.

¹²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 4 November 1914.

¹²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 1 November 1916.

¹²⁰⁹ *TO*, 7 December 1916.

Fund.¹²¹⁰ Other industrial workers, the miners of Saundersfoot, raised £32 from their wages.¹²¹¹ Parish councils and churches employed repeated collections. Ambleston parish collected the large amount of £42 15s.¹²¹² Throughout the war there are numerous references to the CWF and a variety of methods by which it was supported.

There was no greater emotional appeal to charitable instincts than alleviating the plight of Pembrokeshire men who had become prisoners of war, whose presence in ‘Hunland’ was shown by photographs of the incarcerated in white uniforms.¹²¹³ The dispatch of weekly parcels became a steeply escalating cost, especially in 1918 when the repeated German Offensives from March netted increasing numbers of local soldiers. The maintenance of such relief (typically three parcels a fortnight and a weekly bread parcel) cost the County War Fund £2 2s 6d weekly for each man in November 1916 which was a sustainable cost.¹²¹⁴ The number of prisoners had risen to 30 in January 1917 costing £750 per annum.¹²¹⁵ Some 55 local men appeared on the roll of prisoners by July 1918 (costing £43 17s. each per year).¹²¹⁶ No fewer than 48 men had been captured between March and August, so that 98 Pembrokeshire men were largely dependent on foodstuffs sent by family and associational networks.¹²¹⁷

The unprecedented demands on public generosity did not always meet with unstinting support, however incessant flag days attracted particular ire, especially in urban areas where there were more opportunities to raise funds in a concentrated area. At a Pembroke Borough Council meeting one member complained of too many flag-

¹²¹⁰ *H&MHT*, 26 June 1918.

¹²¹¹ *PCG*, 19 February 1915.

¹²¹² PRO SPC/4/1. Ambleston Parish Council minutes 1894-1915; 29 March 1915.

¹²¹³ *H&MHT*, 31 May 1916.

¹²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29 November 1916.

¹²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 17 January 1917.

¹²¹⁶ *CE*, 25 July 1918.

¹²¹⁷ *PCG*, 30 August 1918. A County War Fund Committee held in June 1919 revealed how there were 136 local prisoners at the time of the Armistice with around 880 known local fatalities, which was estimated to easily rise to 1,000, *H&MHT*, 11 June 1919.

days.¹²¹⁸ There were, it was estimated, too many appeals for public funds, particularly in Tenby which was likened to working a willing horse to death.¹²¹⁹ This newspaper columnist urged support for purely local causes and noted just how fed up the public were becoming. There were then limits to the response of the patriotically minded as an expression of their social citizenship. Wartime charity suffered from problems of overlapping and duplicating effort.¹²²⁰

Children, Education and the Debate over Rising Delinquency

As the war offered opportunities for expressions of community solidarity through charity, it also offered children the opportunity to express their solidarity with wider society through their own contribution to war work, while at the same time, war conditions ushered in unparalleled temptations for social deviancy through juvenile delinquency. Whether it was the psychological worry about an absent father serving in the trenches or the disruption to family and school life due to the war, children's outlook and identities were inevitably shaped by their new experiences. Kennedy reminds us that an exploration of the experiences of children provides the possibility of understanding more about how British society saw itself and its future development.¹²²¹

Parker notes how in the interests of wartime efficiency, the educational world became totally subject to wartime demands, which had a long lasting impact upon elementary schooling by promoting more practical and vocational instruction.¹²²² This more practical curriculum made for stronger links between schools, industry and

¹²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 20 June 1917.

¹²¹⁹ *TO*, 21 February 1918; A further commentary appeared on 8 August 1918.

¹²²⁰ Cahalan, *The Treatment of Belgian Refugees* iv.

¹²²¹ Rosalind Joan Sarah Kennedy, *The Children's War: British Children's Experience of the Great War*, PhD. Goldsmith's College, (University of London, 2006), 5.

¹²²² David H. Parker, 'The Talent at its Command': The First World War and the Vocational Aspect of Education, 1914-39', *History of Education Quarterly*, 35:3 (1995), 239.

agriculture.¹²²³ The teaching of handicrafts, and for girls especially, domestic science, was greatly expanded during the war, the latter seen as ‘a useful training’ encouraged by government policy.¹²²⁴ Such expanded provision was sanctioned by the Board of Education who relaxed the 1904 Act regulations in a number of respects.¹²²⁵ Sinner notes an element of social control in expanded domestic science subjects, with dressmaking, laundry and cooking lessons for working-class girls essential to the imposition of middle-class values by the state.¹²²⁶ The changed school curriculum embraced a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities which endured long after 1918.¹²²⁷ Woodcraft was introduced at Tenby County School in 1915.¹²²⁸ The expansion of domestic science for girls is recorded in numerous elementary school logbooks, while in November 1915 the Kilgetty Gardener’s Hall was used as a cookery instruction centre. Greater economic utility of the curriculum probably accounted for this change of educational emphasis to vocationalism, as undoubtedly was the reinforcing of gender roles for girls amidst shifting employment boundaries.

The shape of elementary education in areas of high refugee settlement changed due to the increasing demand, especially when mainly Belgian children were admitted at little or no cost.¹²²⁹ Initially they attended schools across Milford Haven, although a conference of school managers in December 1914 earmarked special provision for them.¹²³⁰ The schoolroom of the Milford Haven Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was

¹²²³ Michael Hyndman, *Schools and Schooling in England and Wales. A Documentary History* (London, 1978), 202.

¹²²⁴ Deidre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty. Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (London, 1989), 5.

¹²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹²²⁶ Anita Sinner, ‘Sewing Seams of Stories.’ *Becoming a Teacher during the First World War*, *History of Education*, 35:3, (2006), 378.

¹²²⁷ David Parker, ‘Just a Stepping Stone’- the growth of vocationalism in the elementary school curriculum, 1914-1939’, *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 35:1, (2003), 8.

¹²²⁸ *TO*, 4 November 1915.

¹²²⁹ Janet S.K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars. Experience, Memory and the First World War in Britain* (Cambridge, 2004), 113.

¹²³⁰ PRO PCC/ED/10/2. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee; 18 December 1914.

acquired and renamed the King Albert School (Illustration 21) with Flemish-speaking teachers.¹²³¹ By June 1916 the school had 120 pupils on the roll.¹²³²



Illustration: 21 The Wesley Methodist Chapel in Priory Road, Milord Haven with the very commodious school room to the right which served as the King Albert School for Belgian children during the war.

The disruption of daily routines and replacement of familiar teaching staff by temporary and often female substitutes had a destabilising effect on discipline in Pembrokeshire schools, reflecting the excitement and unpredictability of changed times. Student teachers sometimes found it hard to control classes vacated by the 20,000 male teachers who had joined up by 1916.¹²³³ At Fishguard one pupil impertinently remarked to a probationer ‘Why don’t you join the bloody army you coward?’, which earned him three cuts on his hand.¹²³⁴ Disgraceful impudent

¹²³¹ PRO PCC/SE/16/18. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee 1914-15; 27 November 1914.

¹²³² TNA ED/21/23269 Ministry of Education. Public Elementary School file. King Albert Belgian Council School 1915-16. The school, number 745, was placed on the Grant list as a public elementary school from 1 February 1915.

¹²³³ David Smith, ‘Juvenile Delinquency in Britain during the First World War’, *Criminal Justice History*, (1990), 125.

¹²³⁴ PRO SSR/1/20/1. Fishguard Voluntary School Logbook 1901-17; 18 September 1917.

language was used to a female teacher at Martletwy School requiring correction.¹²³⁵ One Oliver Phelps who attended St Issells-Pentlepoir School was punished for rude behaviour towards Mrs Mathias, his teacher, but quite unbowed, he went on to 'molest smaller children.'¹²³⁶ Maintaining classroom discipline occasionally involved outside agencies. At Monkton School, cigarette- smoking was being taken up even in the lowest forms (a different sort of threat from the war), so the Head Teacher enlisted the local police who sought the name of the suppliers and thoroughly frightened the children in the process.¹²³⁷ The resort to physical chastisement of offenders was accepted as an educational and social norm although occasional voices were raised against it. Two members of the Pembroke Borough Education Committee spoke out against corporal punishment, stating rather remarkably how the sooner the Germans came (to put an end to the practice) the better.¹²³⁸ Cases of excessive physical correction sometimes led to unilateral parental action. Those at Rosemarket withheld their children from school in 1915 in a particularly bitter and public argument in protest at alleged excessive chastisement. Some managers took a strong line. The Llangwm school managers severely admonished Mr Crocker for ill-treatment of children and warned them that further complaints would lead to his dismissal.¹²³⁹

Over and above formal exemption granted to pupils on occupational grounds, school attendance returns showed a significant decline with so much economic competition for child labour, especially in agricultural districts.¹²⁴⁰ Head Teachers candidly confided their frustration in their school logbooks. In rural areas child absences had been a constant problem ever since compulsory school attendance was instituted in

¹²³⁵ PRO SSR/1/2/2. Martletwy Voluntary School Logbook 1914-52; 31 May 1918.

¹²³⁶ PRO SSR/1/106/3. St. Issells Pentlepoir Council School Logbook 1908-22; 14 March 1917.

¹²³⁷ PRO SSR/1/129/3. Monkton Board School 1912-33; 24 January 1918.

¹²³⁸ *PCG*, 16 July 1915.

¹²³⁹ PRO HPR/6/50. Llangwm National School Manager's minutes 1903-21; 5 October 1914.

¹²⁴⁰ Parker, 'The Talent at its Command', 246.

1881. Even so wartime conditions, with all the various distractions, appear to have led to an intensification of the problem. At Camrose North School, for example, the head wrote how attendance was shameful, with parents keeping their children away and using the war as an excuse.¹²⁴¹ The Freystrop head wrote how children thought they could stay away with impunity.¹²⁴² Even when names were supplied to the School Attendance Officer action could not always be relied upon. At Dale repeated absences were duly reported to the SAO with a predictable lack of results, prompting the head to note with sheer exasperation ‘I ought to know better.’¹²⁴³ Another Head Teacher urged the attendance committee of the Pembrokeshire Education Authority to ensure prosecutions under the Education Act were more numerous and frequent.¹²⁴⁴ Offences rose from 93 in 1915 to 94 in 1917, although the weather was a much more common determinant of attendance, especially in rural schools.¹²⁴⁵ In January 1918 attendance was only 73.4 per cent, but that was largely due to the exceptionally harsh winter.¹²⁴⁶ Lack of attendance had severe financial implications. In reporting to the Pembroke Education Committee in January 1915, it was noted how the ward attendances of 87.8 and 79 per cent resulted in a loss of £61 19s. 6d. in grant.¹²⁴⁷

Children were acknowledged as a vast labour pool which could prove useful to the war effort, itself a cause of lower attendance. Schools almost became adjuncts of local economic output.¹²⁴⁸ Some of the school day, in both urban and country schools, was spent in pursuit of some war-related activity and there must have been very few

¹²⁴¹ PRO SSR/1/12/2. Camrose North Council School Logbook 1914-28; 7 October 1915.

¹²⁴² PRO SSR/1/19/1. Freystrop Voluntary School Logbook 1891-1918; 8 September 1916.

¹²⁴³ PRO SSR/1/116/1. Dale Council School Logbook 1879-1936; 16 July 1917.

¹²⁴⁴ PRO PCC/SE/16/101. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee Attendance sub-committee 1917-24; 14 September 1914.

¹²⁴⁵ PRO PCC/SE/16/20-21. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee minutes 1916-18.

¹²⁴⁶ PRO PCC/SE/16/22. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee minutes 1918-19.

¹²⁴⁷ PCCG, 29 January 1915.

¹²⁴⁸ Parker, ‘The Talent at its Command’, 249.

children who were not involved in at least one national campaign.¹²⁴⁹ The collective endeavours represented good training for a model of wartime citizenship and included the cultivation of ‘victory plots’ in school gardens, conveyed messages and telegrams, collected household waste and fruit stones. The exertions of Pembrokeshire school children were equally catholic. The children of Fishguard school gave their pocket money to the Belgian children, while the First Fishguard Scout Troop collected £8 4s. 6d. for Belgian relief.¹²⁵⁰ The girls of Meyrick Street School knitted comforts for Belgian soldiers.¹²⁵¹ There was a marked increase in the number and size of school gardens with the intention of boosting local food production, efforts sanctioned by the local education authority.¹²⁵² At Lamphey School gardening was substituted for drawing, whilst at Marloes the girls’ mended clothing as the boys dug ‘President’ potatoes.¹²⁵³ The gardens could cover a considerable size. That at Lampeter Velfrey amounted to 575 square yards, excluding paths.¹²⁵⁴ The produce yielded could be exceptional. At Bridell the school garden produced 1,300 pounds of potatoes, excellent results which more than justified the modest rental paid to local landowners.¹²⁵⁵ At Milford Haven, land near St Peter’s Church was tended by local children (Illustration 22). For one-eighth of an acre at Lampeter Velfrey the rental was only ten shillings per annum.¹²⁵⁶ By June 1918 Pembrokeshire had 60 school gardens, double the number from the year before.¹²⁵⁷ It was hoped how their cultivation would

¹²⁴⁹ Grant, ‘An Infinity of Personal Sacrifice’, 79.

¹²⁵⁰ *CE*, 28 January 1915; 27 January 1916.

¹²⁵¹ PRO SSR/1/96/3; Minutes of the Meyrick Street Girls Council School, Albion Square, Pembroke Dock, Logbook 1900-25; 18 November 1914.

¹²⁵² *PH*, 2 June 1916.

¹²⁵³ PRO SSR/1/33/2. Lamphey National School Logbook 1907-33; 15 February 1918; SSR/1/41/2. Marloes National School Logbook 1906-20; 26 September 1916.

¹²⁵⁴ PRO SSR/1/102/2. Lampeter Velfrey – Brynion Board School Logbook 1892-1922.

¹²⁵⁵ PRO SSR/1/42/2. Bridell Board School Logbook 1900-1939; 24 October 1918.

¹²⁵⁶ PRO/SSM/1/48. Lampeter Velfrey Council School Manager’s minutes 1916-34; 6 January 1917.

¹²⁵⁷ *H&MHT*, 5 June 1918.

inculcate a keener sense of personal and common duty, clearly a difficult aspiration to prove.¹²⁵⁸



Illustration: 22 Children help to cultivate open ground at St. Peter's Church, Milford Haven, circa 1917.

Pembrokeshire children were highly useful in collecting nature's bounty in aid of the war effort. At Newport the youngsters collected fruit shells and stones which were used in the manufacture of gas masks.¹²⁵⁹ Their counterparts at Narberth gathered up thousands of horse chestnuts which were despatched to munitions works.¹²⁶⁰ No greater example of co-ordinated juvenile effort can be found than in the direct appeal issued as a result of the widespread failure of the fruit crop in the autumn of 1918 and organised in rural areas. The picking of blackberries for jam for the soldiers became a truly national phenomenon. Ninety-eight Hertfordshire schools collected 147 tons of

¹²⁵⁸ Pamela Horn, *The Changing Countryside in Victorian and Edwardian England and Wales* (London, 1984), 231.

¹²⁵⁹ *CE*, 3 October 1918.

¹²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1 November 1917.

blackberries.¹²⁶¹ In Wiltshire some 280 schools collected in excess of 88 tons earning the children £2,467 5s. 3d.¹²⁶² Across Pembrokeshire, depots were opened to receive the product of the children's enterprise, which was often conducted in school classes led by their teachers. There seems to have been widespread organisation and planning, probably by the Local Education Authority. Over two tons was sent from Haverfordwest on one occasion making £50 9s. 9d., at a price of 3d. per pound.¹²⁶³ Nature rambles thus assisted the state and earned the young pickers extra shillings into the bargain. The scholars of Llangwm collected over eight hundred pounds in weight.¹²⁶⁴

A not inconsiderable role in charitable endeavour was played by school children and by organised school-based groups, so that philanthropic activity was literally practised by citizens from cradle to the grave. Begelly children collected £6 17s. 11 ½ d for the County War Fund.¹²⁶⁵ Children collected eggs and clothing for Belgian refugees and the girls knitted socks and belts for the troops, activities which fit in with the national picture. Touchingly, each house in Pembroke Dock County School adopted a prisoner of war and sent a weekly parcel funded through the collection of weekly pence.¹²⁶⁶ Maintaining the military covenant met the moral duty owed to citizen soldiers who spent months and occasionally years in wretched captivity

Any discussion of changes to children's lives and outlook during the First World War, whether by contemporaries or historians, centres upon the alleged rise in juvenile delinquency over and above the consideration of maintaining classroom discipline

¹²⁶¹ Parker, 'The Talent at its Command', 250.

¹²⁶² I.M. Slocombe, 'Education and the First World War in Wiltshire', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, 90, (1997), 132.

¹²⁶³ *PCG*, 20 September 1918.

¹²⁶⁴ PRO SSR/1/27/1. Llangwm-Hook Council School Logbook 1914-25; 6 September 1918.

¹²⁶⁵ PRO SSR/1/2/2. Begelly Board School Logbook 1893-1920; 19 September 1914.

¹²⁶⁶ PRO PCC/ED/2/440. Pembroke Dock County School Headmaster's Report 1917-18. The total sum subscribed by the children in their weekly pence amounted to £92 4s. 2 ½ d.

already alluded to. The debate is an important aspect of British wartime social experiences and illustrates social, economic and cultural tensions as the usual peacetime controls were lessened. Clarke notes the wider context of the debate as typical of the perpetual concern with the ‘youth problem,’ where the activities of the young have persistently attracted the attention of the media, moral reformers and the state. ‘Criminal youth’ was at the very heart of public concern both before and during the First World War.¹²⁶⁷ Gillis detects such public concern over juvenile delinquency as a recurring phenomenon since the sixteenth century, with each successive cycle of anxiety manifesting new definitions of the problem.¹²⁶⁸ Bradley adds a note of caution in seeing juvenile delinquency as symptomatic changes in social behaviour, but rather as an historical phenomenon in its own right, a persuasive argument.¹²⁶⁹

Contemporaries believed that there was an undeniable national rise in juvenile offending by younger teenagers (and this appears to be the case in Pembrokeshire) but also in offences committed by children of elementary school age. The number of cases of indictable offences had been declining before 1914.¹²⁷⁰ There is no disputing that the number of children and young adults proceeded against in juvenile courts for larceny rose from 12,823 in 1914 to 17,821 the following year, to reach a peak of 20,974 cases in 1917.¹²⁷¹ The majority of cases were of malicious or criminal damage, truancy and grave increases in the number of young thieves, with more money in circulation and possibly the allure of property which those in employment could

¹²⁶⁷ John Clarke, ‘Managing the delinquent: the Children’s Branch of the Home Office, 1913-30’, in Mary Langan and Bill Schwarz (eds), *Crises in the British State 1880-1930* (London, 1985), 240.

¹²⁶⁸ John R. Gillis, ‘The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency in England 1890-1914’, *P&P*, 67, (1975), 76.

¹²⁶⁹ Kate Bradley, ‘Juvenile delinquency and the public sphere: explaining local and national discourse in England c.1940-69’, *Social History*, 37:1, (2012), 19.

¹²⁷⁰ Gillis, ‘The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency’, 123.

¹²⁷¹ Smith, ‘Juvenile Delinquency in Britain’, 135.

afford¹²⁷² In Pembrokeshire the loss of petty sessional papers creates a lacuna which makes an insight into the complete picture difficult, although cases were reported at length in the local press. Juvenile crime in the county appears to have been an urban and very largely a male problem. The Pembroke Petty Sessional registers list three cases in 1915 and only one in 1917.¹²⁷³ Those for Saundersfoot and Narberth list none, while the Dungleddy sessions list two cases in 1915 and five in 1917.¹²⁷⁴ The mid- county judicial area of the Rhos saw a substantial rise in juvenile cases rising from four in 1914 to fifteen in 1916.¹²⁷⁵ The Milford Haven Petty Sessions heard a high proportion of the county's cases, with a peak of 24 in 1915 declining to 21 in 1918.¹²⁷⁶ In terms of numbers, the cases were but a fraction of court listings although they perhaps received disproportionate newspaper coverage on account of heightened emotions focusing on the young as the future of society which was at war.

A wide variety of causes were suggested by contemporaries and social historians to account for the rise in youthful petty crimes and misdemeanours. A combination of disruption in the educational system, the social upheaval and flux in wartime Britain with loosened bonds of parental control and absent fathers away on military service were all variously advanced as explanatory factors. Others thought the spirit of adventure unleashed in the martial climate and further stimulated by the sensationalist press were other contributory factors.¹²⁷⁷ Restrictions on street lighting perhaps encouraged criminality by night and so wartime shortages created opportunities for wrong doing.¹²⁷⁸ Abbot noted the complex causes of juvenile delinquency as the

¹²⁷² Ibid.

¹²⁷³ PRO TPS/PE-11-12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessions 1914-25.

¹²⁷⁴ PRO TPS/NS/3. Saundersfoot Petty Sessions 1913-25; TPS/NA/6-7 Narberth Petty Sessions 1912-18 ; TPS/DU/2. Dungleddy Petty Sessions, 1913-20.

¹²⁷⁵ PRO TPS/RO/5. Roose Petty Sessions 1915-21.

¹²⁷⁶ PRO TPS/RM/2-3. Milford Haven Petty Sessions 1909-22.

¹²⁷⁷ Smith, 'Juvenile Delinquency in Britain', 122.

¹²⁷⁸ Horn, *Young Offenders*, 170.

general disruption to home life, absent fathers and newly-working mothers and restrictions to elementary education. Perhaps the most intangible factor was the effect the war had on the minds and imagination of the young, ‘the stimulation of the spirit of adventure and unrest, and the discount of ordinary moral value which a state of war must necessarily bring about.’¹²⁷⁹ Nationally the number of youngsters coming before the courts rose substantially from 36,929 to 49,915 during the four years of war.¹²⁸⁰ One pernicious influence which was credited with stirring up much youthful unrest in Britain, was the cinema, which was accused of encouraging the young to repeat the violence and crimes which they then saw on celluloid.¹²⁸¹ Pre-war Pembrokeshire shared concerns over the cinema as demonstrated by local authority refusals of licences to would-be operators like Sidney White, who was rebuffed by the Haverfordwest Borough Council in 1912.

In Pembrokeshire the increase in indictable offences appears to conform to the national pattern chiefly in the categories of petty larceny and criminal damage.¹²⁸² Some activity was doubtless symptomatic of a restless, mischievous and less deferential youth, which *The Times* thought was the outcome of mere mechanical cramming in elementary schools instead of inculcating strong moral characteristics in the young.¹²⁸³ Theft accounted for a high percentage of juvenile cases coming before the Youth Court. In the same sessions two lads named Edwin Cox and Reginald Clarke, aged fifteen and fourteen respectively, were charged with stealing fowls worth 8s. and 880 cigarettes valued at £1 7s. 3d. They were both fined and orders for

¹²⁷⁹ Edith Abbott, ‘Juvenile Delinquency during the First World War. Notes on the British Experience, 1914-18’, *Social Science Review* 17:2 (1943), 207.

¹²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹²⁸¹ Horn, *Young Offenders*, 168; Arthur Marwick, ‘British Life and Leisure and the First World War’, *History Today*, 15:6, (1965), 415.

¹²⁸² Smith, ‘Juvenile Delinquency in Britain’, 120.

¹²⁸³ *TT*, 2 September 1918.

compensation issued.¹²⁸⁴ The nature of these crimes is similar to pre-war offences where court records disclose similar penalties, although the general sentiment of a widespread restless youth was perhaps not manifest in a society not at war.

Some of the offences hardly presaged the beginnings of widespread lawlessness. Six Pembroke Dock youths aged twelve to seventeen were charged with stealing apples from a local councillor who, unfortunately for them, also happened to be a member of the local Bench.¹²⁸⁵ Boys were accused in the vast majority of indictments although not exclusively so. A girl aged fourteen, who took a gold chain valued at 30s., was put on probation for twelve months.¹²⁸⁶ The Roose Petty Sessions heard an unusual case when an eight-year-old boy and his eleven-year-old sister were charged with stealing £2 2s. 0 ½ *d.* from their teacher's desk at Neyland, which funded their purchase of sugar (an increasingly rare commodity) and biscuits.¹²⁸⁷ Other youthful larcenies involved the dishonest appropriation of bicycles, timber, apples, lead, clothing, tools, groceries and cash. One meeting of the Haverfordwest Police Court in January 1917 saw the appearance of no fewer than five children, all under the age of fourteen, which was calculated to move any mother to tears at the sight. One newspaper columnist issued the gloomy description of the accused as 'Britain's Future Citizens'.¹²⁸⁸

Trespass was a commonly encountered reason for court summonses, especially for intrusion on railway property at Milford Haven Docks. Six boys were each fined 7s. 6*d.*, for the latter offence in April 1915.¹²⁸⁹ The martial spirit of the times where khaki

¹²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 19 December 1917.

¹²⁸⁵ *PCG*, 6 September 1918.

¹²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 July 1916.

¹²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1916.

¹²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2 February 1917.

¹²⁸⁹ *H&MHT*, 14 April 1915.

and Lee Enfield rifles were commonplace, might explain the increase in offences connected with the unlawful possession or use of air rifles. The Haverfordwest court fined two boys for carrying such weapons without a licence.¹²⁹⁰ A Milford Haven youth was proceeded against for the same offence.¹²⁹¹ Criminal damage was the other most commonly encountered juvenile offence. Young hooligans were publicly censured for setting fire to the gorse at the Frolic, Haverfordwest.¹²⁹² The Milford Haven Sessions dealt with offenders who broke windows, interfered with railway trucks and smashed fish boxes.¹²⁹³ The Pembroke magistrates fined a number of school boys 24s. 6d., for deliberately smashing telephone insulators, 53 of which had been destroyed between Pembroke town and the village of Angle.¹²⁹⁴

More serious offences, such as burglary attracted very stiff chastisement. Two Haverfordwest school boys, Alexander Warlow and Joseph Llewellyn, broke into a house in Quay Street and stole £5 15s. 1d. worth of goods for which they received six strokes of the birch rod.¹²⁹⁵ The court cases as reported occasionally mention an absent father which is the most widely encountered hypothesis to explain the rise in crime. Reginald Davies of Neyland, who was sent to a Reformatory for four years for theft, had a father absent in the navy, leaving him to be brought up by his mother together with six siblings.¹²⁹⁶ One local lad named Phillip Cole of Newton, Llanstadwell, was a highly prolific offender, out of the control of his mine-sweeping father and convicted, *inter alia*, of stealing his mother's purse and placing timber on a railway line. According to his mother, the youngster was hooked on Charlie Chaplin

¹²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23 February 1916.

¹²⁹¹ *PCG*, 5 May 1916.

¹²⁹² *H&MHT*, 24 March 1915.

¹²⁹³ *PCG*, 7 September 1917; 5 October 1917.

¹²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 26 July 1918.

¹²⁹⁵ *H&MHT*, 3 January 1917.

¹²⁹⁶ *PCG*, 9 August 1918.

films and imitated his hero's walk and possibly re-enacted his slapstick capers.¹²⁹⁷

Wider mores and habits hinted at a decline in respect for authority figures and a rebellious streak which expressed itself through rowdyism and hooliganism with the attendant bad language. This was witnessed in mixed assemblies at Fishguard where boys and girls: 'stayed out on sundry corners, in lanes and under hedgerows, indulging in language bordering so far on the lewd and lurid as to make elder folk shudder in contemplating the consequences of such behaviour.'¹²⁹⁸ One less than deferential school boy with a well-aimed snowball, scored a direct hit on the nose of the Mayor of Pembroke.¹²⁹⁹ Other offences, as when two boys were convicted of indecent behaviour behind the fix boxes on Milford Docks probably represented the first fumbling of an exploratory sexuality.¹³⁰⁰ Contemporaries expressed genuine concern at the juvenile rebelliousness of daring and ingenuity at some of the thefts being perpetrated 'which stagger those of an older generation who were brought up with a wholesome fear of the policeman. There is no doubt that this painful prevalence of stealing by children'...constitutes a menace to the future of society'.¹³⁰¹ The offending presaged a depressing outlook for the nation's future according to the *Pembroke County Guardian* and strong arguments were marshalled to turn the healthy energy of the rising generation into proper channels.¹³⁰²

The courts responded to the rising crime with the imposition of cautions, reprimands, financial penalties, corporal punishment, especially birching, and the imposition of custodial sentences to Industrial or Reformatory schools. Birchings rose from 2,415 in

¹²⁹⁷ *PH*, 7 January 1916.

¹²⁹⁸ *CE*, 5 October 1916.

¹²⁹⁹ *PCG*, 13 April 1917.

¹³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3 November 1916.

¹³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1916.

¹³⁰² *Ibid.*

1914 to 5,210 three years later.¹³⁰³ Committal to special or corrective schools peaked at 6,602 in 1916. The system of probation was put under immense strain with the employment of older men past military service and females educated in social work.¹³⁰⁴ A number of Pembrokeshire children proved impossible to control and were sent away. The Pembroke Dock Petty Sessions committed Bertie Spurr, aged eleven, to an Industrial School in Dinas Powis.¹³⁰⁵ Peter Gibbs of Haverfordwest was sent to a reformatory for five years while his father had to contribute 2s. 6d. a week towards his maintenance.¹³⁰⁶ *Ad hoc* use was made of probation officers suggesting their lack of embedding in the criminal justice system. When a fourteen- year- old Belgian boy, Teller Dopuyt, stole £28 the local Belgian Marine Commissioner was appointed to act as his probation officer.¹³⁰⁷

The issue of juvenile delinquency brought other factors into play. The heightened offending rates might well be explained by increased zeal on the part of police and petty officials in pursuing enforcement and prosecution of offences which might well be overlooked in peace time.¹³⁰⁸ Perhaps the result was a well-publicised moral panic and much greater increase in sensitivity to wartime law and order issues.¹³⁰⁹ Worries over youth crime were a footnote over anxiety concerning national and racial decline which became manifest during the time of the Boer War.

The discussion over delinquency disclosed a connection with changing gender and family roles where increasingly, married working mothers were thought by the respectable classes to be ignoring their primary duty to devote time and energy into

¹³⁰³ Beckett, *Home Front, 1914-1918*, 99.

¹³⁰⁴ Smith 'Juvenile Delinquency in Britain', 129.

¹³⁰⁵ *PCG*, 6 April 1917.

¹³⁰⁶ *PH*, 19 January 1917.

¹³⁰⁷ *H&MHT*, 14 August 1918.

¹³⁰⁸ Horn, *Young Offenders*, 172.

¹³⁰⁹ Smith, 'Juvenile Delinquency in Britain', 119.

where it mattered most, the family home.¹³¹⁰ Such a debate dates back at least to the 1870s and was prevalent during the Edwardian era and was by no means just a wartime contention. For Pembrokeshire the numbers of juvenile offences were a mere fraction of overall crime, but because of wartime fears for the future they received widespread coverage in the media and in political discourse. Wartime childhood experiences were highly varied depending upon class, geography and other social determinants. The war did at least raise the whole debate about erecting a national system of education, an objective demonstrated in the ethos of the Fisher Act (1918) which imposed a school-leaving age of fourteen, abolished elementary school fees and embodied the principle of continuation classes.¹³¹¹ Secondary education increased in popularity with numbers attending rising from 60,453 to 96,283 (1914-20).¹³¹²

War offered both opportunities and temptations for children who grew up in a society engaged in an unprecedentedly demanding national struggle. They became active participants in a civic culture as evidenced by their war work, but economic and social dislocation created tensions which undoubtedly fuelled petty offending, which while bearing congruity with pre-war patterns, aroused more than usual interest in law makers and shapers of public policy. Despite their worst fears, it did not presage the beginnings of anarchy, although the war did change the dynamic of class power relations as demonstrated by the relative political and economic decline of the aristocratic class which we next discuss.

¹³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹³¹¹ Geoffrey Sherrington, *English education, social change and war 1911-20* (Manchester, 1981), 101.

¹³¹² Brian Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 192-40* (London, 1974), 365.

The Gentry and Landed Elites

Discharging the moral obligations for the place which they enjoyed in British society demonstrates how the gentry's expressions of patriotism came at considerable cost. We learn a great deal about social mobility and the economic and social tensions felt across rural localities like Pembrokeshire by looking at this class although there were substantial differences to the contexts in which English and Welsh gentry operated. They were one social grouping which, it is held, suffered a diminution in power and influence during and after the war. The land-owning classes who traditionally controlled the legislative process, the established Anglican Church, judiciary and headed the military power of the state.¹³¹³ Their economic power had been declining well before the war, although as Wordie observes, the landowner's position in society was worth much more than the sum total of his estate rentals. Whether taken in status, power or even sport, the rewards of landed property ownership raised its prestige far above its material output.¹³¹⁴ The landed classes held a dominant position which maintained the social fabric, especially in rural areas like Pembrokeshire (although as the Rebecca Riots of the 1840s demonstrated, it was by no means unchallenged); they underwrote a range of philanthropic endeavours (like heading the local infirmary while discharging the functions of local government and public administration as magistrates, high sheriffs or deputy lord lieutenants.¹³¹⁵ A narrow basis of landowning survived into the twentieth century, some 49,204 owner-occupiers accounted for only

¹³¹³ J.R. Wordie, (ed.), *Agriculture and Politics in England, 1815-1939* (Basingstoke, 2000), 6.

¹³¹⁴ Avner Offer, *The First World War. An Agrarian Interpretation* (Oxford, 1989), 108.

¹³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 109; In the context of Wales David W. Howell has made an especially important contribution in charting the gentry's economic and political fortunes, 'the economy of the landed estates in Pembrokeshire c.1680-1830', *WHR*, 3:3 (1967), 265-286; *Land and People in Nineteenth Century Wales* (London 1977).

11.3 per cent of acreage.¹³¹⁶

In Pembrokeshire there were significant gradations in landed wealth and status but at the top of the social pyramid were the landed proprietors. In 1873 there were 1,629 owners of an acre or more, but real prestige accrued to the owners of estates exceeding 3,000 acres, of whom there were 27 with property either wholly or partly in the county. They enjoyed fully one third of the land rental.¹³¹⁷ The typical pattern, however, was one of small-scale estates, with really large holdings of over 3,000 acres uncommon. The land area (excluding waste) by the estates of over 3,000 acres was 38 per cent while the smaller estates under 3,000 acres covered 58 per cent of the whole cultivated area of the county.¹³¹⁸ Rural areas were dominated by families with often ancient lineage. The premier county family were the Philipps' of Picton Castle who had dominated the social scene for centuries and were represented by Sir Charles E.G. Philipps during the war. Other leading families were the Lort Phillips of Lawrenny, Mirehouse of Angle, Meyrick of Bush, Yorke of Langton and Kensington of St Bride's and lesser gentry. It is the contention of this thesis that the Pembrokeshire gentry did suffer a diminution in terms of political and economic power as a result of the appearance of mass democracy from 1918 and the break-up of the great estates in 1917-1919.

The heirs of many of the landed estates were invariably to be found in the officer ranks of the territorial and regular army regiments. War validated the social purpose of the aristocracy and gentry but at a fearful price in casualties.¹³¹⁹ Some 13.6 per cent of officers were killed during the conflict. Performing this traditional obligation,

¹³¹⁶ S.G. Sturmeay, 'Owner Farming in England and Wales 1900-1950', W.E. Mitchinson (ed.), *Essays in Agrarian History Vol. II* (Newton Abbot, 1968), 286.

¹³¹⁷ Evans, 'The Land and its People', 16.

¹³¹⁸ Howell, *Land and People*, 20-3.

¹³¹⁹ Searle, *A New England?* 794.

according to Cannadine, led to an irrevocable weakening of the British aristocracy through disproportionate losses, although it must be noted how four-fifths of British peers and their sons returned after the Armistice.¹³²⁰ The war claimed a number of prominent Pembrokeshire gentry victims, beginning with the death of Major Lawrence Colby of Ffynone, who was killed in action in October 1914 and whose parents endowed a room at the Pembroke Dock Military Hospital in his memory.¹³²¹ Lord St. David's (1860-1938) lost two sons, Colwyn Philipps who was killed on 13 May 1915 and Roland who died on the Somme on 7 July 1916. Lord Kesteven, owner of the Carew estate, died on active service in December 1915, while Major A. B. Higgon of Scolton was killed in the Dardanelles on 19 September 1915.¹³²² Forty-year old Baron de Rutzen died in Egypt and had only succeeded to the title on the death of his uncle in April 1915.¹³²³ Other Pembrokeshire houses to suffer war losses included Captain J. Hamilton Yorke of Langton who died on 27 December 1917 fighting the Turks. The Hon. Cecil Edwardes, brother to Lord Kensington was killed at Cambrai on 20 November 1917 as were the two sons of Sir Evan Jones, elected MP in the 'Coupon' election of December 1918. Even so, casualties *per se* do not equate to a decline in power or status in the social hierarchy.

The officer was presented as the selfless patriot. The images presented by the local *Telegraph* were intended to serve as paradigms of selflessness to encourage others. Colonel Stokes of St Botolphs near Milford Haven left Cape Town on the outbreak of hostilities where he had been amusing himself on a big game hunt and rejoined the 4th Queen's Hussars, which was applauded as an example of 'Duty before Pleasure'.¹³²⁴

¹³²⁰ David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London, 1990), 82.

¹³²¹ *H&MHT*, 5 November 1915.

¹³²² *PH*, 17 September 1915.

¹³²³ *Ibid.*, 25 August 1916.

¹³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 11 September 1914.

The fallen were represented as having noble ideals of spotless honour, courage and sacrifice. Although the toll from the elite was thus well- publicised, recruits from the labouring and manual classes and the middle classes had similar stories of sacrifice to tell. There were occasional miracles of survival after the families had given up hope. When 23-year-old Lieutenant Marteine Lloyd, heir of the Bronwydd estate was reported to have perished during the Battle of the Aisne on 23 October 1914, the town of Newport went into mourning with a memorial service at Newport and a special Court Leet to express condolences to his father, the Lord Marcher.¹³²⁵ Lieutenant Lloyd was in fact safe and well; a War Office blunder was blamed in this case of mistaken identity. Death was not to be thwarted. Captain Marteine Kemes Arundel Lloyd was later killed in action on 16 September 1916.¹³²⁶

Increased gentry mortality may have been a factor, but it was the wider economic and political conditions which resulted in a dramatic change in the pattern of national land ownership (and certainly true in Pembrokeshire as well) from 1917. While the disintegration of the landed estates occurred throughout England and Wales from the 1870s, owners of Welsh estates disposed of their properties at a faster rate than did their English counterparts. Welsh owners, distanced from their tenant farmers by linguistic and religious barriers, were more thoroughly ousted from the political and social leadership of their counties after the rise of democracy from the 1870s. The virulent anti-landlord sentiment coursing through many Welsh rural communities, stoked by a Welsh nonconformist press, was an added inducement for Welsh owners to part with their estates.¹³²⁷ Welsh tenants, for their part, were anxious to buy their own holdings, a desire which arose in part from the insecurity of tenure they felt after

¹³²⁵ *CE*, 5 November 1914.

¹³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 26 October 1916.

¹³²⁷ John Davies, 'The End of the Great Estates and the Rise of Freehold Farming in Wales', *WHR*, 7, (1974), 208-11.

the 'political' evictions following the 1868 parliamentary election.¹³²⁸ Although earlier sales had occurred, a noticeable acceleration in the break-up of Welsh estates took place from 1910, albeit in most cases it was the outlying parts of the estates which entered the market. Sales continued during the war. Perkins has identified some 34 sales occurring in a mere nine week period during September and October 1917.¹³²⁹

High wartime taxation, combined with increased cost of wages and cost of living together with estate repairs and improvements shelved for the duration of the war, were reason enough for many to sell.¹³³⁰ The very high land prices, £35 an acre in 1920, were an added inducement. In 1919 a new basis of land valuation was adopted for the purpose of calculating Death Duties, providing another incentive for owners to liquidate their land holdings. The 'Green Revolution' (1918-21) saw the greatest permanent change in land ownership since the Dissolution of the Monasteries with tenants eager to purchase their holdings using some of the cash which they had accumulated during the currency of the Corn Production Act. Owner-occupiers accounted for 36 per cent of land by 1927.¹³³¹ An unprecedented 6-8 million acres changed hands in only three years, the sale of so many estates, great and small, confirming the effect changes in society already felt in local and national government.¹³³² The number of estates tumbling into the auction houses is easily detectable in Pembrokeshire, especially from 1917.

The Jordanston Estate of 285 acres went under the hammer in August that year and

¹³²⁸ Howell, *Land and People in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, 28.

¹³²⁹ *Pers. Com.* Edward H. Perkins, Haverfordwest, valuer and auctioneer

¹³³⁰ Sturmev, 'Owner Farming in England and Wales,' 293.

¹³³¹ Wordie, *Agriculture and Politics*, 27.

¹³³² Morgan, *Re-birth of a Nation*, 177.

the Milton Estate in October.¹³³³ Subsequent years saw the sale of estates at Nolton, Rosemoor, Hook, Llether and Brawdy.¹³³⁴ In 1919 Trevacon, consisting of some 120 lots with properties at Solva, Cilgwyn, Nevern, Brawdy, Roch and Llanhowell were sold off.¹³³⁵ Some £118,125 was realised with only one lot unsold.¹³³⁶ The Rickeston Estate sold in June 1919 saw all 14 lots disposed of yielding £18,580.¹³³⁷ The Llanunwas Estate at Solva was another sale that same year. The most important post-war sale was the auctioning off of the St. Bride's Estate owned by Lord Kensington in 1920 consisting of 3,662 acres and marking the disappearance of the family off the old political and social map of Pembrokeshire.¹³³⁸ The rise in owner-occupants was marked, rising from 10.3 per cent in 1887 to 64.2 per cent in 1970.¹³³⁹

The overall effects of class levelling during and after the war have been much less clearly defined. Waites argues for an alteration in the specific form of class structure but otherwise no fundamental disturbance in the processes of social differentiation.¹³⁴⁰ Nevertheless under battle conditions class lines were overshadowed by the mutuality of death which made the officer class and those which filled them seem less Olympian and remote.¹³⁴¹ The uncertainties of the post-war world with changed socio-economic conditions were captured in the dilemma of the 'temporary gentlemen' wartime commissioned officers outside the pre-war elite selection pool, who found themselves

¹³³³ *H&MHT*, 8 August 1917; PRO D/LJ/141 Sale catalogue; *Ibid.*, 10 October 1917.

¹³³⁴ PRO D/EE/18/190; HDX/828/2. The Harcourt Powell sale on 29 June 1918 included fields, houses and stores in or near the town of Pembroke in the parishes of St Mary, St. Michael and Monkton.

¹³³⁵ *PCG*, 27 June 1919.

¹³³⁶ *H&MHT*, 1 October 1919.

¹³³⁷ *PCG*, 27 June 1919.

¹³³⁸ *TT*, 24 September 1920; HDX/1684/1. Dorothy Willcock, *St. Brides Pembrokeshire* (Pembroke Dock, 2004). The sale included twelve farms, 22 small holdings, 40 cottages, tithe rent charges and the islands of Skomer, Grassholm and Gateholm. The annual estate rental was £2,901 15s 7d. The baronial residence opened as Kensington Hospital under the aegis of the King Edward VII National Memorial Association for tuberculosis. The capital conversion costs were £23,738. The Rickeston Estate, largely in the parish of Robeston was auctioned off in June 1919 as was the Parry Estate largely based at Neyland. *H&MHT*, 14 May 1919; 11 June 1919.

¹³³⁹ Davies, 'End of the Great Estates,' 212.

¹³⁴⁰ Waites, *A Class Society at War*, 279.

¹³⁴¹ Roebuck, *The Making of Modern English Society*, 101.

in a distinctly ambiguous social status.¹³⁴² The disintegration of the great estates was a motif for the decline of political and social hegemony, which the elites encountered after 1918 with the advent of mass democracy. Their traditional monopoly of the social levers of prestige, national honours and justices of the peace remained largely unchallenged. A pen portrait of the awe felt by the residents of Charles Street, Neyland, in the late 1920s when Lady Lort Phillips of Lawrenny Castle arrived in a Rolls Royce to offer employment to a young girl, Dolly Petherick, demonstrates how the remoteness of the gentry and a lingering deference towards them had not entirely been overcome by war.¹³⁴³

Women's Mores and Political Rights

Changes to the societal position of women and their claims for full citizenship in the political sense cannot be viewed as the unified experiences of a monolithic gendered group. The impact of war on the individual varied enormously and depended upon class, nationality, region, ethnicity, age and the degree of remoteness in an emotional sense from the conflict.¹³⁴⁴ There were undoubted changes to female mores (or those attributed to them by men), habits, fashion and their first, if limited, assumption of political rights through the parliamentary franchise, the latter perhaps the most potent sign of their changed position combined with the removal of certain legal disqualifications in the professions.¹³⁴⁵ Changes to the role and position of women remains one of the central discussions in the debate on war and social change, hence its vast historiography.¹³⁴⁶ The orthodox hypothesis of female war-driven

¹³⁴² Martin Potter, 'Temporary Gentlemen' in the Aftermath of the Great War: Rank, Status and the Ex-Officer Problem', *HJ* 37:1, (1994), 127.

¹³⁴³ Pers. Com. Florence Cole of Neyland

¹³⁴⁴ Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 101.

¹³⁴⁵ Havighurst, *Twentieth-Century Britain*, 143.

¹³⁴⁶ Susan Grayzel, *Women's identities at war: gender, motherhood and politics in Britain and France during the First World War* (1999); 'Liberating Women? Examining gender, morality and sexuality in

emancipation held the rise of greater sexual liberation, increased self-consciousness and assertiveness, especially in their status when viewed by men.¹³⁴⁷ Margaret and Patrice Higonnet have postulated the model of 'The Double Helix' to replace the traditional representation of an escalating social ladder, suggesting that while the labour expected of men and women took them into new territory, women's work and consequent experiences were strictly gendered, with women being subject to systematic subordination. The opposite strands of a double helix resulted in a constant distance being maintained and never converging.¹³⁴⁸ Female war experiences acquire an increasing historiography with telling contributions in a Welsh context from Beddoe and Snook.¹³⁴⁹ Monger has recently argued how women's role and work did not dramatically change during the war, although their contributions as citizens simply received greater recognition. He welcomes how such scholarly investigation makes it more difficult for historians to suggest that there was a single 'women's' experience of the war in Britain.¹³⁵⁰ Pembrokeshire women did experience greater opportunities for wider employment and there were limited examples of less rigorous conformity with dress and fashion, but it was far from revolutionary and far from permanent change, as will be demonstrated.

First World War Britain and France', in Gail Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History and the Great War: Historians and the Impact of 1914-18* (Oxford, 2003); Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of our Sons: Men, Women and the Renegotiation of Citizenship during the Great War* (Basingstoke, 2002); M. Hausmann, 'The impact of the Great War on the discourse of Women's Suffrage', in Hartmut Gerghoff and Robert von Friedeberg (eds), *Change and Inertia: Britain under the Impact of the Great War* (Bodenheim, 1998).

¹³⁴⁷ Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War*, 107; Alastair Reid, 'The Impact of the First World War on British Workers', in Richard Wall and Jay Winter (eds), *The Upheaval of War*, 297.

¹³⁴⁸ Claire A. Culleton, *Working-Class Culture, Women and Britain, 1914-1921* (Basingstoke, 2000), 26.

¹³⁴⁹ Beddoe, 'Munitionettes, Maids and Mams: Women in Wales, 1914-1939', in Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mothers Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939* (Cardiff, 1991), 189-201; *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2000); Snook, 'Out of the Cage? Women and the First World War in Pontypridd', *Llafur*, 8:2 (2001), 75-87. Both note the strong post-war reaction against female employment and the circumscribed long-term changes which Welsh women experienced.

¹³⁵⁰ David Monger, 'Nothing Special? Propaganda and Women's Roles in Late First World War Britain', *Women's History Review*, 23:4 (2014), 518-542.

It was not until 1918 that they enjoyed any national political voice.¹³⁵¹ Marwick's fortresses of prejudice against women were not so much swept away as undermined, largely within a conservative framework. Even the much vaunted increase in feminine consciousness was seldom sufficient to challenge the usual pattern, especially of working-class women of a life filled with marriage, children and domesticity.¹³⁵² The war generated new debates centred upon alleged increases in female sexual impropriety, intemperance and flouting of previous accepted norms of decency. These went a considerable way to engender a sense of moral unease in a society engaged in its first 'total war'. Beddoe argues that patriarchal interpretations of moral issues which came to the forefront during the war were rooted in fears of women's new-found freedoms.¹³⁵³

For Grayzel the models of 'liberation' and 'backlash' and of gender reconstruction do not prove adequate in explaining the sheer diversity of women's wartime experiences.¹³⁵⁴ The war initiated renewed interest into the private lives and personal conduct of women by the state. Normally private behaviour became a public concern.¹³⁵⁵ Sexual mores in particular most concerned contemporaries, with alarmist morality-mongers painting frightful visions of girls and women freed from the control of their fathers and husbands.¹³⁵⁶ The earliest manifestation of female sexual exhibitionism was associated with the so-called 'khaki fever'; sexual excitement displayed as blatant, and aggressive and overt harassment of soldiers by young

¹³⁵¹ Susan Pedersen, 'Gender, Welfare and Citizenship in Britain during the Great War', *AHR*, 95:4 (1990), 983-1006.

¹³⁵² Pyecroft, 'British Working Women', 710.

¹³⁵³ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, 69.

¹³⁵⁴ Susan Grayzel, 'Liberating Women? Examining Gender, Morality and Sexuality in First World War Britain and France', in Gail Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History and the Great War* (Oxford, 2004), 126.

¹³⁵⁵ Emily Sarah Payne, *Private Lives and Patriotism: A Study of Attitudes to Sex and Venereal Disease in Wartime Britain, 1914-1918*. PhD University of Kent (2005), 1.

¹³⁵⁶ Beckett, *The Great War, 1914-1918*, 337.

working-class women, threatening, it seemed, to subvert the gender as well as the moral order.¹³⁵⁷ This appearance of gendered patriotism, which lost its potency as women assumed more actual involvement in the war effort, seems to have been absent, or at any rate entirely unrecorded, in Pembrokeshire. If young girls and women did hang round the training camps and forts seeking vicarious excitement of the war by fraternising with the troops (with all the attendant risks), it received no currency in the press either through editorials or correspondence.

The desire to control female sexuality combined with greater independence was the wider context for the first moral *frisson* of ‘War Babies,’ those born to unmarried mothers with soldier fathers. The discussion was not one of illegitimacy *per se* but on how to control female sexuality.¹³⁵⁸ The issue was in fact an example of gross exaggeration with illegitimacy rates in 1915 barely altered from the previous year.¹³⁵⁹ That the issue was nevertheless one of wide currency and intense public interest was demonstrated by the Rector of Prendergast who delivered a sermon on ‘War Babies’ to his parishioners in April 1915 when ‘you could hear a pin drop.’¹³⁶⁰ The previous week the *Pembrokeshire Herald* had hinted darkly how the problem was applicable to Pembrokeshire also but did not elaborate.¹³⁶¹ In 1917 the county had a total of 90 births out of wedlock, a marked decline on the pre-war figure of 111 in 1914.¹³⁶² There was no marked increase in Pembrokeshire during the war.

¹³⁵⁷ Angela Woollacott, ‘Khaki fever and its Control: Gender, Class, Age and Sexual Morality on the British Home Front in the First World War’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 29:2, (1994), 326; more recently Doan has highlighted how the focus has been upon bodies that performed actions and behaviours deemed unconventional at the time, Laura Doan, *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality and Women’s Experience of Modern War, 1914-18* (Chicago, 2013).

¹³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 332.

¹³⁵⁹ Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 65.

¹³⁶⁰ *PH*, 30 April 1915.

¹³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 23 April 1915.

¹³⁶² PP. 1916 (Cd. 8206) *Seventy-seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Marriages and Deaths*.

The state, through the offices of the Ministry of Pensions, assumed the role as the husband's sexual surrogate by investigating accusations of marital infidelity where separation allowances were being paid out.¹³⁶³ The state, as arbiter of domestic morality, cancelled a total of 4,292 allowances out of a total of 10,151 cases investigated (1917-18).¹³⁶⁴ Local petty sessional records across Pembrokeshire disclose no abundance of illegitimacy cases where affiliation orders were granted against fathers. The Mathry Sessions granted Harriet Morris an order for 2s. 6d. a week for fifteen years against Sergeant William Henry Rogers of 2/4th Welsh in respect of her child.¹³⁶⁵ War-time illegitimacy rates peaked in 1917 before declining to 42,000 in 1918.¹³⁶⁶

Social flux with the presence of thousands of soldiers and sailors in Pembrokeshire led to an increased vigilance on behalf of the police in detecting disorderly houses and brothels. Cases were reported with somewhat greater prominence in local newspapers than is encountered in peacetime. The implication that women's moral decadence was a threat to the existing social order was a commonplace fear.¹³⁶⁷ The feared collapse of gendered moral codes of behaviour brought to the fore question of whether personal lifestyles were deleterious to the war effort. There was an increasing zeal in the enforcement of legislation, like the Civil Law Amendment Act (1912) which rendered any person who managed or assisted in managing a brothel or knowingly permitting their property to be used for such purposes, a fine of £20 and three months' imprisonment.¹³⁶⁸ The appearance was promulgated in more than one quarter that the war was resulting in declining female moral standards, especially their feckless

¹³⁶³ Pedersen, 'Gender, Welfare and Citizenship', 998.

¹³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 999.

¹³⁶⁵ *CE*, 9 December 1915.

¹³⁶⁶ Marwick, *Women at War*, 119.

¹³⁶⁷ Grayzel, 'The Outward and Visible Sign of Her Patriotism', 158.

¹³⁶⁸ Payne, *Private Lives and Patriotism*, 88.

dissipation of their separation allowances, which was an affront to their husbands' daily sacrifices, in other words, the fracture of family life and moral degeneracy of wives and mothers.¹³⁶⁹

Much of the discourse on female behaviour cast women free from the reticence of Edwardian society as sexual freelancers emerging from the dislocation of family life.¹³⁷⁰ The prosecution and punishment of brothel-keeping in Pembrokeshire amply demonstrated the persistence of double standards of morality for women and men, with the former invariably portrayed as the instigators and tempters with the concomitant of shattered marriages and neglected children.¹³⁷¹ The Pembroke Dock Petty Sessions in February 1915 considered the case of Gertrude Cook of King Street charged with brothel keeping, with two other women indicted for aiding and abetting. Young women in court were advised to leave before the hearing of the evidence which resulted in the principal defendant receiving three months' custody with hard labour. The court was treated to the poignant sight of desperately distressed children clinging to their mother as she was taken away. During the hearing, Cook's husband was said to be on active service 'fighting for us all', a grave indictment of his wife's personal betrayal and rejection of her national responsibilities.¹³⁷² A pronounced example of gendered justice and inequality before the law came before the same court in April 1917. Elizabeth Evans of King Street was charged with keeping a disorderly house, while Kate Taylor and Lilian Saville were brought up with aiding and abetting. The latter two defendants received three months' hard labour while three men found

¹³⁶⁹ Stella Moss, 'Wartime Hysterics'? Alcohol, women and the politics of wartime social purity in England', in Jessica Meyer (ed.), *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, 2008), 153.

¹³⁷⁰ Edward J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance. Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (London, 1977), 146.

¹³⁷¹ Lucy Bland, 'Cleansing the portals of Life': the Venereal disease campaign in the early twentieth century,' in Mary Langan and Bill Schwarz (eds), *Crises in the British State 1880-1930* (Birmingham, 1985), 202.

¹³⁷² *PCG*, 26 February 1915.

on the premises, a labourer and two soldiers received fines of two pounds each. One newspaper columnist expressed his contempt at this display of 'Man's Justice' with 'one law for the man and another for the woman.'¹³⁷³ The upholding of unequal standards in matters of morals and sexuality is commonly encountered across the country.¹³⁷⁴ As with illegitimacy, keeping of disorderly houses did not perceptibly increase, although the prominence accorded to such cases unquestionably did.

The view of the female as author of immorality was obvious at the Haverfordwest Sessions in August 1917 when three men were summoned for aiding Cissy Murphy in keeping a brothel. One defendant, a soldier, who had been gassed, 'had been tempted by Eve' and he only had to pay costs whereas his fellow defendants were fined as well.¹³⁷⁵ The Damoclesian prospect of losing her weekly Government pension of 28*s.* 9*d.* was mentioned during the hearing of the case involving Mary Ann Mills, widow, at the Haverfordwest court in February 1918. The defendant was convicted of keeping a brothel on St Thomas' Green in the town and she also faced the prospect of losing her three children all aged under sixteen years, to the Workhouse.¹³⁷⁶ The Bench gave her another chance to mend her ways although the sanctions for further offences were obvious.

The most direct social threat to the efficiency of the armed forces, it was maintained, was the spread of venereal disease among the troops; as the war progressed women were increasingly blamed for the spread of the infection.¹³⁷⁷ The disease infected 416,891 soldiers and sailors throughout the war.¹³⁷⁸ An Act of 1916 required local

¹³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 20 April 1917.

¹³⁷⁴ Bland, 'Cleansing the portals of life', 192.

¹³⁷⁵ *H&MHT*, 15 August 1917.

¹³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 15 February 1918.

¹³⁷⁷ Moss, 'Wartime hysterics,?' 158.

¹³⁷⁸ Winter, *Death's Men*, 150.

authorities to prepare plans to curtail the affliction. Nevertheless, the effectual treatment hoped for could expose medical men for actions for slander which prompted at least one Pembrokeshire council to petition the government to indemnify them.¹³⁷⁹ Regulation 40D, enacted on 22 March 1918 (and revoked on 25 November the same year), made it a criminal offence to have sexual intercourse, or attempt to do so, with a member of the armed forces, if they were suffering from venereal disease.¹³⁸⁰ A sea change in attitudes saw responsibility for infection change from the rakish man infecting helpless women to lascivious harlots transmitting the scourge to innocent Tommies.¹³⁸¹ Moss notes the umbilical link between the concerns over increased female drinking fuelling sexual desire and immorality.¹³⁸²

Cases of prostitution and later prosecutions under 40D of DORA are found almost exclusively at Pembroke and Pembroke Dock where there were particularly large concentrations of soldiers. There were four prosecutions in 1915 and the same number in 1917. Elizabeth Griffiths received one month's imprisonment for acting in an 'indecent manner'.¹³⁸³ At the same court, Helene Smith was charged with having sexual intercourse with a member of the armed forces whilst suffering from the condition and she received exemplary punishment of six months' custody with hard labour.¹³⁸⁴ A week before the end of the war, on 4 November 1918, Amy Johnson was remanded on the same charge but she was later discharged. Again, possible moral panic highlighted an issue writ large on the public consciousness, but not one which had risen a great deal over the peacetime norms. Only a handful of such cases are found in Pembrokeshire either in the press or sessional records which can be

¹³⁷⁹ PRO SPU/PE/1/17. Pembroke Union Board of Guardians 1916-18; 1 February 1917.

¹³⁸⁰ Payne, *Private Lives and Patriotism*, 60.

¹³⁸¹ DeGroot, *Blighty*, 235.

¹³⁸² Moss, 'Wartime hysterics?', 158.

¹³⁸³ PRO TPS/PE/12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessions 1917-25; 22 April 1918.

¹³⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 14 September 1918.

interpreted as either a societal acceptance, which seems unlikely or imperfect regulatory controls.

A wartime controversy relates to changing female mores and habits and the persistent accusation of their excessive drinking and intemperance. Perception is reality and charges of widespread drinking amongst soldiers' wives constantly surfaced in public discussions, in Pembrokeshire and elsewhere.¹³⁸⁵ Anecdotal evidence of increased alcohol consumption led to legislative changes to discourage women's consumption.¹³⁸⁶ Moss contends how the notion of widespread female dipsomania is far from accurate.¹³⁸⁷ The Women's Advisory Committee of the Liquor Control Board concluded how any increase that did occur was mainly among women who drank before.¹³⁸⁸ Contrary to popular belief, female convictions for drunkenness declined from 40,815 in 1914 to 24,206 two years later.¹³⁸⁹ Gutzke alludes to the dangers which single women faced in public houses, although he points to the increasingly progressive attitudes towards public house reform by brewers, while the social acceptance of women entering those premises became more widespread and acceptable.¹³⁹⁰

As with the other categories of crime in Pembrokeshire, female convictions for drunkenness occurred in urban areas, especially in Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock. The latter saw eight convictions in 1914, twelve in 1915 and ten in 1916, after which the number dramatically declined.¹³⁹¹ Fines were the standard punishment for public intoxication. At the Roose Sessions Jane Sheepwash was fined 2s. 6d. plus

¹³⁸⁵ Moss, 'Wartime hysterics?', 151.

¹³⁸⁶ Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 64.

¹³⁸⁷ Moss, 'Wartime hysterics,?' 169.

¹³⁸⁸ Thom, *Nice Girls and Rude Girls*, 168.

¹³⁸⁹ DeGroot, *Blighty*, 238.

¹³⁹⁰ David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives. Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960* (Dekalb, 2005).

¹³⁹¹ PRO TPS/PE/11-12. Pembroke Borough Petty Sessions 1914-25.

costs.¹³⁹² There were some incorrigible offenders. When Elizabeth Hare of Neyland was convicted in August 1916 it was her fourth offence in twelve months.¹³⁹³ Aggravating factors, especially the care of children escalated the penalty as happened in the case of Annie Nichols, a soldier's wife with five children, who appeared before the Pembroke magistrates.¹³⁹⁴ Before the Pembroke Bench in May 1915 appeared Elizabeth James whose husband was in the 4th Welsh Regiment who was charged with child neglect and being drunk every day. She received six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Such cases prompted one newspaper correspondent to suggest that soldiers' wives should receive provisions rather than money with which to purchase alcohol.¹³⁹⁵

There were recorded changes in the female dress habit and in patterns of their sociability. The absence of so many men led to an increase in unchaperoned middle-class and working-class women in public spaces, while there was a noticeable increase in the use of cosmetics, shorter skirts and shorter or bobbed hair.¹³⁹⁶ Trousers became commonplace, as did the sight of women driving motor cars and vans. Bruley sees the supreme irony where personal liberation for women came about as a result of the sublime tragedy of war.¹³⁹⁷ By February 1917 it was fashionable for Pembrokeshire women to wear trousers or overalls at work. Other more unconventional garb was felt to include the wearing of straw hats and mackintoshes such as was witnessed on the streets of Haverfordwest to the bemusement of one commentator.¹³⁹⁸

¹³⁹² *H&MHT*, 14 July 1915.

¹³⁹³ *PCG*, 4 August 1916.

¹³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4 January 1918.

¹³⁹⁵ *TO*, 9 September 1915.

¹³⁹⁶ Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 151.

¹³⁹⁷ Sue Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900* (Basingstoke, 1999), 57.

¹³⁹⁸ *PCG*, 23 February 1917; *H&MHT*, 26 September 1917.

Smoking became a metaphor for the widening boundaries which were experienced during the war, although the habit can be traced back to the 1880s among upper- and middle-class women.¹³⁹⁹ The accusation that smoking led to a loss of femininity and an appropriation of this form of masculinity was an old one; thus tobacco became a tool of emancipation.¹⁴⁰⁰ The shock of a female lighting up may have lost its edge during wartime but it was still significant enough for the local media to comment upon as an assertion of the public role which women claimed.¹⁴⁰¹ Cigarette smoking became a totem of the new feminist practices in Pembrokeshire and was explicitly described as such when a woman was seen walking along the Promenade at Neyland smoking a cigarette, an event considered newsworthy by the local *Telegraph*.¹⁴⁰² When the price of tobacco was increased by 2d. per ounce at one wartime budget one was observed how women were the chief objectors and how there had been a great increase in female smokers in Haverfordwest.¹⁴⁰³ A supposed shortage of cigarettes at Tenby in the summer of 1918 attracted a rhetorical query as to whether it was due to purchases by young ladies.¹⁴⁰⁴ At Fishguard the Girl Guides received a homily during one public church service decrying the purchase of tobacco by females under the age of eighteen.¹⁴⁰⁵

The epitome of the young assertive, less- inhibited female was the ‘flapper’ whose ‘unwomanly behaviour’ was commentated on both nationally and locally.¹⁴⁰⁶ In

¹³⁹⁹ Penny Tinkler, *Smoke Signals. Women, Smoking and Visual Culture in Britain* (Oxford, 2006), 146.

¹⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 24; Julia Skelly has recently discussed the inter-relationship between war, masculine vulnerability, visual culture and addictive substances, ‘Advertising Masculine Vulnerability: Cocaine and Cigarettes after the First World War’, *Visual Culture in Britain*, 14:2 (2013), 179-198.

¹⁴⁰¹ Matthew Hilton, *Smoking in British Popular Culture 1800-2000* (Manchester, 2000), 146.

¹⁴⁰² *PCG*, 22 September 1916.

¹⁴⁰³ *H&MHT*, 9 May 1917.

¹⁴⁰⁴ *TO*, 11 July 1918.

¹⁴⁰⁵ *CE*, 2 December 1915.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Payne, *Private Lives and Patriotism*, 92; Fowler discusses ‘flappers’ in the context of youth culture in the inter-war period in *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c. 1920-1970* (Basingstoke, 2008). More

Pembrokeshire they seem to have been a strictly urban phenomenon and hint at changing sexual cultures. The appellation acquired connotations of sexual frivolity, and appears to have originated in 1906, becoming a typical cigarette smoking, dance-crazed young woman, fashion conscious and bent on pleasure seeking. The term eventually applied to all young women aged 21 to 30, although the original meaning was a considerable distance from the wartime phenomenon. They were widely subject to caricature and ridicule; as Graves noted they had to learn ‘life is not all cigarettes and sweets.’¹⁴⁰⁷ An early manifestation of these young hedonists occurred when a young lady of ‘the flapper stage’ was seen riding on a soldier’s bicycle at Neyland showing off her ankle.¹⁴⁰⁸ Local flappers were keen to be in the company of local servicemen. At Tenby, visiting American sailors thought the town quite the most ‘affectionate’ place they had visited, with other reports of ladies ‘gambolling’ on Monkstone Beach, concerns heavy-laden with sexual connotations.¹⁴⁰⁹ As a sign of changing social practices, attention was drawn to the dangers of mixed bathing with *alfresco* disrobing, with females sporting close-fitting bathing costumes.¹⁴¹⁰

A motif of women’s widening opportunities were the public appointments which they started to secure, an extension of public service which had been the preserve for very few upper -and middle-class women.¹⁴¹¹ The occasional female parochial appointment can be found during wartime. At Penally the vicar’s churchwarden was Miss Clifton, appointed in 1917.¹⁴¹² Miss Olive Dawkins of Haylett Grange, Haverfordwest, became the first female presiding officer during the General Election of December

recently Judith Mackrell discusses the lives of six women who exemplified the range and daring of that generation in *Flappers: Six Women of a Dangerous Generation* (Basingstoke, 2013).

¹⁴⁰⁷ Stephen, *Never Such Innocence*, 394.

¹⁴⁰⁸ *PCG*, 14 July 1916.

¹⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 18 July 1918.

¹⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5 September 1918.

¹⁴¹¹ Watson, *Fighting Different Wars*, 107.

¹⁴¹² *TO*, 12 April 1917.

1918.¹⁴¹³ The social class of the female counted for much with the old landed elites who did not always have so many doors closed to them; the Slebech Parish Council found the Baroness de Rutzen a member, rubbing shoulders with elite males.¹⁴¹⁴

The most significant progress for women during wartime came with the securing of limited political rights when females aged 30 and above were granted the franchise. Some 8.5 million women who were ratepayers or married to ratepayers were given the vote, although this still excluded 5 million others. Women comprised 38 per cent of the Welsh electorate and Turner considers how the change irrevocably altered the nation's political geography.¹⁴¹⁵ The Representation of the People Act which received Royal Assent on 6 February 1918, was a highly significant innovation which recalibrated the relationship to and the functioning of almost every part of the constitutional structure.¹⁴¹⁶ Although Simone de Beauvoir was certain that the winning of the vote by British women 'was in large part due to the services they rendered during the war,' the 'reward' hypothesis has been robustly challenged.¹⁴¹⁷ There is evidence of a burgeoning interest in politics by Pembrokeshire women of whom 17,171 were entitled to vote in 1918.¹⁴¹⁸ The women of Tenby were reminded of the great and solemn privilege accorded to them and they were urged to cast their votes, rather ambiguously, for their 'nation's good.'¹⁴¹⁹ In the *Tenby Observer* there was talk of a local women's political caucus to be established in the county without the interferences of agents from the major political parties although, when it came, they were strongly advised to support the coupon candidate, Sir Evan Jones. Housing,

¹⁴¹³ *H&MHT*, 18 December 1918.

¹⁴¹⁴ PRO HSPC/53/1. Slebech Parish Council 1894-1974; 15 April 1918 Baroness de Rutzen was elected as a councillor.

¹⁴¹⁵ Turner, *British Politics and the Great War*, 434.

¹⁴¹⁶ Robert Blackburn, 'Laying the Foundations of the Modern Voting System: The Representation of the People Act 1918', *Parliamentary History*, 30:1, (2011), 50.

¹⁴¹⁷ Marwick, *The Deluge*, 211.

¹⁴¹⁸ *H&MHT*, 30 October 1918.

¹⁴¹⁹ *TO*, 12 December 1918.

cheaper food, child care and the creation of a Ministry of Health were cited as priorities when women were canvassed as to the major political priorities, a number of which spheres were intimately connected with the field of domestic economy and nurturing.¹⁴²⁰

The year ended with praise for women and their contribution to the war effort. According to one commentator, 'Aurora' in an article entitled 'A Woman's Year-1918;' the war would mark their full and complete emancipation, which of course was a decided overstatement.¹⁴²¹ The inculcation of greater confidence, assertiveness and changed social habits did occur but personal circumstances limited the extent of that new-found freedom. Barriers were reduced with the removal of certain disqualifications in the law and other professions in 1919, but for many working-class women their lives were delineated in the same frame of children and domesticity, with perhaps many of them welcoming the return to the status quo.¹⁴²² Ouditt agrees that 'business as usual' attempted to recapture the nostalgia of pre-war certainties.¹⁴²³ Nevertheless, there is evidence of new female attitudes in the post-war world.

At Llanstadwell women were busy filling in electoral forms and decreed 'household duties were no longer women's work'.¹⁴²⁴ 'Flappers' were still very much in evidence. At Haverfordwest one woman experimented with new hair styles, tying her hair up which required 36 hair pins.¹⁴²⁵ Lady tennis players at Newport kept their bobbed hair while the style proved quite a craze at Fishguard. Nor did they cease to worship at the shrine of lady nicotine. Young ladies at Penslade, Fishguard,

¹⁴²⁰ Ibid., 31 October 1918.

¹⁴²¹ CE, 26 December 1918.

¹⁴²² Gerard J. DeGroot, 'The First World War as Total War', in Martin Pugh (ed.), *A Companion to Modern European History* (Oxford, 1997), 279.

¹⁴²³ Sharon Ouditt, *Fighting Forces, Writing Women. Identity and Ideology in the First World War* (London, 1994), 89.

¹⁴²⁴ PCG, 21 March 1919.

¹⁴²⁵ PT, 18 July 1923.

attempting to light their cigarettes in stormy weather were advised to purchase a patent lighter, or better still, give up the habit. They were also cautioned to modify their language.¹⁴²⁶ Depending on age, status and location, younger women had discovered new horizons which even the retrenching forces of conservatism could not entirely contain.

Defining their own Patriotism: The Volunteer Training Corps

Just as women displayed their allegiance as full participants in civic culture through voluntary military service, those men exempted from military duties on account of age, infirmity or occupational restrictions were similarly eager to acknowledge their masculinity and moral obligations through corresponding positive action. The asseveration of patriotism could be detected in the willingness of citizens to don uniforms and serve in ancillary military units when there was no compulsion for them to do so. Fears of German invasion resulted in the spontaneous creation of local defence associations and town guards, which culminated in a grudging recognition of a Central Association of Volunteer Training Corps by the War Office on 19 November 1914. Osborne sees the VTC as a manifestation of old-style patriotism which was at odds with the centralist state organising for industrialised warfare.¹⁴²⁷ The plurality of different expressions of national service was not accepted with equal validity if it allowed middle-aged men to use the VTC to define patriotic service on their own terms.¹⁴²⁸ This form of service was clearly expressed in Pembrokeshire.

A peninsula, with long coastline, and therefore open to an enemy landing or punitive

¹⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 5 October 1921; Notions of female sensibilities regarding the discussion of sexual matters were clearly still evident after the war. During the hearing of one paternity case a number of young girls were requested to leave the Haverfordwest Police Court; *WT*, 28 May 1924.

¹⁴²⁷ *PT.*, 65.

¹⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 66.

raid, Pembrokeshire saw a ready response to the VTC, especially at Goodwick, Tenby and Pembroke Dock. At the former location a public meeting was held at the Harbour Works Mission Hall and filled to capacity on 14 December 1914 when the corps was officially established and 50 members enrolled.¹⁴²⁹ A desire to protect hearth and home was sufficient perhaps to provide an incentive to join, as was a desire to be seen to display patriotism to one's peers. A list of rules and regulations promulgated by the corps for its members, aged seventeen to 58, laid down expectations regarding membership criteria, punctuality and attendance at drill.¹⁴³⁰ Goodwick had stolen a march on its neighbour, Fishguard, whose own corps was active from 26 January 1915.¹⁴³¹ Within a week 70 men had joined, although even with the facility of a miniature rifle range in the Market Hall the corps did not increase as perhaps it should have. Pembroke and Pembroke Dock fell into line in February 1915, while at Haverfordwest the proposition to raise a town guard offered a good opportunity for respectable citizens to display their patriotism and to contribute what they could during the present crisis.¹⁴³² The guard was founded on 15 April 1915 when the Lord Lieutenant, Sir Charles Philipps, resplendent in new khaki uniform, believed that the old town, which had furnished men for Crecy and Poitiers, still had men of that same spirit who would respond.¹⁴³³ The town guard soon had a sentry box in Castle Square where, it was joked, members could slumber.¹⁴³⁴ Around 30 to 40 members attended the twice-weekly drill with each paying a subscription of threepence per week.¹⁴³⁵ A year later the corps had 60 members on the roll. Smaller communities were not to be outdone, so that Llanunwas had a separate detachment while Saundersfoot had 42

¹⁴²⁹ *CE*, 17 December 1914.

¹⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 31 December 1914.

¹⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 28 January 1915.

¹⁴³² *H&MHT*, 20 January 1915.

¹⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 21 April 1915.

¹⁴³⁴ *PH*, 16 April 1915.

¹⁴³⁵ *H&MHT*, 28 April 1915.

members by the time Conscription was introduced.¹⁴³⁶ Little enthusiasm was shown initially at Milford Haven where only 25 people attended a public meeting.¹⁴³⁷ A corps of 25 to 30 members was formed although this was well below the 200 men originally envisaged. A Neyland VTC came into being in 1917.

The town of Tenby, which lay on the open coast, was an enthusiastic participant in the VTC movement where perhaps, conscious of their location on the south-east coast they esteemed themselves vulnerable. Images of Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby shelled on 16 December 1914 were raised at a public meeting convened to consider establishing a volunteer national reserve and town guard.¹⁴³⁸ This came into being on 4 January 1915 with a membership of 200 and drilling facilities at Messrs Ace's garage.¹⁴³⁹ In December 1916 they had the signal honour of an inspection by Viscount French, Commander in Chief of the Home Forces during a tour of inspection.¹⁴⁴⁰ Uniforms were not a priority. A red brassard bearing the black letters 'G.R.' was worn by enrolled men including Arthur Bartle a Haverfordwest Grammar School master (Illustration 23). They were issued at Tenby in March 1915 although one observer thought them 'hideous'.¹⁴⁴¹

¹⁴³⁶ *CE*, 3 February 1916.

¹⁴³⁷ *PH*, 27 October 1916.

¹⁴³⁸ *TO*, 24 December 1914.

¹⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 14 January 1915.

¹⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 December 1916.

¹⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 11 March 1915.



Illustration: 23 Red felt VTC brassard worn by Arthur Bartle, a teacher at Haverfordwest Grammar School with the words 'Haverfordwest V.T.C. No. 53' marked on the inside.

There was much anti-VTC sentiment in official circles which required members to purchase their own boots and strict rules were issued about wearing uniforms outside drills. The allure of the uniform, when they eventually arrived, was persuasive so that the Pembrokeshire corps eventually acquired the trappings of proper military units. The nature of the VTCs changed after they received official recognition on 29 February 1916 and the unit took its place in the national manpower scheme on a county basis only, complete with khaki uniform and bounty of two pounds per man.¹⁴⁴² The advent of Conscription breathed new life into the movement which had dwindled to a mere 50,000 men by December 1916. The influx of thousands of men, excused temporarily or permanently by the Military Service Tribunals, represented a flood of recruits and gave the VTC the opportunity of demonstrating their worth as a defence organisation.¹⁴⁴³ By May 1917 the VTC had a strength of 300,000 men of

¹⁴⁴² Osborne, 'Defining Their Own Patriotism', 71.

¹⁴⁴³ Mitchinson, *Defending Albion*, 149.

whom a third were 'Tribunal men'.¹⁴⁴⁴

Rules were laid down to ensure efficiency, with Section B men of military age liable to be removed from the corps into the regular army.¹⁴⁴⁵ Management of the Pembrokeshire VTC was assumed by the local Territorial Association in May 1916 and it was hoped to raise a regiment of volunteers for the county with a minimum number of 600 men.¹⁴⁴⁶ The 1st Battalion of the Pembrokeshire VTC, it was stressed, could be called out in the event of an invasion.¹⁴⁴⁷ By February 1917 they had a strength of 551 men.¹⁴⁴⁸ Funds were in desperately short supply since arms and clothing could not be purchased from public funds. The War Office was only able to send a token armament consisting of twenty rifles.¹⁴⁴⁹ There was a mixed response to Lord St David's' appeal for donations. The Finance Committee of Pembrokeshire County Council made a grant of £200.¹⁴⁵⁰ The Haverfordwest Borough Council gave £100, but at Milford Haven the urban councillors thought the responsibility for arming the volunteers fell squarely on Government shoulders.¹⁴⁵¹ The Haverfordwest Rural District Council gave a respectable ten guineas.¹⁴⁵² Providentially the county volunteer force was never mustered to confront a real emergency, although they did their best to meet basic proficiency standards in modern warfare. The Milford Haven volunteers practised musketry at Dale while their Fishguard counterparts learned the techniques of bomb throwing.¹⁴⁵³

¹⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Bilton, *The Home Front in the Great War*, 237.

¹⁴⁴⁶ *PH*, 12 May 1916.

¹⁴⁴⁷ *H&MHT*, 14 February 1917.

¹⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴⁹ *CE*, 15 February 1917.

¹⁴⁵⁰ PRO PCC/SE/18/3. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee minutes 1912-20; 14 April 1917.

¹⁴⁵¹ *H&MHT*, 11 April 1917; PCG, 23 March 1917.

¹⁴⁵² PRO HAR/SE/2/2. Haverfordwest Rural District Council minutes 1909-17; 7 March 1917.

¹⁴⁵³ *H&MHT*, 9 May 1917.

Many of the instigators of the local VTCs were leading lights in professions and local commerce. Revealingly, at their summer camp held at Penally in August 1917 around 200 were mustered, ‘chiefly businessmen.’¹⁴⁵⁴ The camp included five solicitors (the highest ranking being a Lieutenant) while the machine-gun detachment boasted the ex-mayors of Haverfordwest and Tenby.¹⁴⁵⁵ The disbanding of the corps began within weeks of the signing of the Armistice. They had defined their own patriotism through the appropriation of military uniform and ritual. Despite initial official discouragement and snide or gently- mocking allusions during the war, they did manifest their solidarity with the armed struggle carried on by younger, eligible men overseas and received official endorsement of their services like one corps member, William Griffith (Illustration 24). The Pembrokeshire VTCs did come to be seen in the time-honoured tradition of the citizen soldier, defenders of hearth and home.

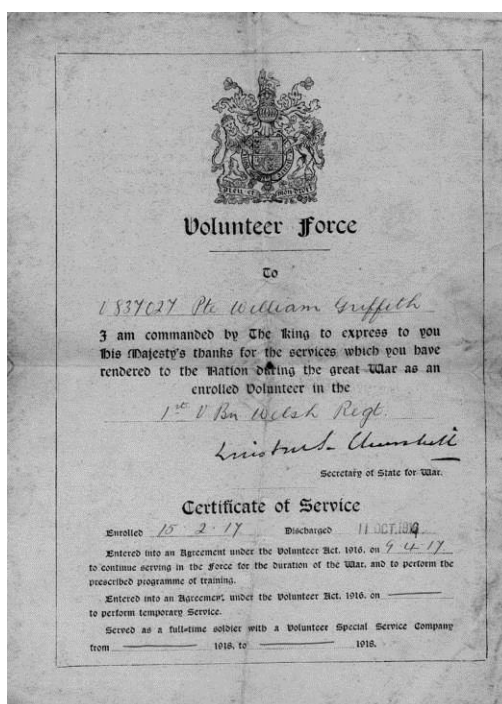


Illustration: 24 Certificate awarded to William Griffith on account of his services to the VTC from enrolment in April 1917 to the end of the war.

¹⁴⁵⁴ PCG, 10 August 1917.

¹⁴⁵⁵ H&MHT, 8 August 1917.

Digging for Victory: Allotments as Patriotic Agriculture

One of the more unexpected ways of signally participating in the national struggle was to assist in boosting the nation's food supply in response to shortages and the introduction of rationing from 1917. Means of supporting the national war effort came in an inordinate variety of ways, although perhaps one of the more unexpected was the expression of practical patriotism through the cultivation of allotments. This was a form of democratic agronomy which was a conspicuous feature in Pembrokeshire urban districts from 1916. Tilling the soil was not usually vested with such nationalistic attributes, although the allotment movement did afford citizens opportunities to promote community cohesion and display the individual's readiness to associate themselves with the mobilisation of national resources. Allotments were not a wartime innovation. In the mid-nineteenth century many landowners saw allotments as the best hope of improving the social and moral condition of the rural poor as it was widely believed they encouraged self-reliance, industriousness, sobriety and political docility. In the 1840s there were around 2,000 allotment sites in England.¹⁴⁵⁶ Wartime allotments has a very restricted bibliography which this county study will extend. Pembrokeshire allotments represented a conscious effort to increase the amount of locally-grown foodstuffs and served as a patriotic statement of solidarity with the national struggle. The war gave rise to a civic allotment culture which lasted well into the 1920s and 1930s.

The allotment movement which expanded rapidly from 1917 was qualitatively and

¹⁴⁵⁶ Wordie, *Agriculture and Politics*, 98; Boaz Moselle, 'Allotments, enclosure and Proletarianization in Nineteenth-century Southern England', *EHR*, 48 (1995), 482-500; Jeremy Buckhart, 'Rural social relations, 1830-50: Opposition to allotments for labourers', *AgHR* 45 (1997), 165-175; D.C. Barnett, 'Allotments and the problem of Rural Poverty, 1780-1840', E.L. Jones and G.E. Mingay (eds), *Land, Labour and Population in the Industrial Revolution: Essays Presented to J.D. Chambers* (London, 1967).

quantitatively different from what went before, receiving official sanction from the Food Production Department of the Board of Agriculture and encouragement from every organ of the state and popular press. Common and marginal land was taken over so as to boost the national output of fresh vegetables. Tending allotment and vegetable plots was seen as a patriotic activity which made the British, if not a nation of shopkeepers, then certainly gardeners on a journey toward desired self-sufficiency. The horticulturalist and plot -holder were billed as patriots.

Across Pembrokeshire, borough and urban councils took the initiative in providing urban dwellers with at least the prospect of a small vegetable plot owing to sustained pressure from ratepayers for the same. Milford Haven Urban District Council was initially chided by the local Trades and Labour Council who complained to the Board of Agriculture that the council were stifling the provision of allotments.¹⁴⁵⁷ By the summer of 1917 plots were available and excellent crops forthcoming in Shakespeare Avenue and Hill Street, Hakin. Many more were needed to cater for demand.¹⁴⁵⁸ The Milford council were given power to enter fields at Albion Street, Hakin but given the national milk shortage good dairy pasture was protected from development. In fact, deputation from the urban district council pleaded for the dairy farmers to be excused from carrying out cultivation orders on account of Milford Haven's large juvenile population.¹⁴⁵⁹ The allotment movement caught the public imagination at Haverfordwest. Vilder's Field was turned into plots at ten shillings per plot.¹⁴⁶⁰ Later the Allotments committee were given power to enter a field in Upper Scotchwell.¹⁴⁶¹

¹⁴⁵⁷ *H&MHT*, 21 February 1917.

¹⁴⁵⁸ *PCG*, 23 February 1917.

¹⁴⁵⁹ PRO PCC/SE/2/3. Pembrokeshire War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1912-18; 20 February 1918.

¹⁴⁶⁰ PRO HAM/SE/1/8. Haverfordwest Borough Corporation minutes 1908-17; 6 February 1917.

¹⁴⁶¹ PRO HAM/SE/1/9. *Ibid.* 1917-25; 23 April 1918.

The number of plot-holders in town rose to 80.¹⁴⁶² Not everyone was pleased by the prospect. The Portfield Recreation Committee lacked the capacity to plough the lower end of the Racecourse (where the local golf club had their links) but instead offered £5 towards this work.¹⁴⁶³

North Pembrokeshire was not tardy in advancing the cultivation of allotments. Land was made available at Clive Road, Fishguard and in Goodwick, while in Llanwnda parish a piece of land at Dyffryn was taken possession of.¹⁴⁶⁴ At Neyland, frustrating delays led to an acrimonious exchange between the urban council and the war agricultural executive. When a tractor broke up an additional five acres there the arduous toil of preparing the ground, removing stones and breaking-up was performed by women.¹⁴⁶⁵ Potatoes did particularly well at Pembroke Dock where there were 90 allotments by May 1917 in the Pater ward of Pembroke Borough Council. The number rose to 154 the following year with tons of seed potatoes put to good use. An allotment holders' association was formed with entry priced at one shilling.¹⁴⁶⁶ The DORA regulations permitting the appropriation of property to provide allotment land enraged some, including one landowner, William John of Pembroke Dock, who deplored the methods used as being akin to those of Sinn Fein or Leon Trotsky when his field was taken.¹⁴⁶⁷

Tenby Borough Council set a remarkable example of success in providing municipal allotments in response to ratepayer demand. In January 1917 they resolved to plough Hooper's Field off the Marsh Road so as to let out allotments of ten perches at five

¹⁴⁶² *H&MHT*, 20 June 1917; *Ibid.*, 17 April 1917.

¹⁴⁶³ *PCG*, 12 January 1917.

¹⁴⁶⁴ *CE*, 25 January 1917.

¹⁴⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 15 May 1918.

¹⁴⁶⁶ *PCG*, 11 May 1917.

¹⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 29 March 1918.

shillings a year rental.¹⁴⁶⁸ Other plots were sourced at North Cliff and the realisation that their efforts might counter the German submarine peril were not forgotten, although potatoes were becoming a dish of the past, hence the need to plant as many as possible. The town had 50 allotments in April 1917.¹⁴⁶⁹ Major Burke offered his field off the Narberth Road for £6 6s. a year on the stipulation it was restored to its former condition after the war.¹⁴⁷⁰ The number of allotment holders rose to 183 by November 1918 with a thriving plot-holders' association.¹⁴⁷¹ Those who produced bumper yields were hailed as Stakhanovs of the soil. Mr McKenzie of Haverfordwest made a name for himself by reclaiming two acres of the old marsh and turning it into a productive garden.¹⁴⁷² Motivation clearly sprang from the opportunity to boost the availability of fruit and vegetables in individuals' homes to supplement rationed commodities.

There were all too many instances of individuals perpetuating mean thefts from other allotment holders, acts which strayed well beyond any sense of propriety. These offences were not merely slights against the individual, but crimes against society and any sense of communal solidarity.¹⁴⁷³ Potatoes were stolen from allotments at Haverfordwest in July 1917, while a 'two-legged rat' helped himself to other people's carrots at North Cliff, Tenby.¹⁴⁷⁴ The most despicable of thefts was perpetrated against a war widow caring for her two children at Fishguard, when six rows of potatoes were lifted, leading to outrage and a public subscription to make up for her

¹⁴⁶⁸ *TO*, 25 January 1917.

¹⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 26 April 1917.

¹⁴⁷⁰ TMAG TEM/BOOKS/3/2/3. Tenby Borough Corporation Sanitary and Food Control Committee 1913-18; 21 December 1917.

¹⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 28 November 1918.

¹⁴⁷² *H&MHT*, 13 February 1918; *Ibid.*; 3 July 1918; *Ibid.*, 20 March 1918.

¹⁴⁷³ DeGroot, *Blighty*, 140.

¹⁴⁷⁴ *TO*, 8 August 1918.

loss.¹⁴⁷⁵ For such individuals the moral claim of equal sacrifice and responsibility of citizenship were obviously of little account.

Beyond the invaluable yields, the 'democratic agriculture' which the movement represented added a new dimension to the Home Front. The output of food found itself in the parcels sent out to serving soldiers which attracted fulsome praise. Corporal Pritchard savoured his new potatoes which were 'eaten on the spot'.¹⁴⁷⁶ One Neyland soldier in the Holy Land could only imagine the lush greenery of those allotments at home amidst the baking heat and dust of Palestine.¹⁴⁷⁷ The war was communicated by a variety of media, contacts with 'others', propaganda events, cinema, messages from the pulpit, and through contact with objects of everyday life.

The liquidation of many of the great landed estates represented a major aspect of social change which was propelled by the high cost of land, affluence of tenants with ready money and an eagerness to buy, coupled with the backlog of repairs which could not be carried out during the war. Thus it is compelling to attribute this major event to the war. Although the extension of the franchise to women over the age of 30 in February 1918 was an important electoral and constitutional milestone, it was not always the democratic breakthrough which is often represented. A meeting of parishioners held at Waterston Council school on 17 March 1919 was marked by the energy of female voters filling in and signing nomination papers. They expressed the view that 'a new era has dawned for local offices. Household duties are no longer women's work.'¹⁴⁷⁸ Nevertheless the parish council in that area did not return a female councillor until the 1960s. There was a wide divergence between legislative

¹⁴⁷⁵ *CE*, 9 August 1917.

¹⁴⁷⁶ *H&MHT*, 2 October 1918.

¹⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷⁸ *PCG*, 21 March 1919.

enactments and practices at grass roots level.

Chapter V

Cultural and Religious Influences

The almost complete absence of local diaries or personal reminiscences ensures that any discussion of the impact of cultural and religious influences on Pembrokeshire's wartime residents is fraught with difficulty. Nevertheless the abundance of contemporary newspapers provided a meaningful insight into the beliefs and local psychologies of war which this chapter will attempt to evaluate. Newspapers offer rich sources for examining wartime attitudes. Although editorial positions cannot be taken as proxies for public opinion, and it is hard to determine how readers may have read or understood newspaper articles, as Hampton has explained, they were an essential reference point and a means through which the social world was represented and understood. Newspapers disseminated reports, gossip and wartime rumours to a wide audience. Doubtless there was a desire to build a newspaper's circulation so that such reporting would be popular and in so doing they fed public discussions of local, national and international events. They gave voice to local concerns as well as helping to mould local attitudes.¹⁴⁷⁹ Jones alludes to the significance of the press as an important social agency and how it was an essential instrument of propaganda in boosting and maintaining public morale. Nor were newspapers themselves unchanged by the war. Prices rose, newspapers shrank in size and pre-war patterns of newspaper consumption changed within social classes.¹⁴⁸⁰

Key questions to be posed here include whether the war affected patterns of religious

¹⁴⁷⁹ Mark Hampton discusses the wider operation of the press in relation to its role in wider political discourse, 'the liberal narrative;' 'Renewing the liberal tradition: the press and public discussion in twentieth-century Britain', in Michael Bailey (ed.), *Narrating Media History* (Oxford, 2009) 26-35; Hampton also discusses the role of the press and the shaping of opinion, *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950* (Chicago, 2004)

¹⁴⁸⁰ Aled Gruffydd Jones, *Press, Politics and Society. A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 1993).

adherence and attendance in Pembrokeshire in the midst of unprecedented carnage and destruction, while perceptions of ‘otherness’ provide an interesting view of local attitudes towards friendly aliens. Questions of national self-consciousness arise with the discussion of Welsh nationalism, while the influence of orchestrated public ceremonies offer an insight into the methods through which opinion could be manipulated. The changing role of the cinema was important in this exercise while patterns of leisure as expressed through sport will be examined. The wider cultural expression through commerce, the war as a ‘commodity culture,’ marketing, souvenirs, music and dance will be appraised. It is the contention of this thesis that the war strengthened, not weakened, religious adherence and impacted on various cultural forms like the cinema and marketing and commerce. The war also promoted greater ethnic mixing by virtue of Belgian refugees, while the continued pursuit of sport very much depended upon the class of the participants.

Pembrokeshire represents a multiplicity of different communities, both rural and urban. Each town or village can be approached as an area of social living marked by some degree of social cohesion and community sentiment.¹⁴⁸¹ Thinking of communities in this way helps us understand how to examine sentiments, values and a sense of belonging, which were expressed as a series of dynamic relationships between people who shared certain experiences.¹⁴⁸² Much of the popular culture of wartime Pembrokeshire would have been oral, challenging cultural historians who attempt to reconstruct mentalities with severe limitations. We need to understand the sentiments and beliefs of Pembrokeshire inhabitants, the prevailing ideologies as articulated through religion, leisure and material artefacts which, Cronin asserts,

¹⁴⁸¹ Bernard Decon and Moira Donald, ‘In search of community history’, *Family & Community History*, 7:1 (2011), 14.

¹⁴⁸² Jeremy Black and Donald M. Macrauld, *Studying History* (Basingstoke, 2007), 148.

display the inter-relatedness of ideas and material life.¹⁴⁸³ We can claim a greater understanding of the lives of ordinary people and of past suppositions, states of mind, mental structures, beliefs and values.¹⁴⁸⁴ This study will explicitly contribute to our understanding of religion, ethnicity and cultural and recreational expression during wartime.

The role of religion

Religious belief and fellowship represented an intimate and deeply personal aspect of human identity, which was challenged and tested during the war. Membership of church or chapel provided a moral and devotional landscape which frequently delineated family and social relationships and presented members with opportunities for cultural, educational and personal improvement. In Pembrokeshire the differing worlds of Anglicanism and Nonconformity operated in parallel, with high numbers of confessional membership. The pre-war religious scene was marked by a clear dichotomy between the Anglican episcopate of St David's, with its deaneries and parishes, and the varied branches of Nonconformity in which Baptists and Congregationalists were most numerous. Pre-war antagonism was occasionally bitter, especially over doctrinal and liturgical issues and the debate over Disestablishment.¹⁴⁸⁵

Christian churches in wartime have become indelibly connected with the spectre of bellicose clerics whipping up congregations with outspoken jingoism, serving Mars rather than Christ, in Shaw's memorable phrase, scandalised religious life and brought

¹⁴⁸³ James E. Cronin, 'Politics, Class Structures and the Enduring Weakness of British Social Democracy', *JSH*, 16:3, (1983), 123.

¹⁴⁸⁴ Black and Macraid, *Studying History*, 123.

¹⁴⁸⁵ *PCG*, 29 February 1912 and with many other references in other newspapers, especially in 1912-13.

the church into disrepute.¹⁴⁸⁶ As an instrument of the state, clerical fervour and bigotry, it is alleged by Marwick, coupled with the brutal horror of war, created a backlash of cynicism leading to declining church attendances across the board, exacerbating the churches' long-standing failure to capture the interest of the proletariat.¹⁴⁸⁷ The cleric as an apostate to the Gospel of Peace was the view of Playne who deplored the nationalism, imperialism and chauvinism of pastors who uttered strange negations of Christianity.¹⁴⁸⁸ Very few references are found in Pembrokeshire to this strident articulation of militarism.

Churches provided ample theological justification to a righteous cause. They resonated with homiletics touching German militarism and violations of Belgian neutrality closely identifying the Church militant with the British war effort.¹⁴⁸⁹ Nonconformity was no less resolute in justifying participation in the war, although Hughes has identified how many Wesleyan Methodist ministers and laypeople were alienated by the public mood of optimism and excitement.¹⁴⁹⁰ Across the spectrum of religious belief in Pembrokeshire came forthright statements in support of a just defensive war. The South Wales Calvinistic Methodist Association at Dinas, for example, deeply regretted the war although they nevertheless thought it in a righteous cause, 'that of liberty, fairness and freedom'.¹⁴⁹¹ Later, Archdeacon Williams explained how it would have been tantamount to national cowardice to have stood

¹⁴⁸⁶ Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1978), 245.

¹⁴⁸⁷ Arthur Marwick, 'After the Deluge', in Henry R. Winkler (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, 1976), 32.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Caroline E. Playne, *Society at War 1914-1916* (London, 1931), 187.

¹⁴⁸⁹ Stuart Mews, 'Spiritual Mobilization in the First World War', *Theology* 74, (1971), 259; K.W. Clements, 'Baptists and the Outbreak of the First World War', *Baptist Quarterly* 26 (1975), 74-92; Gethin Matthews, 'Fighting Baptists. The Responses of Baptist Churches to the Great War', *Baptist Quarterly*, 45:3, (2013), 179-181.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Michael Hughes, *Conscience and Conflict. Methodism in Peace and War* (Epworth, 2008), 51. Hughes further alludes to how the Methodist Connexion devoted enormous energy into providing support for members of the New Army; 'Methodism and the Challenge of the First World War', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, 60:1, (2014), 1-16.

¹⁴⁹¹ *CE*, 5 November 1914.

aside, 'no nation ever took arms in a more just and righteous cause.'¹⁴⁹² A reflection on Nonconformity and pacifism in Wales before the war demonstrates how far churches had travelled in supporting Britain's entry into the war.¹⁴⁹³

For the churches a defensive war could be couched in terms of an idealised Crusade and offered an unparalleled opportunity to undertake the Christianisation of 'the masses'.¹⁴⁹⁴ Patriotism was a God-inspired instinct according to the Rev T.O. Phillips, Vicar of St Mary's Church, Haverfordwest, with the obligation of duty owed by every citizen. He was glad that patriotism was theirs to a striking degree.¹⁴⁹⁵ For the most part clerical encouragement was possibly more balanced and nuanced in Pembrokeshire than has popularly been maintained, although the content of sermons apart from commemorative or memorial service for the fallen are difficult to gauge.

There was no Pembrokeshire equivalent of Bishop Winnington-Ingram's notorious sermon preached during Advent in 1915 calling for a Holy war and the necessity for killing Germans, rightly seen as the most infamous sermon in Anglican history.¹⁴⁹⁶

There were nevertheless some bombastic utterances from local clergy urging military recruitment. These were predominantly but not exclusively from Anglican rather than Nonconformist pulpits. In Tenby, the Rev W.F. Phillips, pastor of the Presbyterian Church thought every able-bodied man should do his bit; if the Germans got to England they would do greater harm since they hated the British more than the Belgians.¹⁴⁹⁷ The Rev Bickerton C. Edwards of Tenby, an Anglican priest, scorned

¹⁴⁹² Ibid., 20 May 1915.

¹⁴⁹³ Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922* (Cardiff, 1991); *Rebirth of a Nation* (Cardiff, 1980).

¹⁴⁹⁴ Michael Burleigh, 'Religion and the Great War', in *A Part of History. Aspects of the British Experience of the First World War* (London, 2008), 79; Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 160, 173.

¹⁴⁹⁵ *H&MHT*, 18 November 1914.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 168.

¹⁴⁹⁷ *TO*, 29 October 1914.

the delusions of pacifists.¹⁴⁹⁸ In a similar vein the Rev David Davies, Vicar of Fishguard, issued an appeal for local men to join up by rounding on Britishers skulking at home preferring to watch cinema or play football or cricket.¹⁴⁹⁹ The holding of recruiting meetings in church halls and peer pressure from the audience and hectoring from the platform which often contained men of the cloth, clearly identified the church with fulfilling state requirements by advocating militarism.

Inter-church rivalry could not be avoided in the public discourse of who was doing most in their patriotic duty of encouraging members to enlist. Across Britain *The Baptist Times* reported how 13,255 of their members had enlisted by November 1914 and this was probably an under- representation.¹⁵⁰⁰ Nonconformists were accused of being timorous and slack in mobilising their membership. An acrimonious correspondence was instigated when one anonymous writer, quoting the Paymaster General, claimed full three-quarters of enlistees were 'Church of England men.'¹⁵⁰¹ A small number of local clergy chose direct involvement, over and above the likes of the Rev J. Williams of Llandewi Velfrey who was appointed recruiting agent by the parish council.¹⁵⁰² The most prominent was the Rev George Thomas, pastor of Berachah Calvinistic Methodist Church, Goodwick, who obtained leave from his congregation to enable him to enlist as a private in the Royal Garrison Artillery. For him, example was indeed more efficacious than precept. One newspaper columnist applauded this unusual move and hoped others would follow, even if the members sustained themselves in the meantime through prayer meetings.¹⁵⁰³ Rev Thomas quickly gained a Commission and at his valedictory service which 'bordered on

¹⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6 May 1915.

¹⁴⁹⁹ *CE*, 4 September 1914.

¹⁵⁰⁰ Clements, 'Baptists and the outbreak of the First World War', 76.

¹⁵⁰¹ *PCG*, 12 November 1915.

¹⁵⁰² PRO HSPC/60/21. Llandewi Velfrey Parish Council minutes 1895-1944; 29 March 1915.

¹⁵⁰³ *CE*, 3 June 1915.

cheerfulness' he posed the rhetoric question 'How can I urge upon others to join the forces, if I, an eligible, remain behind?'¹⁵⁰⁴ The khaki figure was a striking figure in the pulpit. The 'bronzed and hardy pastor-officer' (his was a rather ambiguous title) was lionised by the local press, paid several visits home and he was gazetted major in October 1917. He declined to preach on his leave since army life was too strenuous, brutal and bloody to enable him to wield the pen of piety.¹⁵⁰⁵

The other clerical exponent of actual military involvement was the Rev John Wesley Howells, a Tenby boy who became pastor of Victoria Hall Wesley Methodist Church in Yorkshire. He secured a Commission in the 7th Lancashire Fusiliers, leaving no doubt as to his intent: 'I'm in this for the real business- not patriotic employment but active service...as a Christian and a parson I'm joining the ninety lads from my church on this sacred enterprise.'¹⁵⁰⁶ Rev Howells later transferred to the Royal Flying Corps where he was killed in an accident in Palestine in July 1917.¹⁵⁰⁷ Chaplaincy offered a more conventional form of clerical service, as demonstrated by the Rev Howell, Rector of Gumfreston who volunteered as a chaplain at the Front in April 1917.¹⁵⁰⁸ These examples of direct clerical involvement were highlighted by the press to possibly encourage emulation by others but also their support for the war.

Courageous, if sometimes solitary voices were raised against the novel methods introduced into modern warfare including the introduction of Conscription, which appeared to ape German militarism against which the war was being fought. One issue which exercised the minds of the pious was the introduction of poison gas as a weapon first used by the Germans at Ypres on 22 April 1915. Speaking at the

¹⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 2 September 1915.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 1 November 1917.

¹⁵⁰⁶ *TO*, 15 July 1915.

¹⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 29 August 1918.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 12 April 1917.

Pembrokeshire Baptist Association meeting, where 60 delegates representing 11,000 members gathered, the Rev Owen D. Campbell, pastor of Bethesda Baptist Church, Haverfordwest condemned the possibility of the Allies retaliating in kind.¹⁵⁰⁹ He asserted how it would be better for England to go down than listen to the counsels of barbarous retaliation.¹⁵¹⁰ One critic thought the minister should be exposed to a dose of it himself. Later, the bombing of English cities by Gotha bombers sparked a debate over reprisal bombing. Several bishops opposed such reciprocation and one critic replied by commenting how the bench of bishops had hardly played a very successful role during the war. Further, the public were getting 'just a trifle fed up with all this ecclesiastical humbug'.¹⁵¹¹ Such comments could point to hostile attitudes toward the churches when they argued for moral restraint in the conduct of the war, although such criticism was at odds from the role of the churches as sources of spiritual reassurance and support.

An essential role of the wartime churches was to provide a powerful focus for the spiritual solace and comfort of anxious relatives and the bereaved through assurance, ordinary ministry and the promotion of community cohesion through ritualistic memorial services. They were conduits for the expression of grief and hope alike. As Winter notes, religious forms moved to the centre of public life as emotional anguish intensified with the survival of loved ones or indeed their death in combat.¹⁵¹² Thus the churches gave themselves a role in national reflection and commemoration. Marwick notes how the churches were well patronised during wartime as a focal point

¹⁵⁰⁹ *H&MHT*, 9 June 1915.

¹⁵¹⁰ *PH*, 4 June 1915.

¹⁵¹¹ *TO*, 25 October 1917.

¹⁵¹² Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History. Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the present*. (Cambridge, 2005), 164.

for celebration and thanksgiving.¹⁵¹³ The function of the church as the Christian conscience of the nation was demonstrated movingly by the Rev T. Lodwig Evans, pastor of Tenby Baptist Church, when he maintained how the church existed to help the people face a common danger and bear the common anxiety.¹⁵¹⁴ The all-too-common services of commemoration for the fallen provided families with spiritual assurance that their husbands and sons had died in a noble cause. When Private Jack Farrow of Haverfordwest, a prominent Salvationist, died in the Dardanelles, a service at the local barracks heard how Jack ‘was a good lad who had gone to Heaven’.¹⁵¹⁵ When the Rev W.E. Salmon of Cardiff preached at Albany Congregational Chapel in 1918 he did not suggest that every lad at the Front was a saint. Nevertheless, in the bitter struggle against tyranny they were the ones paying an inestimable price for uplifting the world.¹⁵¹⁶

The churches were very effective in canalizing mass grief and incomprehension at the war, and judging from the number of memorial services to fallen soldiers, prayer intercession services and anniversary services to mark the beginning of the war, this was doubtless true in Pembrokeshire. This ensured that church life over the four war years, according to Burleigh, was positively vibrant.¹⁵¹⁷ On the other hand revulsion at the carnage of war led to declining attendances, empty pews and loss of credibility. Such observations were made by one correspondent styled a ‘Tenby Layman’ who noted how church-going had fallen off tremendously.¹⁵¹⁸ Elsewhere the opposite was definitely the case. Record church attendances were noticed at St Katherine’s Church, Milford Haven, during Easter, 1916, despite all eligible unmarried men on the

¹⁵¹³ Marwick, ‘After the Deluge’, 31.

¹⁵¹⁴ *TO*, 3 December 1914.

¹⁵¹⁵ *PCG*, 14 January 1916.

¹⁵¹⁶ *H&MHT*, 24 July 1918.

¹⁵¹⁷ Burleigh, ‘Religion and the Great War’, 81.

¹⁵¹⁸ *TO*, 2 March 1916.

communicants' roll serving in the armed forces.¹⁵¹⁹ The work of the church in war relief work gave them greater community interface than their usual strict liturgical or denominational boundaries and perhaps made them more relevant to wider society. Hermon Chapel, Fishguard, sent a postal order to each of their 120 members on active service while at the Tabernacle Congregational Chapel, Milford Haven, some 210 wounded soldiers were entertained and fed in their spacious hall.¹⁵²⁰ Such activities possibly helped to boost church attendance with the combination of devotional and community aspects combined and as agents of charity.

Individual questioning of faith and doubts in the belief of a personally –acting Christian God were among the responses to war. To the universal questions why such a war was allowed and why the Almighty did not directly intervene to end the carnage were stern tests of the ecclesiastical apologists' mind. Wartime homiletics conflated the war with a necessary purging of the nation's sins. The Rural Dean of Cambridge in addressing a congregation at St Mary's Church, Haverfordwest, stated God did not start the war, neither was it His will, although it would burn itself out and also the nations' sins and wrong doing.¹⁵²¹ For the Rev T.O. Phillips of Haverfordwest, the war, like other forms of suffering and misery was redeemed in the beauty and splendour of character given to men by God's good Grace.¹⁵²²

The extent of traditional Christian observance of the Sabbath palpably declined as national effort for the war required seven, not six days of toil. Sunday observance could be interpreted as deleterious to the war effort. When such a dispute arose at Milford Haven over Sunday screenings of films in aid of local war charities, one

¹⁵¹⁹ *PCG*, 5 May 1916.

¹⁵²⁰ *H&MHT*, 2 January 1918; *TO*, 6 December 1916.

¹⁵²¹ *PH*, 12 July 1918.

¹⁵²² *Ibid.*, 15 November 1918.

cynic wryly commented how Sabbatarianism was imbued with a large amount of German ‘Kultur’.¹⁵²³ A moving debate was witnessed when the Pembroke Borough Council’s proposal to grant the freedom of the borough on a Sunday to local soldiers who had won gallantry awards was strongly objected to by two councillors; Councillor W.G. Lloyd, with three sons serving, tearfully retorted ‘one of my poor boys fell on a Sunday.’¹⁵²⁴ The decision to proceed was carried by twenty votes to two. Thus strict religious observance was less important than the moral imperative to mark the sacrifices of men from the locality.

Perceptions of the special status and exemptions from military service enjoyed by the clergy and theological students fuelled a considerable amount of anti-clericalism which is detectable in Pembrokeshire. Anglicans and Nonconformists were mocked by national periodicals like *John Bull* which maintained a relentless campaign mockingly stating ‘I don’t see why these able-bodied psalm smiters shouldn’t lend a hand.’¹⁵²⁵ There was irritation at the lack of commitment, according to one anonymous columnist, to the national cause by local parsons wandering aimlessly around the streets of Haverfordwest indulging in tittle-tattle, it being thought more useful for them to fill shells in a Government factory.¹⁵²⁶ Clerical exceptionalism to military service prompted one correspondent styled ‘Junius’ to complain why clergy, along with infants, invalids and the aged, were exempted from the scope of the Military Service Acts; was the priest ‘too holy to fight for England, freedom and justice?’¹⁵²⁷ This was a far cry from the local clergy previously identified who actually fought as combatants.

¹⁵²³ *CE*, 15 June 1916.

¹⁵²⁴ *PCG*, 16 November 1917.

¹⁵²⁵ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 184.

¹⁵²⁶ *PH*, 30 April 1915.

¹⁵²⁷ *H&MHT*, 19 September 1917.

In Pembrokeshire, churches continued to be solidly supported with no decrease in their share of press coverage of fund-raising events, services, and associational forms. The return of peace publicly created nostalgia for pre-war certainties, not only for the church but also, as the Rev Baring Gould prosaically put it, for the beauty of home in a reflective sermon preached to celebrate the Armistice.¹⁵²⁸ The pervasive informal religiosity of popular religion in the population which Gregory identifies, continued as a cultural system in its own right¹⁵²⁹ That said, it must be conceded how of the Christian suppositions of many individuals, popular during the Edwardian era, disappeared in the trenches in the minds of many individuals.¹⁵³⁰ Pope makes a general point and sees Welsh Nonconformity as bereft of an identity and mission during the inter-war years and lacking a clear ecclesiology as a result of rendering to Caesar rather than to Christ.¹⁵³¹ In 1920, Protestant church and chapel membership in Britain stood at 5,654,000 with Anglican membership peaking in the 1930s and that of their Nonconformist brethren in the 1920s.¹⁵³² The sacrament of baptism, which Gregory identified with respectability, sociability and ‘folk religion’, peaked in popularity in the 1920s as a percentage of births.¹⁵³³ In Pembrokeshire there was little sign of the post-war church losing its central place in public life and the negative reaction does not appear to have been a local experience.

Aliens and Identities

Pembrokeshire received an extensive interaction with foreign nationals. The responses to these contacts reveal a great deal about politics, nationalism and definitions of who

¹⁵²⁸ *PH*, 15 November 1918.

¹⁵²⁹ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 153.

¹⁵³⁰ Ruston, ‘Protestant Nonconformist Attitudes towards the First World War’, 241.

¹⁵³¹ Robert Pope, ‘Christ and Caesar? Welsh Nonconformists and the State, 1914-1918’, in Matthew Cragoe and Chris Williams (eds), *Wales and War*, 180-181.

¹⁵³² Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures. England 1918-1951* (Oxford, 1998), 273.

¹⁵³³ Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 184.

was the enemy in the era of total war. Community cohesion could be promoted by juxtapositioning the values and customs of the locality against those of ‘others’.¹⁵³⁴ Muller contends how the war polarised British society, with an external enemy needing to be defined to generate internal cohesion.¹⁵³⁵ He argues how nationalist perceptions determined a binary difference between ‘ins’ and ‘outs’, although the formal unity of nationalist language is only created by public communication.¹⁵³⁶ For Muller, as a consequence of the totalizing effects of modern industrial warfare the enemy came to be defined not merely as the opposing armed forces but the entire population of the opposing state. Germans were diametrically opposed to the positive self-image promoted of British society.¹⁵³⁷ The mounting polarisation of domestic politics as the war intensified was the background against which British nationalist attitudes determined responses to other peoples. Muller sees hostility as not having socially integrative effects. While he sees ‘Who is the enemy in total war’ as a very difficult question to answer in a definitive and conclusive way, the difference is clear enough when comparing Pembrokeshire attitudes to Belgian refugees to German aliens and all things Teutonic.¹⁵³⁸

With a long tradition of maritime commerce and with major ports at Milford Haven and Fishguard, and much older ones at Tenby and Haverfordwest, interaction with foreign nationals had long been a feature of local society. Pre-war Haverfordwest had seen a vibrant if noisy, ‘colony’ of Italians, chiefly street entertainers, in 1905 and a Swiss café in Bridge Street kept by Max Metzger in 1911.¹⁵³⁹ The arrival of Belgian

¹⁵³⁴ Linda Colley, ‘Britishness and Otherness: an argument’, *JBS*, 31 (1992), 309-329.

¹⁵³⁵ Sven Oliver Muller, ‘Who is the Enemy? The nationalist Dilemma of Inclusion and Exclusion in Britain During the First World War’, *European Review of History*, 9:1, (2002), 64.

¹⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁵³⁹ *H&MHT*, 5 July 1905; *PH*, 6 October 1911.

refugees in September 1914 afforded local inhabitants their most extensive acquaintance with ‘friendly’ aliens. Of the several hundred thousand refugees accepted across Great Britain, some 50,000 were children with around 33,000 being of school age in September 1915.¹⁵⁴⁰ Several hundred were domiciled in Pembrokeshire for the duration of the war. The refugees offered an example of how specific group solidarities were in mobilising for the war effort.¹⁵⁴¹

Kushner identifies the importance of a local sense of place in the reactions and responses to the Belgian refugees.¹⁵⁴² Some of the most interesting instances of local opinions can be gleaned from elementary school logbooks as refugee children were admitted to various Pembrokeshire schools before their own school, named after King Albert, opened its doors in 1915. At Hubberston-Hakin, some 31 Belgian children were admitted in October 1914 originating from Ostend and Louvain. The majority were able to only speak Flemish, although the older pupils were conversant in French as well.¹⁵⁴³ The pupils attending Fishguard National School were ‘much interested’ in their three new Belgian counterparts who were admitted on 23 October 1914.¹⁵⁴⁴ By early November 1914 some 60-80 children were attending schools in the Milford Haven area.¹⁵⁴⁵ Some pupils made remarkably swift progress. The Head teacher of Narberth Council School expressed deep regret when Eugene Slabbinck left for Oxford in December 1915, remarking how she was ‘a wonderfully smart girl and quite the best in Standard III. Her progress was somewhat astonishing.’¹⁵⁴⁶

¹⁵⁴⁰ Kevin Myers, ‘The hidden history of refugee schooling in Britain: the case of the Belgians, 1914-1918’, *History of Education*, 30:2, (2001), 154-155.

¹⁵⁴¹ Purseigle, ‘A Wave on to our Shores’, 439.

¹⁵⁴² Kushner, ‘Local heroes: Belgian Refugees in Britain during the First World War’, 2.

¹⁵⁴³ PRO SSR/1/132/1. Hubberston-Hakin Council School 1909-16; 23 October 1914.

¹⁵⁴⁴ PRO SSR/1/137/140. Fishguard Girls National School Logbook 1908-30; 23 October 1914.

¹⁵⁴⁵ PRO PCC/ED/10/2. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee minutes 1914-15; 7 November 1914.

¹⁵⁴⁶ PRO SSR/1/117/3. Narberth Board School Logbook 1913-28; 10 December 1915.

The Belgians added to popular culture during their four- year stay. An annual parade was held at Milford Haven on the birthday of King Albert, while a Belgian concert at Fishguard Temperance Hall witnessed a group of instrumentalists bring together ‘brilliance, colour and animation at a time when the drab dregs of war permeated the very life of the community even at this remote end of the island home’.¹⁵⁴⁷ The concluding of the Armistice ensured that some Belgian refugees made a swift return home. SS *Ibis* left Milford Haven in December 1918 with fish from their catches together with a considerable amount of luggage.¹⁵⁴⁸ By March 1919 the refugees’ return was well under way with periodic sailing trips, although others preferred to return by train.¹⁵⁴⁹ As a thank-offering for the hospitality received, the Belgians erected a red Balmoral granite obelisk in 1919 which was undoubtedly appreciated, even though the site attracted petitions and a public meeting to protest against the proposed inconvenient site.¹⁵⁵⁰ The Belgian refugees were still being talked of locally in the 1980s, these links strengthened, as Kushner comments, with family histories and friendships which long outlasted the war.¹⁵⁵¹

A combination of increased need for foreign labour from Britain’s allies and the presence of torpedoed crews created a situation where a wide variety of possibilities for contact with foreign national became available. Hostility was not limited to the nationals from the Central Powers. Griffin has alluded to the importance of Chinese labour to the British war effort despite suspicions of a substitution policy from the Left.¹⁵⁵² Egregious hostility was voiced by T. McGrath of Fishguard, a prominent

¹⁵⁴⁷ *PCG*, 22 October 1915; *CE*, 7 June 1917.

¹⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 18 December 1918.

¹⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 5 March 1919.

¹⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12 February 1919.

¹⁵⁵¹ Kushner, ‘Local Heroes: Belgian refugees during the First World War,’ 19.

¹⁵⁵² Nicholas J. Griffin, ‘The Response of British Labour to the Importation of Chinese Workers: 1916-1917’, *Historian*, 40:2 (1978), 261.

seaman's union leader, who derided 'Chinamen' as cowardly, mutinous and without respect.¹⁵⁵³ Foreign nationals manned many merchant ships. When the steamer *Strathnairn* was torpedoed on 15 June 1915 only one 'Britisher' survived, along with a number of Chinese men who walked barefoot through the streets of Milford Haven.¹⁵⁵⁴ Britain's ally Portugal (who entered the war in 1916) supplied a labour battalion numbering 1,000 men which arrived at Hearston Camp.¹⁵⁵⁵ One resident, reminiscing in the 1970s, remembered their drooping moustaches and their new boots tied around their necks.¹⁵⁵⁶ Pembroke Dock hosted French and Russian warships, the crew of the latter intriguing local residents with their impressive moustaches and the unrecognizable lettering on their caps.¹⁵⁵⁷ A Serbian labour camp was established at Letterston Common consisting mainly of Oxford and Cambridge graduates, while the village of Dale was enlivened by a Russian- Jewish labour battalion.¹⁵⁵⁸

The increasing prominence of the United States Navy in 1918 ensured that American sailors visited Pembrokeshire's coastal towns on a number of occasions. Curiosity with the old country was manifest when the crew of the USS *Ossipee* visited Haverfordwest Castle in October 1918 while another group visited Fishguard Fort, which had been built to ward off privateers during the War of Independence in the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁵⁹ Bonds of friendship could be expressed through offering hospitality to American soldiers. The Haverfordwest Borough Council resolved to ask townsfolk to accommodate visiting soldiers from Haverford, Pennsylvania which had

¹⁵⁵³ *CE*, 11 November 1915.

¹⁵⁵⁴ *PH*, 18 June 1915.

¹⁵⁵⁵ *H&MHT*, 24 July 1918.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Bill Morgan and Bette Meyrick, *Behind the Steam* (London, 1973), 171. Starling and Lee have emphasised the importance of labour battalions during the Great War of Portuguese labour and the 9th Russian Labour Battalion which was based locally, John Starling and Ivor Lee, *No Labour, No Battle. Military Labour during the First World War* (Stroud, 2014).

¹⁵⁵⁷ *H&MHT*, 13 September 1916.

¹⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid*; 28 August 1918; 21 August 1918. A Russian Jewish labour battalion was also based at Scoveston Fort, Asher Tropp, 'Russian Jews in Pembrokeshire', *Cajex*, XXXIX, 2 (1989), 39.

¹⁵⁵⁹ *PH*, 1 November 1918; *CE*, 14 November 1918.

been founded by three Quakers from Haverfordwest in 1681.¹⁵⁶⁰ Relations were not always so cordial. Two sailors from the USS *Sacramento* were fined for drunkenness and criminal damage during an altercation at Pembroke Dock in 1917, while Robert Norwood and John Robinson Britton of the USS *Tampa* were charged with assault and attempted rape respectively.¹⁵⁶¹

There was a strong Scandinavian and North European flavour to Pembrokeshire's wartime ethnic mixing. The demand for timber resulted in large numbers of fellers being recruited and their collective efforts did much to transform the Pembrokeshire landscape by removing large areas of native woodland. Wages of 40 shillings per week were available to 'capable, sober men' based at the Timber Supplies Depot Camp.¹⁵⁶² Some 50 Russian lumbermen were engaged in felling at Treffgarne Woods after first registering at Haverfordwest Castle.¹⁵⁶³ Others found employment at Llwyngwair Woods, between Newport and Nevern, to further increase supplies of wood for the army in France.¹⁵⁶⁴ The migrants did not enjoy the best of reputations, with the 'Russian' fellers seen as a local pest, (especially perhaps after the Revolution of November 1917 had taken their country out of the war) with a propensity to drink heavily and enter people's homes uninvited.¹⁵⁶⁵ All were tarred with the same brush. Indignantly the 'Wiston Camp Boys,' consisting of 22 Russians, nineteen Finns, ten Danes, eight Swedes, five Dutch, three Norwegians and one American, wrote to the press pointing out they 'were not all the same.'¹⁵⁶⁶ The Slebech Camp had a similar

¹⁵⁶⁰ PRO HAM/SE/1/9. Haverfordwest Borough Corporation minutes 1917-25; 22 October 1918.

¹⁵⁶¹ *PCG*, 7 December 1917; *Ibid.*, 28 June 1918.

¹⁵⁶² *PH*, 9 November 1917.

¹⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10 August 1917.

¹⁵⁶⁴ *CE*, 1 November 1917.

¹⁵⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 26 December 1917.

¹⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 January 1918; Jacqueline Jenkinson considers the experiences of some 8,000 Lithuanians who settled in Scotland under the 1917 Anglo-Russian Military Convention and their experiences, 'The Impact of the First World War on Migrant Lithuanians in Scotland, c.1917-1921', *I&M*, 31:2 (2013), 171-188.

composition although their number included a smattering of Greeks and Italians.¹⁵⁶⁷

But for the war such contacts would have been highly unlikely and exposure to people of other nationality and faiths an undoubted widening of local horizons. Community cohesion was an essential element in the wartime resilience of the civilian population. Certainly those from enemy countries would be suspect, but even those nationals from allies could not count on unqualified hospitality as the Belgians discovered from 1915 in addition to the outright hostility to Chinese seamen and Russian timbermen.

Welsh Consciousness

If the war had the capacity to influence established religious forms and practices, coupled with the potential to change the world view of residents through their contacts with different nationalities, it also had the ability to change self-perceptions and transform national consciousness. A credible argument can be advanced of how Welsh national consciousness was stimulated in Pembrokeshire by the war. Such nationalistic sentiments were largely delineated by existing cultural and linguistic factors which disclosed wide variations in Pembrokeshire between Welsh-speaking north and monoglot English in the south. Thompson and Day remind us of how national identities are produced as a result of ‘ordinary’ social experiences.¹⁵⁶⁸ Wales was seen as one of the nations of Britain where ‘national’ demands could be accommodated within the Liberal and pluralist attitude to the United Kingdom.¹⁵⁶⁹ According to Edwards and Griffith, from the nineteenth century nationalism was almost exclusively connected with Liberalism and was overwhelmingly

¹⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 23 January 1918.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Andrew Thompson and Graham Day, ‘Situating Welshness: ‘Local’ Experience and National Identity’, in Ralph Fevre and Andrew Thompson (eds), *Nation, Identity and Social Theory. Perspectives For Wales* (Cardiff, 1999), 28,

¹⁵⁶⁹ Paul Ward, ‘Nationalism and National Identity in British politics c.1880s to 1914’, in Helen Brocklehurst and Robert Phillips (eds), *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, (Basingstoke, 2004), 218.

Nonconformist.¹⁵⁷⁰

Such a link was manifest in the Tabernacle Congregational Chapel, Haverfordwest when the Rev E. Nicholson Jones spoke of the new interest manifest in the Welsh language.¹⁵⁷¹ The same reverend gentleman was present at the inaugural meeting of the Haverfordwest Cymric Society in early 1914 where attendees were enjoined to remember the untarnished and undefiled heritage preserved for them in the form of the language, literature and distinctive characteristics at the price of the blood and sufferings of their ancestors.¹⁵⁷² The moral stature of Lloyd George's 'five foot nations' received considerable endorsement in the political discourse of the autumn of 1914 when Wales, a small nation herself, responded to the war in the defence of Belgium, a similarly small nation subject to terrible aggression. One War Aims Association speaker informed a Fishguard public meeting how Wales had been more loyal in war than the other 22 small nations, a great credit to 'the Cymric race'.¹⁵⁷³ These were obvious attempts to bolster patriotic sentiment and support for the war effort.

The celebration of St David's Day became a focal point for Welsh national sentiment which had not been celebrated everywhere before.¹⁵⁷⁴ Perhaps this was a search for certainties deeply rooted in the Welsh past during the uncertainties of war. The first official celebration of 1 March at Tenby came in 1915 with a service in Welsh conducted in St Mary's Church, 'probably for the first time in the long history of the

¹⁵⁷⁰ Andrew Edwards and Will Griffith, 'Welsh National Identity and Governance, 1918-45', in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Andrew Edwards (eds.), *Debating Nationhood and Governance in Britain, 1885-1945* (Manchester, 2006), 118.

¹⁵⁷¹ *PCG*, 5 March 1909.

¹⁵⁷² *H&MHT*, 4 February 1914.

¹⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 5 September 1918.

¹⁵⁷⁴ *PCG*, 5 March 1909. In Pembroke Dock, 'although not a Welsh town, celebrated the patron saint's day in fine style.'

church'.¹⁵⁷⁵ St David's Day saw a remarkable war- time expansion of patriotic pageants which enriched civic and especially school life, all directly encouraged by deliberate Government policy which percolated down to Local Education Authorities. At Johnston School the celebrations were combined with efforts to promote the new War Loan.¹⁵⁷⁶ The Pembrokeshire Education Authority supplied each school with official St David's Day booklets issued by the Welsh Department of Government.¹⁵⁷⁷

At Fishguard County School the Union Flag and Welsh Dragon hung side by side, 'symbols of the united ideas of nationalism and imperialism for which the boys are fighting.'¹⁵⁷⁸ The national emblems of daffodil and leek were conspicuous at Milford Haven on the saint's day in 1916, together with a concert at the National School and a grand social.¹⁵⁷⁹ Heroes of the past were invoked to encourage emulation especially in the minds of the young. When St Martin's Council School celebrated St David's Day, the patriotic recitations celebrated St David, Asser, Giraldus Cambrensis, Owain Glyndwr and General Sir Thomas Picton.¹⁵⁸⁰ It was ironic how Owain Glyndwr, the adversary of the English Crown, was transfigured into a model patriot servant of the state to inspire the current wartime Welsh people. Welsh consciousness and national self -esteem received a palpable boost in December 1916 when Lloyd George became Prime Minister of the coalition government. The Rev W. Mendus of Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, Haverfordwest, expressed pleasure that a compatriot had attained the highest position in the British Empire and he emphasised at the same time

¹⁵⁷⁵ *TO*, 5 March 1915.

¹⁵⁷⁶ PRO SSR/1/31/2. Johnston Board School 1907-26; 28 February 1917.

¹⁵⁷⁷ PRO PCC/ED/10/3. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee file of educational matters; 11 February 1915.

¹⁵⁷⁸ *CE*, 9 March 1916.

¹⁵⁷⁹ *H&MHT*, 8 March 1916.

¹⁵⁸⁰ *PH*, 3 March 1916.

the importance of keeping alive the spirit of the race and nationality.¹⁵⁸¹

Welsh national consciousness was by no means universal or uncontested during wartime. In south Pembrokeshire there was a very real antipathy to nationalism and the Welsh language. One newspaper article reminded its readers how the linguistic differences between north and south, between Welsh and English, showed no signs of abating, making Pembroke the ‘Ulster’ of Wales, the southern half of the county being as English as Hampshire.¹⁵⁸² When Dr Henry Owen, chairman of governors of the Haverfordwest Grammar School, discussed the teaching of Welsh in the school, the distinguished academic and treasurer of the National Library of Wales retorted ‘Haverfordwest is not a Welsh town and never was; ‘...the Red Dragon of Wales is lying in the dust under the castle’.¹⁵⁸³ To William Howell Walters nationalism in Wales was no different to Sinn Fein in Ireland; both movements he thought had the ultimate aim of self- government but also separation from the empire.¹⁵⁸⁴ Such a statement was highly relevant given the suppression of the Easter Rising in Dublin a matter of days before. Others deprecated Pembrokeshire’s suspicion of pan- Welsh institutions like the national tuberculosis or pensions schemes and thought Wales should be allowed to develop on its own lines and in accordance with its own nature and genius.¹⁵⁸⁵

The image of Wales as a proud, patriotic nation with a separate identity albeit within the pantheon of the British Empire, received wide coverage during the war and Welshness an identity which was by no means clear cut. The description of Great Britain and Britishness could be highly ambiguous with persistent and promiscuous

¹⁵⁸¹ *H&MHT*, 7 March 1917.

¹⁵⁸² *CE*, 25 January 1917.

¹⁵⁸³ *PCG*, 18 June 1915.

¹⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5 May 1916.

¹⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 5 May 1916.

references to ‘England’ which demonstrates just how ambiguous national descriptions can occasionally be. Addressing a meeting at Goedwig Chapel, Goodwick, in September 1914, Mr. Stuart Jones spoke about the County War Fund and recruiting and stated how the honour of an Englishman was a priceless possession.¹⁵⁸⁶ Nor was that an isolated mis-statement of nationhood and affiliation. The words ‘England’ and ‘Englishmen’ occurs repeatedly implying the exclusivity of Welsh national consciousness did not apply in the minds of many. In 1918 it was reported how a Haverfordwest officer was the first ‘English’ officer to march into Jerusalem when it was captured from the Turks in December 1917.¹⁵⁸⁷

The dissolution of empires and rise of nation states in their wake reawakened the political discussion about self- government for Wales. The *Welsh Outlook* advocated an independent national standpoint.¹⁵⁸⁸ The Fishguard Cymmrodorion Association met in Hermon Chapel vestry and endorsed the idea of Welsh Home Rule to satisfy national aspirations and relieve the congestion of parliamentary business during the era of Reconstruction.¹⁵⁸⁹ Its urban district council also expressed strong support for the proposal.¹⁵⁹⁰ The Haverfordwest Borough Council took a different approach, preferring the status quo. One commentator who agreed with them wrote: ‘We are not a distressful people and have no great grievances. We desire rather to be drawn closer to the great mother country – England. Her rights are shared by us and in her burdens we help to bear, and her honour and glory we are delighted to share in.’¹⁵⁹¹ The old fault lines of linguistic separation, with Welsh speaking being predominantly in the north and English in the south, often determined such attitudes to Welsh home rule.

¹⁵⁸⁶ *CE*, 17 September 1914.

¹⁵⁸⁷ *PCG*, 19 April 1918.

¹⁵⁸⁸ Edwards and Griffith, ‘Welsh national identity and governance’, 153.

¹⁵⁸⁹ *CE*, 28 January 1918.

¹⁵⁹⁰ PRO FGU/SE/1/3. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1916-21; 16 July 1918.

¹⁵⁹¹ *PH*, 26 July 1918.

The Pageantry of Propaganda

Public events could be constructed or manipulated to produce patriotic messages, thereby maintaining a favourable frame of mind of civilians at home.¹⁵⁹² In a wider sense commercial advertising, newspapers, sermons, musical productions, novels, films and souvenirs, ‘bombarding the eyes and ears of British citizens with posters, parades, pamphlets, films, martial music and military spectacles also contained subtle and sometimes not-so subtle propaganda’.¹⁵⁹³ Despite its impressive exercise in improvisation, Government propaganda became more professional and refined as a consequence of ‘total’ war.¹⁵⁹⁴ The transmission of ideas and values reached official maturity with the creation of the Ministry of Information in 1918, although the absence of scientific sampling techniques and evaluation provides only anecdotal or circumstantial evidence of their effectiveness.¹⁵⁹⁵ Countering dissent through censorship, the control of public spaces was a highly organised aspect of Government control over the information domain.¹⁵⁹⁶ Pembrokeshire residents were fully exposed to both explicit and subtle propaganda through staged public events or didactic lectures by political activists.

Although not a wartime innovation, propaganda extended into the classroom with patriotic iconography on school walls and organised rituals.¹⁵⁹⁷ Instruction was provided on the growth of the British Empire to the pupils of Begelly School while

¹⁵⁹² Ralph Haswell Lutz, ‘Studies of World War Propaganda, 1914-33’, *Journal of Modern History*, 5:4 (1933), 497.

¹⁵⁹³ Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, 96.

¹⁵⁹⁴ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda during the First World War 1914-18*, 255.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Andrew Steed, ‘British Propaganda and the First World War’, in Ian Stewart and Susan L. Carruthers (eds), *War, Culture and the Media: Representations of the Military in Twentieth Century Britain* (Trowbridge, 1996), 33; Stephen Badsey, ‘Press, Propaganda and Public perceptions’, in *A Part of History* (London, 2008), 29.

¹⁵⁹⁶ Brock Millman, ‘HMG and the War Against Dissent, 1914-18’, *JCH*, 40:3 (2005), 417.

¹⁵⁹⁷ John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire. The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester, 1984), 183.

those children attending St David's Carnhedryn and Eglwysrwr Schools received lessons on suitable patriotic subjects.¹⁵⁹⁸ Schemes of work included lessons on the origins and progress of the Great War and popular culture associated with it. Pupils at St David's Quickwell School were taught Ivor Novello's popular tune 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' on 1 October 1915, while their fellow students at Wolfscastle sampled 'Thirty Patriotic Poems for the Young'.¹⁵⁹⁹ Patriotism, sacrifice and citizenship were accentuated 'until the day of victory'.¹⁶⁰⁰

The theatre of propaganda was amply demonstrated locally through the annual celebration of Empire Day on 24 May, especially from 1916. The national celebration used ritualised symbols and myths emblematic of British imperial culture which, according to English, crossed class boundaries and sustained social hierarchies.¹⁶⁰¹ Forms of dress, music and literature were extensively used in schools so that the annual celebration, first observed in 1904, received official sanction and encouragement for the May 1916 event.¹⁶⁰² School holidays were sometimes awarded although in the majority the presentation of flags and button holes combined with marching around and saluting the Union flag sufficed.¹⁶⁰³ The children of St Florence

¹⁵⁹⁸ PRO SSR/1/2/2. Begelly Board School Logbook 1893-1920; Scheme of work for 1917-18. SSR/1/14/2 St David's- Carnhedryn Board School Logbook 1894-1918; Scheme of work 1916-17. Such messages were reinforced by visits by former old pupils serving in the army. On 3 April 1916 Private Samuel James and Corporal Levi Reynolds gave pupils a lesson on the training of a soldier. SSR/1/16/2. Eglwysrwr Board School Logbook 1904-20; On St. David's Day a concert consisted of recitations, poems, Welsh airs and lessons on patriotism. Only seventeen people attended and the meeting was abandoned.

¹⁵⁹⁹ PRO SSR/1/70/2. St David's- Quickwell Hill Board School 1901-21; 1 October 1915; SSR/1/97/2 Wolfscastle Council School Logbook 1909-42; November 1915.

¹⁶⁰⁰ PRO SSR/1/119/2. Narberth-Templeton Board School Logbook 1909-36; 2 March 1916.

¹⁶⁰¹ Jim English, 'Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958', *HJ* 49:1 (2006), 247.

¹⁶⁰² Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 232.

¹⁶⁰³ PRO SSR/1/22/2. Martletwy National School Logbook 1914-52; 24 May 1918; SSR/1/52/2. Jordanston, Llanstitan and Manorowen National School Logbook 1900-18; 24 May 1917.

sang suitably stirring airs, 'Flag of Britain' and 'God Bless the Prince of Wales,' that year.¹⁶⁰⁴

Remembrances of past military triumphs or the death of national figures attracted opportunities for the expression of patriotic or religious sentiments with useful propaganda value. Trafalgar Day was of considerable importance in schools and the wider public arena. At Milford Haven in 1915 the day was celebrated in fine style, with Mr Kelway expressing the certain opinion of how 'the British Navy under Admiral Jellicoe would maintain the greatness of the past'.¹⁶⁰⁵ One of the most significant local remembrances of sacrifice in war came with the anniversary services to mark the landing of the 4th and 5th Welsh at Suvla Bay during the Dardanelles campaign, on 10 August 1915. The heavy losses sustained were remembered at a memorial service at St David's Cathedral on the first anniversary attended by 2,000 people including 700 men of the 4th Welsh Regiment, and high praise was lauded on those who had made such sacrifices for the Empire.¹⁶⁰⁶ Marking the bravery and distinction of local soldiers afforded an opportunity to bestow civic approbation through awarding honorary freedom from Pembrokeshire's ancient boroughs, Haverfordwest, Tenby and Pembroke. At the latter location a large platform was erected in Wesley Square and the freedom granted to Lieutenant Skyrme, Lieutenant Lewis, Sergeant Player and Corporal Lloyd, a sample of the twenty local men who had won honours by November 1917.¹⁶⁰⁷ The fame of Private Herbert W. Lewis of the 11th Welsh who won the Victoria Cross in Salonika in 1916 created immense excitement (conveyed by Illustration 25) and his homecoming to Milford Haven witnessed an extraordinary procession together with handsome gratuities (one of £135

¹⁶⁰⁴ PRO SSR/1/147/3. St Florence National School 1909-27; 24 May 1916.

¹⁶⁰⁵ *PH*, 29 October 1915.

¹⁶⁰⁶ *PH*, 11 August 1916.

¹⁶⁰⁷ *H&MHT*, 21 November 1917.

16s.) subscribed for by former colleagues.¹⁶⁰⁸ Such public events probably combined elements of civic activism, community cohesion building and a general cathartic release for those present.



Illustration: 25 Private William Herbert ‘Stokey’ Lewis of the 11th Welsh, winner of the Victoria Cross, is feted on his return to Milford Haven on 25 January 1917.

Before the Armistice became the nation’s supreme remembrance of war, the date of the declaration of war, 4 August, was firmly fixed as an annual solemn commemoration to remember past and current sacrifices and reaffirm the determination to see the matter through to the end. Narberth council expressed their inflexible determination to prosecute the war to a victorious end, sending their resolution to the central Committee for Patriotic Organisations.¹⁶⁰⁹ Tudor Square, Tenby, was filled with soldiers, sailors and civilians to hear a clear affirmation that the struggle would continue until ‘the righteous objects, for which we entered it has

¹⁶⁰⁸ *H&MHT*, 31 January 1917; *Ibid.*, 30 May 1917.

¹⁶⁰⁹ PRO NAR/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council 1911-20; 18 July 1917.

been obtained.¹⁶¹⁰ At Milford Haven the Great War anniversary included an intercessory service at the Tabernacle Congregational Chapel while at the fish market the men sang the national anthem.¹⁶¹¹

The most direct attempt to influence public opinion came through demagogic appeals at public meetings organised by the National War Aims Committee (NWAC). The combination of shipping losses, high casualties and cost-of-living pressures posed a collective threat to civilian morale which the NWAC, established in 1917, was employed to sustain.¹⁶¹² They used a complex and flexible narrative of patriotism informed by pre-war motifs but adapted to the requirements of a war-weary civilian society. Public meetings organised at a local level were the chief method of disseminating messages. The NWAC offered communities a sense of autonomous involvement, a local inflection of the standard, delineated message of the centrally provided speakers.¹⁶¹³ The NWAC propaganda, adversarial, supranational and proprietary, offered a narrative of patriotic identity contextualised by sub-patriotism.¹⁶¹⁴ The movement was active in Pembrokeshire in 1917 but expanded their endeavours in the summer of 1918 when they requested Fishguard Urban District Council to arrange a public meeting. Thus the local council was the organizer and perhaps added endorsement to this external lobbying group. The need to crush German militarism was emphasised by Messrs Duxbury and Bubby in Castle Square, Haverfordwest, in September 1918 during which Councillor Richard Sinnett picked up a little boy (patriotically named Lloyd George) from the crowd and warned that if the war did not end satisfactorily the youngster and others like him would be destined

¹⁶¹⁰ TMAG TEM/BOOKS/1/1/5. Tenby Borough Corporation minutes 1900-24; 4 August 1917.

¹⁶¹¹ *H&MHT*, 9 August 1916.

¹⁶¹² David Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain. The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (Liverpool, 2012), 13.

¹⁶¹³ *Ibid*, 68.

¹⁶¹⁴ *Ibid*, 270.

to fight it all over again.¹⁶¹⁵ The NWAC conveyed positive patriotic messages and countered talk of a negotiated peace, 'to kill the spirit that begets the conscientious objector'. Negotiation was not to be talked of until the Allies had crossed the Rhine into the heart of Germany.¹⁶¹⁶ Not everyone approved of the necessity of a war aims association. One Tenby resident wrote; 'It seems somewhat strange that at this stage of the Great War it should be thought necessary to launch the NWAC'.¹⁶¹⁷

Perhaps the most effusive and sincere expression of patriotic pageantry (as in Illustrations 26 and 27) came with the Armistice celebrations themselves which were invested with intense emotional sentiments, on 11 November. They were repeated in more formal and restrained style on Peace Day on 19 July 1919. At Haverfordwest that November there was a torchlight procession with hastily- costumed characters and the Women's Royal Air Force in their 'becoming' uniforms, seen for the first time, although some thought they were in fancy dress.¹⁶¹⁸ Messages of Britishness, the Empire and winning the war were explicit in many wartime events which brought Pembrokeshire civilians into contact with a variety of techniques which inculcated them with positive information about why the war was being fought, - for duty, honour and other worthy precepts.

¹⁶¹⁵ *PCG*, 13 September 1918; *H&MHT*, 4 September 1918.

¹⁶¹⁶ *PH*, 13 September 1918.

¹⁶¹⁷ *TO*, 13 September 1917.

¹⁶¹⁸ *PH*, 22 November 1918.



Illustration: 26 Armistice celebrations in the grounds of Hamilton House, Milford Haven with the flags of the Entente, including Japan and the United States, on display.



Illustration: 27 Children at Prendergast Infants school holding oversized Union flags in a photograph to celebrate the signing of the peace in 1919.

The Role of the Cinema

Cinema represented a profound social and cultural influence over the wartime civilian population, a source of consolation perhaps and was the centre of popular culture.

This section will demonstrate how important a medium it was in the dissemination of war- information to people in a rural locality. The cinema was seen as the equivalent to the machine in the era of ‘total’ war.¹⁶¹⁹ Film emerged during the war as an agency of national persuasion, which had the capacity to raise awareness of national identity and contributed to the moulding of the opinion of audiences.¹⁶²⁰ Cinemas were social spaces which quickly established themselves as a centre- piece of working class entertainment. From the first public exhibition of moving images in 1896, the growth of the cinematograph was extraordinary with the number of cinemas rising to 1,600 by 1910 and to double that number eight years later.¹⁶²¹ There was a similar increase in weekly cinema admissions with ticket sales rising from 7 million in 1914 to 20.6 million in 1917, despite the entertainment tax which increased ticket prices.¹⁶²² The medium emerged from the fairground show tents to dominate popular entertainment exceeding the attraction of music halls.¹⁶²³

Cinema in Pembrokeshire evolved from the side shows at Portfield Hiring Fair, Haverfordwest, as a public entertainment in October 1898, amongst others featuring the tattooed lady and gentleman, fat lady, freak of nature and two boxing saloons.¹⁶²⁴ By 1909 there were three rival bioscope exhibitors with their brilliantly illuminated coliseums. With many qualms the Haverfordwest Borough Council granted a lease of the old corn market to an entrepreneur, Sidney White, to open a cinema, although they expressly forbade Sunday performances. The Palace Cinema duly opened on 28 July 1913 and was the last word in modernity and luxury providing opportunities for

¹⁶¹⁹ Michael Paris, *The First World War and Popular Cinema* (Edinburgh, 1999), 1.

¹⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁶²¹ Chris Brader, ‘A World on Wings’: ‘Young female workers and cinema in World War I’, *Women’s History Review*, 14:1 (2005), 101.

¹⁶²² Peter Miskell, *A Social History of the Cinema in Wales, 1918-1951* (Cardiff, 2006), 22; Brader, ‘A World on Wings,’ 101.

¹⁶²³ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 69.

¹⁶²⁴ *H&MHT*, 12 October 1898.

entertainment which were 'amusing, procreative but truly educative.'¹⁶²⁵ Other Pembrokeshire towns had their own picture palaces from the early 1910s, mostly converted from other uses; Tenby had a Picture Palace, as did Fishguard, Pembroke, Pembroke Dock and there were two at Milford Haven.

The cinemas offered an excellent medium for the dissemination of official propaganda. Factual films dominated film propaganda with some 240 offerings over three years, together with 152 issues of the bi-weekly official newsreel.¹⁶²⁶ Taylor asserts how the war represented a watershed in the ways in which Government manipulated public opinion, though it did so with a combination of intuition, opportunism and muddling.¹⁶²⁷ War items constituted an important staple of local cinema screenings whether as fiction or factual, through Pâthé's *Gazette*. When *Britain's Might* was shown at the Tenby Picture Palace it elicited 'fervent cheers' for the Royal Navy.¹⁶²⁸ This is clear evidence for the efficacy of propaganda. The Fishguard Electric Palace screened footage of the fighting at Alost, Belgium, depicting armoured cars, cavalry, field artillery, barricaded streets and the destructive power of German shelling.¹⁶²⁹ Later they aired *The Child Killers*, a story of the invasion of France in August 1914, 'without a shred of prejudice or exaggeration'.¹⁶³⁰ Local cinemas brought forth major war events into a celluloid reality for their audiences. A large number of pictures seized upon German frightfulness, helping to mould attitudes to aliens and stoke the fires of Germanophobia. Our understanding of audience reception of the messages shown to them is very difficult to gauge

¹⁶²⁵ Ibid., 30 July 1913.

¹⁶²⁶ Nicholas Reeves, 'Film Propaganda and its audiences: The Example of Britain's Official Films during the First World War', *JCH*, 18:3 (1983), 465.

¹⁶²⁷ Philip M. Taylor, 'Introduction: Britain and the Cinema in the First World War', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 13:2 (1993), 115.

¹⁶²⁸ *TO*, 13 August 1914.

¹⁶²⁹ *CE*, 29 October 1914.

¹⁶³⁰ Ibid., 29 July 1915.

Without doubt the most influential wartime film and the one which received the greatest local currency was *The Battle of The Somme*, shot by two official cinematographers, Malins and McDowell and distributed by the British Topical Committee for War Films.¹⁶³¹ The film premiered on 10 August 1916 and was eventually seen by half the adult population of Great Britain.¹⁶³² One third of the 77-minute production depicted the wounded and the dead evoking responses of pity and horror from audiences.¹⁶³³ Very large audiences attended White's Palace at Haverfordwest where they were enthralled as they watched the most poignant and realistic dramas of the age unfold upon the screen.¹⁶³⁴ One reviewer noted a feeling of almost religious awe at the anticipation of soldiers flinging themselves across death-swept no man's land.¹⁶³⁵ No one could be sanguine about the great thundering salvos of the British artillery or the suffering of 'our boys'. Later, *The Battle of the Ancre* in five parts, was screened at The Palace, Pembroke Dock; it included the 'Advance of the Tanks' and was considered the most marvellous picture ever seen.¹⁶³⁶ Cinemas had a wider wartime utility over and above disseminating wartime information. They did not completely eschew their old associations with vaudeville and the music halls. Film airing was often accompanied with dancing, comedy and musical items and also occasionally political messages. At Haverfordwest, films promoting the War Loan and War Weapons Week were shown, but also on the Bill were the 'Wing Boys' from the Royal Naval station at Milton.¹⁶³⁷ Miss Dugdale appeared at the Palace Cinema, Haverfordwest, and asked the audience a question. 'What shall we do with our vote?'

¹⁶³¹ Frazer, Robertshaw and Roberts discuss the film and its impact in *Ghosts on the Somme. Filming the Battle, June-July 1916* (Barnsley, 2013).

¹⁶³² Andrew Swift, *All Roads Lead to France* (Bath, 2005), 261.

¹⁶³³ Reeves, 'Film propaganda and its Audiences', 468.

¹⁶³⁴ *H&MHT*, 29 November 1916.

¹⁶³⁵ *PH*, 1 December 1916.

¹⁶³⁶ *PCG*, 23 February 1917.

¹⁶³⁷ *H&MHT*, 8 November 1918.

she queried, a month after the Representation of the People Act bestowed the vote on females aged over thirty.¹⁶³⁸

There is a general consensus as to how the cinema expanded its customer -base beyond the confines of the working class to attract the patronage of the middle classes, on account of its newly-found respectability being used by Government.¹⁶³⁹

Cinema -going almost became a patriotic duty. The local education committee at Pembroke could see no objection to the children of Monkton School being permitted to see a film about the King's visit to France, on account of its educational value.¹⁶⁴⁰

Concerns over the alleged pernicious effect of cinema on the nation's morals were not resolved in wartime. A national board of censors was established in 1912 to study any nefarious influences at work, especially any impact on the young cinemagoers.¹⁶⁴¹

Perhaps the moral censure was an example of class prejudice given the medium's undoubted popularity with the working class.¹⁶⁴² Such concerns were expressed locally. In August 1917 a local syndicate acquired White's Picture Palace at Haverfordwest promising the public the showing of films of 'wholesome entertainment' in the form of good pictures and dramatic performances, an implicit slight of Mr White's management.¹⁶⁴³ The latter replied how he resented the insinuation and that he had always shown films which could be enjoyed by people of all ages.¹⁶⁴⁴ Rock alludes to the scrutiny of cinema auditoria by women police patrols and social purity groups as an expression of the 'khaki fever' moral panic which were

¹⁶³⁸ Ibid., 27 March 1918.

¹⁶³⁹ Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War*, 116.

¹⁶⁴⁰ PRO SSR/1/129/3. Monkton Board School Logbook 1912-33; 20 December 1916.

¹⁶⁴¹ Dean Rapp, 'Sex in the Cinema: War, Moral Panic and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918', *Albion*, 34:3, (2002), 422.

¹⁶⁴² DeGroot, *Blighty*, 239.

¹⁶⁴³ *H&MHT*, 15 August 1917.

¹⁶⁴⁴ *PCG*, 31 August 1917.

a response to changes in leisure, courtship and gender equality.¹⁶⁴⁵ The role of the cinema in shaping public attitudes is of great importance, since gauging the social impact requires an analysis of cultural artefacts of the war generation in order to fully appreciate their meaning.¹⁶⁴⁶ Pembrokeshire cinemas provided both topical (if not objective) weekly screenings of war news but also plenty of opportunities for escapism through romantic or historical fiction and broadened its appeal. It was a valuable resource in building community resilience during wartime.

Sport and Recreation

Sport occupied a crucial place in mass- culture in Wales before and during the First World War, but the experiences of participants during wartime was anything but uniform. It is the central argument of this part of the thesis that class was an essential factor in the acceptability of which sports continued to be played. Johnes has asserted how important sport was in projecting Welsh national identity and how sporting institutions represented an integral part of Welsh civil society.¹⁶⁴⁷ Osborne maintains how the British played and watched sport reflected the self- interest, ambition, a mechanism for asserting identity and passion of vibrant communities.¹⁶⁴⁸ Team sports, especially rugby union and cricket, grew rapidly from the mid-nineteenth century, developing their own bureaucracy and, in the case of football, a high degree of commercialisation. They represented a panacea of respite from the working week so

¹⁶⁴⁵ Alex Rock, 'The khaki fever' moral panic: Women's patrols and the policing of cinemas in London, 1913-19', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 12 (2014), 57-72.

¹⁶⁴⁶ Paris, *The First World War and Popular Cinema*, 2.

¹⁶⁴⁷ Martin Johnes, *A History of Sport in Wales* (Cardiff, 2005).

¹⁶⁴⁸ John Morton Osborne, 'Continuity in British Sport: The Experience of the First World War', in George K. Behlmer and Fred M. Leventhal (eds), *Singular Continuities. Tradition, Nostalgia and Identity in Modern British Culture* (Stanford, 2000), 89. In a Welsh context Gareth Williams has contributed 'The dramatic turbulence of some irrecoverable football game, Sport, Literature and Welsh identity', in Grant Jarvie (ed.), *Sport in the Making of Celtic Cultures* (Leicester, 1999); Martin Johnes, *A History of Sport in Wales* (Cardiff, 2005); Martin Johnes, 'British Sports History: The present and the future', *Journal of Sport History*, 35:1 (2008), 65-72.

that quickly football became the very centre of working-class leisure activity. This was a highly gendered space where sporting association was habitually characterised by male identification and female estrangement and exclusion.¹⁶⁴⁹ Sporting clubs promoted community cohesion and served as highly useful vehicles for the dissemination of moral messages. The amateur sporting ideal equated good sportsmanship with a moral and disciplined citizenry.¹⁶⁵⁰ Participatory sports contained the potential for the binding of classes together in a society at war. In Pembrokeshire what sport was being pursued and which social class usually participated in them were determinants of their acceptability during wartime. Working-class team sports were those which were the most discouraged.

Pembrokeshire had a vibrant sporting scene, dominated by rugby football and from the later 1890s, the association code along with cricket and hockey. The association code often derived from existing rugby union clubs, as demonstrated in 1896 when the Haverfordwest football team was established from the existing rugby club.¹⁶⁵¹ The immediate pre-war years witnessed the popularity of mixed hockey matches, boxing tournaments and a Health and Strength League with gymnastics in the old corn market at Haverfordwest in 1911.¹⁶⁵² Golf was formally established at the county town in 1904 and a pavilion costing £250 was opened at the Racecourse on 9 October 1913.¹⁶⁵³

The outbreak of war brought a national and local debate as to whether sport should continue to be played during such a desperate national crisis. Osborne asserts how the

¹⁶⁴⁹ Patrick F. McDevitt, *May the Best Man Win. Sport, Masculinity and Nationalism* (Basingstoke, 2004), 9.

¹⁶⁵⁰ Osborne, 'Continuity in British Sport', 95.

¹⁶⁵¹ *H&MHT*, 29 January 1896.

¹⁶⁵² *PCG*, 29 December 1911.

¹⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, 10 October 1913.

grip of sports on the national imagination hardly loosened during the war with the maintenance of at least some semblance of normality during the first war year.¹⁶⁵⁴ Football came in for particular opprobrium, with newspapers refusing to print sports news and the strident headlines ‘Duty before Sport’. A class dynamic could have been at play since tennis and racing, largely middle-class pursuits, seldom attracted such negative comment. In 1915 the Football Association cancelled all matches for the duration of the war.¹⁶⁵⁵ There were some strong advocates in Pembrokeshire for the *status quo* of sport to be allowed to continue. One correspondent, ‘Soccer’, agreed with ‘those broad minded’ people who maintained how indulging in a game of football kept a good many men fit, ‘it will do no one any good to see us walking about with long faces.’¹⁶⁵⁶ At Neyland the continuance of rugby football was thought unlikely to materially affect the war effort but on the contrary would do much to swell the coffers of war charities, especially the County War Fund. Tommy liked nothing better than to read accounts of football matches in the newspapers according to one unnamed reporter.¹⁶⁵⁷ Roberts notes how important football was in the proletarianisation of the BEF during the war, sustaining morale by embracing working-class- derived values and customs. Football was a highly effective vehicle for this process.¹⁶⁵⁸

Senior rugby and football matches seem to have ceased locally in August 1914 as they normally would have done, but they did not resume with the seasonal round. The banner of such sports was henceforth carried by school and junior teams who usually played military teams. The Haverfordwest Rugby Football team was described as

¹⁶⁵⁴ Osborne, ‘Continuity in British Sport’, 92.

¹⁶⁵⁵ Veitch, ‘Play Up! Play Up! And Win the War’, 370.

¹⁶⁵⁶ *CE*, 1 October 1914.

¹⁶⁵⁷ *H&MHT*, 9 September 1914.

¹⁶⁵⁸ James Roberts, ‘The Best Football Team, the Best Platoon’: The Role of Football in the Proletarianization of the British Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918’, *Sport in History*, 26:1 (2006) 26-46.

defunct by November 1914, although thanks to the military presence the association code continued for a little longer.¹⁶⁵⁹ When matches were played there were exclamations of surprise in the local media, as occurred at Fishguard when Parcymorfa played a team from the county school.¹⁶⁶⁰ The majority of sport which continued in wartime Pembrokeshire had a military flavour, by virtue of the participating teams, especially rugby football which had long since been considered to be the embodiment of the Victorian and Edwardian imperial ideal, vigorous, muscular, militaristic and patriotic.¹⁶⁶¹

County cricket was likewise subject to severe restrictions imposed by the war with the Pembrokeshire League matches suspended. Once again military participation hushed criticism by providing a veneer of respectability to the proceedings. In June 1917 one excited correspondent eagerly anticipated the return of cricket with four local teams, Fishguard, Goodwick, Military and the RNAS which had a seaplane station.¹⁶⁶² The Haverfordwest Cricket Club had no recorded committee meetings for four full years (1916-20) given the hostility in many circles to continued team sports, a divergence to the thesis postulated by John.¹⁶⁶³ Team sports, football, rugby and cricket were subject to restrictions and its participants subject to censure for playing during wartime. Such sentiments appear not to have been levelled at those playing tennis or followers of hunts.

Other forms of sport including lawn tennis and golf continued even if in a restricted

¹⁶⁵⁹ *PH*, 6 November 1914.

¹⁶⁶⁰ *CE*, 4 March 1915.

¹⁶⁶¹ Tony Collins, 'English Rugby Union and the First World War', *HJ*, 45:4 (2002), 798.

¹⁶⁶² *CE*, 14 June 1917.

¹⁶⁶³ PRO DSO/27/1. Haverfordwest Cricket Club minutes 1903-34. Simon John argues how cricket helped to sustain morale and provided a respite from the war while the response of cricketers and authorities to the war largely deflected them from the criticism levelled against the other team sports. He further argues that the war reinforced societal stratification as the anxieties imposed by the conflict led people to seek comfort from existing structures 'A Different Kind of Test Match': cricket, English Society and the First World War', *Sport in History*, 33:1, (2013), 19-48.

form and were popular among the middle class.¹⁶⁶⁴ They continued even if in slimmed-down versions. The Tenby Lawn Tennis Club re-opened each May although in 1917, with food shortages looming, they discontinued the usual teas.¹⁶⁶⁵ Llanion and Neyland also continued playing, the former with a financial deficit which necessitated the holding of a whist drive to bring the club to solvency.¹⁶⁶⁶ Hockey was a sport in which women played a prominent role. In January 1918 at the Transport Field, Neyland, the home ladies' hockey team were well beaten by the Dockyard ladies, 3-1.¹⁶⁶⁷ Professional golf competitions ceased during the war and this impacted hard on smaller golf clubs.¹⁶⁶⁸ The summer meeting of the Tenby Golf Club was abandoned in August 1914 due to the war while Sunday golf was instituted at the Penally links of nine holes.¹⁶⁶⁹ Perhaps the hardest hit was the Haverfordwest Golf Club membership which dropped from 108 in 1914 down to 84 in 1915 and to just 62 in 1916. A combination of time pressures and the need for economy led to declining interest and saw the club resort to increased subscriptions.¹⁶⁷⁰ Predictably, boxing was a tremendous attraction especially in a garrison town like Pembroke Dock. The organised pugilistic encounters occasionally attracted audiences of 4,000 soldiers in the Market Hall.¹⁶⁷¹

Hunting continued but in a drastically reduced form. The master of the Pembrokeshire foxhounds, Jack Howell, resigned his Commission from the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry in 1913 and signified his willingness to continue hunting, even though

¹⁶⁶⁴ Tony Mason, *Sport in Britain* (London, 1988), 8.

¹⁶⁶⁵ *TO*, 24 May 1917.

¹⁶⁶⁶ *PCG*, 29 March 1918.

¹⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 February 1918.

¹⁶⁶⁸ Derek Birley, *Playing the Game. Sport and British Society 1910-1945* (Manchester, 1995), 69.

¹⁶⁶⁹ *TO*, 20 August 1914; *Ibid.*, 29 April 1915.

¹⁶⁷⁰ *PCG*, 22 June 1917.

¹⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 16 November 1917.

many hunting mounts had been commandeered in a number of districts.¹⁶⁷² The Pembrokeshire hounds cost around £1,000 a year to maintain, a challenging task given the declining subscriptions by 1916.¹⁶⁷³ The fields of riders were tiny. A mere dozen horsemen turned out at the traditional Boxing Day Hunt in Castle Square, Haverfordwest, in 1916 and perhaps eighteen to twenty the following year including three uniformed officers.¹⁶⁷⁴ The presence of presumably middle-class officers lent respectability to the field. In contrast, the continued pursuit of team sports in Pembrokeshire during the war could be given respectability through the participation of military teams or as a charitable endeavour in support of war charities

Wider Culture

The exploration of the wider cultural effects of the war reveals a bewildering and seemingly eclectic variety of artefacts, representations and practices, which together can be seen as the ‘popular’ culture of the war.¹⁶⁷⁵ Trentmann has written extensively on the culture of consumption and the development of consumerism in the modern world.¹⁶⁷⁶ He has also emphasised how interest in objects for symbolic communication has yielded a range of insights about identity formation, manners and the cult of domestic space.¹⁶⁷⁷ Such a discussion is fraught with difficulties as we attempt to contextualise material fragments. MacCallum-Stewart observes how popular culture is a moveable feast of ideas and contradictions which reflect differing

¹⁶⁷² *H&MHT*, 12 August 1914.

¹⁶⁷³ *PCG*, 7 April 1916.

¹⁶⁷⁴ *H&MHT*, 2 January 1918.

¹⁶⁷⁵ Jessica Meyer, (ed.), *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, 2008), 12. Ross Wilson discusses the imagery of the war ranging from slang songs to war memorials in the *Cultural Heritage of the Great War in Britain* (Farnham, 2013)

¹⁶⁷⁶ Frank Trentmann, *The Making of the Consumer: Knowledge, Power and Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford, 2006); Patricia Maclachlan and Frank Trentmann, ‘Civilising Markets: Traditions of consumer politics in twentieth-century Britain, Japan and the United States’, in Mark Bevir and Frank Trentmann (eds) *Markets in Historical contexts: ideas and politics in the Modern World* (Cambridge, 2004) 170-201.

¹⁶⁷⁷ Frank Trentmann, ‘Maternity in the Future of History: Things, Practices and Politics’, *JBS*, 48 (2009), 283-307.

viewpoints as well as expressing internal hegemony.¹⁶⁷⁸ The popular representation of war was transmitted through the language of commerce, music and dance, popular literature, postcards, souvenirs and even through personal names.

Advertisers were quick to copy military rhetoric, such commercialisation tending to normalise and trivialise the conflict by allowing it to penetrate the minutiae of everyday things. Thus the advertisement of Ritchie J. Davies of the Boot repairing Factory, Dew Street, Haverfordwest, declared ‘Davies at the front’ and ‘Another Smashing Victory,’ obvious idioms of war.¹⁶⁷⁹ Livesey’s Linseed Linctus as advertised by the Tenby Drug Stores was highly effective for ‘home defence’.¹⁶⁸⁰

Postcards and toys were mediums in which war messages were perhaps subconsciously relayed. Postcards provided a visual repository of the war through studio portraits of soldiers, actual combat scenes or the delicate silk propaganda-postcards evoking images of kin, home and hearth.¹⁶⁸¹ Postcards were highly influential as comic, educational and topical- disseminating mediums and were rather more effective in this regard than the cigarette cards, tea, biscuit and tobacco tins and boxes which often carried imperial and military depictions.¹⁶⁸² Toys, once an area of deep German penetration of the British market, were advertised with impeccable patriotic credentials as British-made. At Tenby, Hodges’ Toy Stores in Warren Street stocked a variety of soldiers, forts and trenches to fire the imaginations of the

¹⁶⁷⁸ Esther MacCallum- Stewart, ‘A Biplane in Gnomeregan: Popular Culture and the First World War’, in *A Part of History. Aspects of the British Experience of the First World War* (London, 2008), 191.

¹⁶⁷⁹ *H&MHT*, 20 January 1915.

¹⁶⁸⁰ *TO*, 14 January 1915. At Fishguard H. Roberts draper and milliner had ‘declared war upon their entire stock, ‘During that period, NO ARMISTICE whatever will be given’ so thousands of VOLUNTEERS were wanted in clearing these goods; *CE*, 13 August 1914.

¹⁶⁸¹ Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, 171.

¹⁶⁸² MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 22-26.

young.¹⁶⁸³ There was a huge interest in war souvenirs like crested china whose principal manufacturers, Goss, Arcadian, Shelley, Willow and Swan, produced model Dreadnoughts, helmets, shells, artillery pieces, tanks and aircraft bearing crests of British towns and cities as displayed in Illustration 28.¹⁶⁸⁴ Thus the international war had been appropriated by the very local. The ordinary artefacts of material culture promoted patriotic feeling and made military images a complete feature of daily life.¹⁶⁸⁵



Illustration: 28 Shelley China model of a British tank with the arms of Tenby, Arcadian China model of a Zeppelin with the arms of Haverfordwest, Artillery piece with the arms of Pembroke Dock, Artillery Shell emblazoned with the arms of Neyland.

Trench art, the folk art of war, a different form of memorialisation, turned the detritus of shell cases, bullets, grenades and twisted metal fragments, themselves representing a mangled mass of symbolism into everyday objects and displayed a remarkable

¹⁶⁸³ *TO*, 30 November 1916.

¹⁶⁸⁴ Peter Doyle, *Tommy's War. British Military Memorabilia* (Ramsbury, 2008), 179.

¹⁶⁸⁵ Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, 174.

variability.¹⁶⁸⁶ These objects embodied the ordinary soldier's cultural and psychological experiences as almost endless individual expression.¹⁶⁸⁷ One Haverfordwest soldier, Bertie Griffiths, had a letter-opener made from a lethal-looking piece of German shrapnel taken from a comrade's leg. There were other less brutal ways of personalising the conflict. A trend, first instituted during the Boer War, whereby infants were christened with names reflecting battles and leading generals, was considerably extended during the First World War. In Tenby in March 1915 a baby was christened with the names of Neuve Chapelle by her soldier father, prompting one wag to remark how local registrars would soon have to have French lessons.¹⁶⁸⁸ At least fifteen Pembrokeshire babies, a mixture of both sexes, were given the appellation of 'Verdun' (after the fortress city assaulted by the Germans on 21 February 1916 with the battle lasting until 18 December). At Tenby the Registrar recorded Verdun E. Maud Watkins, whilst at Pembroke a boy was christened Verdun G. Barker, and a girl Linda Verdun Davies at Begelly. The Belgian city of Louvain, so infamously sacked by the German Army in 1914, likewise inspired parents to name at least eight infants including Myfanwy Louvain Adams and Arabella Louvain Rowlands (Begelly), Ivy Louvain Nicholas (Haverfordwest) and Louvain Freda Parnell (Milford Haven). There were a smattering of children variously, patriotically-named, Douglas Haig Comber and Lloyd George Thomas (Newport), Douglas Haigh Poyntz (Pembroke), Howard Winston Mathias (Begelly), Lloyd George Phillips (St David's) and Robert Joffre Swales (Haverfordwest). For these individuals the war would ever remain deeply personal

¹⁶⁸⁶ Nicholas J. Saunders, 'Bodies of Metal, Shells of memory: 'Trench Art, and the Great War Re-cycled', *Journal of Material Culture* 5:43 (2000), 46.

¹⁶⁸⁷ Joe Bageant, 'The Trench Art of World War I', *Military History*, (2004), 62.

¹⁶⁸⁸ *PH*, 19 March 1915.

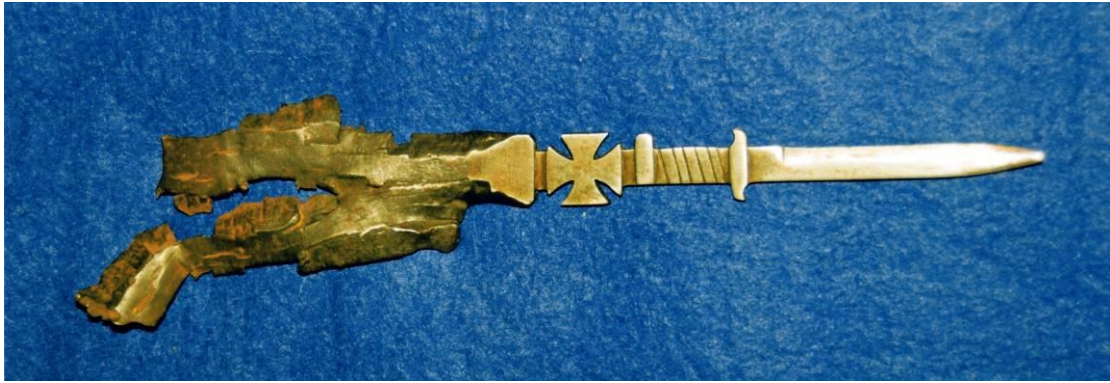


Illustration: 29 Letter opener complete with iron Cross motif made from a piece of shrapnel and acquired by a Haverfordwest soldier in 1918.

The cultural, leisure and religious impacts upon Pembrokeshire were not marked by their long-term nature. There is no evidence that religion lost its confessional appeal and the newspapers of the 1920s record the enormous variety of Anglican and Nonconformist life with services, Sunday school anniversaries and the rich social life of the churches. The significant closure of chapels was not witnessed until the 1960s. Sport quickly revived from the wartime restrictions. The class bias against team sports ceased as returning servicemen sought to revive their interests, while the wide range of sports, cricket, golf, hockey, quoits, racing and field sports were all energetically pursued during the 1920s. The ethnic mixing promoted during wartime by virtue of a large refugee colony at Milford Haven ceased when the Belgian refugees returned during late 1918 and early 1919. Perhaps the most enduring and long-term aspect of culture and individual identity lay in deeply personal experiences which remained with individuals for the rest of their lives.

Chapter VI

Civilian Experiences of War, Real and Imagined

The principal means of communicating the war to civilians were via the national and local press and the cinema, although there were other means, the spoken word, and the psychological aspect of ‘imagined’ possible enemy attack which provided vicarious experiences of the conflict. In these processes the local and national press played an important role in shaping opinion, as Jones has identified in his research into the history of journalism in Wales during this period which is discussed in the previous chapter.¹⁶⁸⁹ Bingham alludes to the reassessment of the value of the press as a historical source. He maintains that they provide one of the most effective ways of exploring the representations and narratives that circulated throughout British society, the heterogeneity of their contents ensuring that newspapers are a rich source of information on a wide range of subjects.¹⁶⁹⁰ Experiences could be real such as actual contact with troops, witnessing new weapons of war like airships and seaplanes, while others, such as invasion scares, spies, rumours and the like, fed the fears and imaginations of civilians, especially during the early months of the conflict which was a period of extraordinary emotional intensity. Tylee alludes to the impossibility of examining people’s consciousness directly and to the lack of means of measuring patterns of thought, how they imagined themselves or others, while Lawrence contends how the psychological strains were sure to be profound.¹⁶⁹¹ This chapter will

¹⁶⁸⁹ Aled Jones, *Press, Politics and Society. A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 1993); Powers of the Press. *Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot, 1996).

¹⁶⁹⁰ Adrian Bingham, ‘Reading Newspapers: Cultural Histories of the Popular Press in Modern Britain,’ *History Compass* 10:2 (2012), 140-150. Curran and Seaton remind us to avoid an automatic correlation between the climate of opinion in the country and the political character of the press; *Power without Responsibility. Press, Broadcasting and the internet in Britain* (Oxford, 2010), 24.

¹⁶⁹¹ Claire M. Tylee, *The Great War and Women’s Consciousness. Images of Militarism and Womanhood in Women’s Writings, 1914-64* (Basingstoke, 1990), 251; Jon Lawrence, ‘The First

identify the opportunities for real or imagined contact with the enemy, while acknowledging that Pembrokeshire was hundreds of miles from the mud of Flanders. It was nevertheless in the front line of the U-boat campaign from early 1915 and as such provides a good example of the flexible concept of multiple wartime fronts which this chapter will explore. The central argument is that war provided a variety of contexts for actual contact with the machinery of war and sometimes imaginary fears or scaremongering even in distant rural localities. Nor were such scares far-fetched. Grayzel describes how the air war shattered the sense of separateness between the 'home front' and 'war front.'¹⁶⁹² Technological changes challenged the ideas that the home and war zones were separate and the division between combatant and non-combatant. Not knowing what was going to occur was unsettling indeed.¹⁶⁹³

War Scares

The pre-war anticipatory literary genre of German invasion and spy stories developed widely from Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) and popularised especially by William Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910* (1906) which reflected pre-war Anglo-German tensions of economic, naval and colonial rivalry.¹⁶⁹⁴ Being a maritime county there is some evidence of such fears being expressed locally. In February 1909 when the Old Quay at Haverfordwest could accommodate no more shipping, one correspondent when seeing the forest of masts, thought 'the German invasion, so much talked about recently, had become an accomplished fact'.¹⁶⁹⁵ At the borough council meeting that November, Councillor Phillips, the outgoing mayor, jocularly

World War and its Aftermath', in Paul Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (Harlow, 1994), 164.

¹⁶⁹² Susan R. Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire. Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge, 2012), 3. Some 1,239 civilians were killed and 2,886 injured by air raids.

¹⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁶⁹⁴ David French, 'Spy Fever in Britain, 1900-1915', *HJ*, 21:2 (1978), 355-370; Zara Steiner, 'Views of War: Britain before the Great War- And After', *International Relations*, 17:7 (2003), 7-33.

¹⁶⁹⁵ *PCG*, 26 February 1909.

remarked how he was glad, as Admiral of the Port (a purely honorific title), he had not been called on to repel a German invasion.¹⁶⁹⁶ Such tensions were not obvious when the German armoured cruiser SMS *Hertha* paid a courtesy visit to Milford Haven in August 1912.

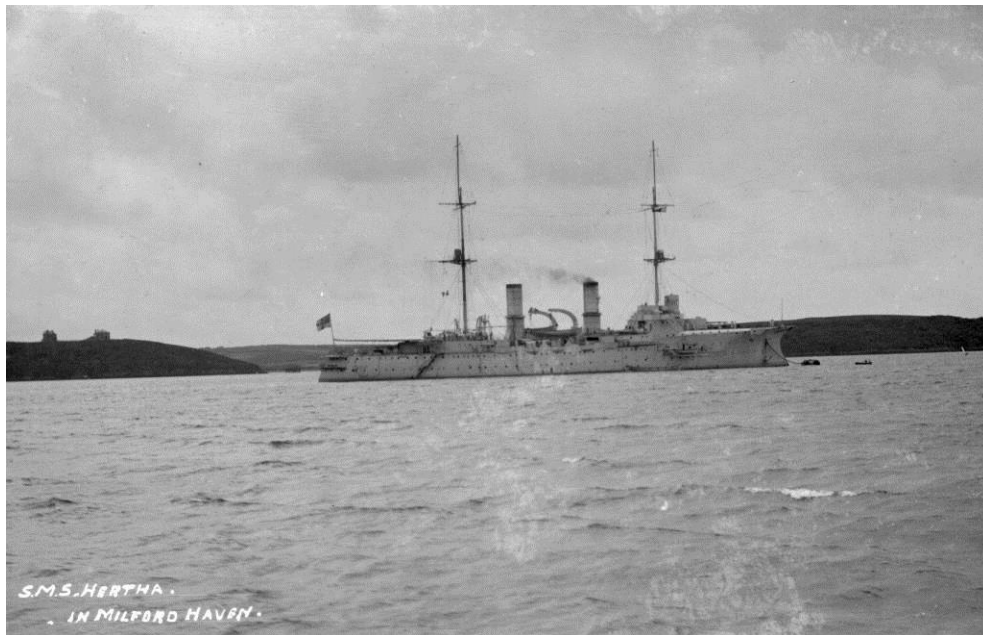


Illustration: 30 SMS *Hertha* anchored opposite Wear Point in Milford Haven in August 1912.

Every courtesy was extended to the 450 crew members during their ten-day stay including the inevitable football match against Pembroke Dock Athletic Club.¹⁶⁹⁷ Perhaps their visit was not entirely one of public relations. It was later recounted how one German officer in bidding farewell to a local lady remarked ‘Good-bye till we come to stay,’ from which it was deduced how they had paid particularly close attention to Pembroke Dockyard and Haven forts during their stay.¹⁶⁹⁸

¹⁶⁹⁶ *H&MHT*, 10 November 1909.

¹⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 21 August 1912.

¹⁶⁹⁸ D’Enno, *Fishermen Against the Kaiser*, 24.

Spy Mania and Germanophobia

The physical and emotional uncertainties of being at war help to explain the extraordinary phenomenon of ‘spy mania’ which reached decidedly epidemic proportions in 1914 as an expression of an imagined wartime experience. Thousands of reports came in even from the most ‘sober, solid and otherwise truthful people’.¹⁶⁹⁹ Amateur spy catchers abounded. Signalling from the Pembrokeshire coast to enemy shipping or submarines was widely suspected by locals.¹⁷⁰⁰ Such views were openly aired by figures in authority. Lord St David’s stated ‘spies are all around. Living on the coast of Pembrokeshire I know that signalling is going on.’¹⁷⁰¹ Even the monastic island of Caldey was not immune from such fears. The Abbot in a pastoral article described a story doing the rounds where a German submarine put in on the north of the island and found hospitality from a local well-wisher as ‘persistent although quite unfounded’.¹⁷⁰²

Spy mania, ‘the gibbering phantoms of the inventiveness and credulity of disordered minds’, clearly played on real fears generated by the declaration of war. There were local incidents, some not without humorous elements.¹⁷⁰³ At Fishguard a local sensation centred upon the arrest of a spy who was actually a Professor at Cork University returning to Ireland.¹⁷⁰⁴ Another suspect, taken into custody at Broad Haven, did not reply to the sentry on account that he was dumb.¹⁷⁰⁵ Defending a Russian Pole who took too much interest in the unloading of munitions at Pembroke

¹⁶⁹⁹ Christopher Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm* (London, 2010), 53.

¹⁷⁰⁰ French, ‘Spy Fever’, 365; James Hayward, *Myths & Legends of the First World War* (Stroud, 2002), 16.

¹⁷⁰¹ *TO*, 30 September 1915.

¹⁷⁰² PRO HDX/1028/2. *Pax. The Quarterly Review of the Benedictine Community of the Isle of Caldey, South Wales*. Summer 1915.

¹⁷⁰³ Hayward, *Myths & Legends*, 2.

¹⁷⁰⁴ *CE*, 13 August 1914.

¹⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 September 1914.

railway station, his solicitor, Mr Lowless, exclaimed ‘In this neighbourhood everybody seems to be mighty afraid of spies’¹⁷⁰⁶ Such incidents demonstrate the heightened emotional fears and tensions arising from contacts with visitors or travellers upon whom suspicion easily fell.

With the exception of the Military Service Acts, one of the most bitter controversies of public policy centred upon the agitation against enemy aliens resident in Great Britain (overwhelmingly German and Austro-Hungarian), which reflected the xenophobic and chauvinistic identification of enemy civilians (whether nationalised or not) as a scourge, meriting immediate internment. The bitter polemic over the subject resonated in Pembrokeshire and clearly demonstrates the capacity of the popular press to shape attitudes. Before the war, the Aliens Act of 1905 was the basis of immigration control policy although when war was declared the Aliens Restrictions Act of 4 August 1914 giving the Government a virtual *carte blanche* passed in a single day.¹⁷⁰⁷ There were around 70,000 enemy aliens in the United Kingdom in 1914. Orders in Council prohibited such aliens from changing their names.¹⁷⁰⁸ Public anxiety palpably increased later on in the summer of 1918 when the German military offensives seemed at their most threatening, prompting calls for ‘Intern them all’.¹⁷⁰⁹

Debate over the enemy- alien issue surfaced in the local press in Pembrokeshire invoking highly emotive and accusatory statements in which rumour, suspicion and innuendo were substituted for facts. For example, one early casualty was Carl Hoffman, jeweller and watchmaker of High Street, Tenby, and a local resident for

¹⁷⁰⁶ *PH*, 21 August 1914. Other spy scares were experienced at South Hook, Dale, Pennar and Scoveston Fort during August and September 1914 and doubtless reflect acute public anxiety when the war was new.

¹⁷⁰⁷ Colin Holmes, ‘The Myth of Fairness: Racial Violence in Britain 1911-19’, *History Today*, 35:10 (1985), 42-43.

¹⁷⁰⁸ Bird, *Control of Enemy Alien Civilians*, 232.

¹⁷⁰⁹ Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning. Propaganda in the First World War* (London, 1977), 133.

nearly 40 years. He was defended by a local newspaper, an example of the press attempting to balance obviously highly-charged local feeling, against charges of ‘disloyal utterances’ ascribed to him by local rumourmongers. Nor was it true that he had any investments in Germany.¹⁷¹⁰ Upon the declaration of war against Austria-Hungary, a local Austrian waiter was obliged to give in his notice at Tenby.¹⁷¹¹ Local press and community leaders called for decisive Government action against this perceived threat. One strident newspaper editorial warned: ‘Let Mr Roch and the Government understand that the country, and especially Pembrokeshire, will not rest content until ‘the enemy in our midst’ is placed somewhere out of mischief.’¹⁷¹² A requisition signed by the luminaries of Haverfordwest called upon their borough council to convene a public meeting to discuss this pressing issue.¹⁷¹³ Calls to intern enemy aliens were a shibboleth to demonstrate personal and community patriotism. One resident of Saundersfoot sought to counter such comments which sometimes bordered on the hysterical, by posing the rhetorical question ‘What in Heaven’s name is the use of fighting for right and liberty if we are going to persecute innocent people in our midst?’¹⁷¹⁴

There is no doubt that popular attitudes especially to Germans were effectually shaped by wide reporting of alleged atrocities committed by the armies invading Belgium and France in August 1914.¹⁷¹⁵ The antagonism between Britain and Germany became more pronounced after 1900, representing the interplay of complex economic, naval

¹⁷¹⁰ *TO*, 13 August 1914.

¹⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, 20 August 1914.

¹⁷¹² *PH*, 30 June 1916.

¹⁷¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8 March 1917.

¹⁷¹⁵ John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (Yale, 2001) demonstrates the reality of violence against Belgian and French civilians.

and colonial interests.¹⁷¹⁶ Pembrokeshire antipathy to all things German was soon made manifest. Local examples are not numerous and may well be the tip of an under-reported iceberg.¹⁷¹⁷ Belgian monks at Tenby related tales of Hunnish iconoclasm which held nothing sacred, while beneath the ashes of Louvain, the ‘Oxford’ of Belgium, lay a set of geological specimens sent from Caldey Island for study in the early months of the year.¹⁷¹⁸ Some of the survivors of the liners *Falaba* and *Lusitania* were landed at Milford Haven and Fishguard respectively, bringing German ‘frightfulness’ to the soil of the county. There does not appear to have been overt anti-German demonstrations as witnessed in English cities, rather exclusion and marginalisation. However there were exceptions; for example, in 1916 PS Thomas of Narberth reported an attempt to raid the shop of Herman Idle, a supposed German sympathiser by a crowd of youths, women and children, who at least dispersed when warned by the police.¹⁷¹⁹ Some 50-60 Tenby ratepayers opposed the magistrates renewing the license of Mrs Stone of the Three Mariners public house in case her husband, a German by birth, might convey eavesdropped conversations between soldiers and sailors back to the enemy. In 1914 he had changed his name from Hoffman to Stone. The magistrates thought this scenario most unlikely and then granted the renewal.¹⁷²⁰ One unfortunate tramp at Milford Haven was taunted and

¹⁷¹⁶ Jan Ruger, ‘Revisiting the Anglo-German Antagonism,’ *Journal of Modern History*, 83:3, (2011), 579-611; Patrick Major, ‘Britain and Germany: A Love-Hate Relationship?’ *German History*, 26:4, (2008), 457-468; Lothar Reinermann, ‘Fleet Street and the Kaiser: British Public Opinion and Wilhelm II,’ *German History*, 26:4 (2008), 469-485.

¹⁷¹⁷ Panikos Panayi has written extensively on immigration, racial violence and the German communities in Britain before and during the war. His work describes the dynamics of racial hatred unleashed during the war. ‘Anti-immigrant riots in nineteenth and twentieth-century Britain,’ in Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain, 1840-1950* (Leicester, 1993) 1-25; *Immigrants, Ethnicity and Racism in Britain, 1815-1945* (Manchester, 1994); ‘The destruction of the German communities in Britain during the First World War’, Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Germans in Britain since 1500* (London, 1996), 113-30; *Prisoners of Britain: German civilians and combatant internees during the First World War* (Manchester, 2012).

¹⁷¹⁸ *TO*, 17 September 1914; *Ibid.*, 5 November 1914.

¹⁷¹⁹ PRO PCC/PO/83. Pembrokeshire Constabulary, Pembroke Division (Narberth Section) Reports of Occurrences; 1916.

¹⁷²⁰ *TO*, 8 February 1917.

hustled by an angry crowd of Belgian women and local children upon the suspicion he was German before being rescued by local police.¹⁷²¹ One local ‘Briton’ complained through the local press why a beautiful Welsh hymn was sung by Calvinistic Methodists meeting at Dinas to the tune of the Austrian War Song. He questioned: ‘Are Nonconformists not patriotic enough to stop singing this tune at least while the war lasts?’¹⁷²²

Hatred was directed towards the Kaiser who featured as the replacement Aunt Sally at village fetes; his effigy was prominent in the flames of a number of Armistice celebration bonfires. The editor of the local *Guardian* thought that an Allied declaration of no peace with the Kaiser would help to create a revolutionary movement from within Germany, a providential statement indeed.¹⁷²³ The war created a sense of exclusivity which those outside certain boundaries of kinship and community were eager to cross into acceptance. One Pembroke Dock resident Harriet Baker Kuhler, aged 73, prayed for a Certificate of Naturalisation in 1915 (her late husband had removed his allegiance to Prussia in 1866). She strongly expressed the desire to be removed from the category of alien.¹⁷²⁴ In the same year Mary Susanna Riechelmann of Goodwick was thought by her referees to be a respectable woman with clear loyalty to Great Britain.¹⁷²⁵

The first actual encounter with German nationals (thus opposition was not derived from actual contact) occurred at Fishguard where two reservists were arrested and

¹⁷²¹ *CE*, 27 May 1915.

¹⁷²² *Ibid.*, 5 November 1914.

¹⁷²³ *Ibid.*, 18 August 1916.

¹⁷²⁴ TNA HO/144/1391/270023. Home Office: Registered Papers, Supplementary. Nationality and Naturalisation. Harriet Baker Kuhler. Resident in Pembroke Dock. Certificate 1,636. Issued 16 February 1916.

¹⁷²⁵ TNA 144/1442/302901. Home Office: Registered Papers, Supplementary. Nationality and Naturalisation. Mary Susanna Riechelmann. Resident in Goodwick. Certificate 1,740. Issued 29 March 1916.

taken to Haverfordwest Castle under escort as prisoners of war.¹⁷²⁶ Later in the war German civilians were interned at Drim Wood, Llawhaden but they did not make so much of a favourable impression as German prisoners of war who, ‘taken together are said to be a decent lot’.¹⁷²⁷ Two of them evidently did not take to incarceration and they escaped before being captured by a vigilant policeman at Portfield Gate, Haverfordwest.¹⁷²⁸ Pembrokeshire did thus have a limited exposure to actual prisoner-of-war contact. Thirty German sailors entrained at Haverfordwest station in 1916 and created intense interest, while the crews of two U-boats were landed at Pembroke Dock two years later.¹⁷²⁹ German prisoners-of-war arrived in small numbers from the summer of 1918, their labour being earmarked for the harvest. The County War Agricultural Executive discussed possible camps for them at St David’s, Narberth, Fishguard and Rickeston Mill in the spring of 1918.¹⁷³⁰ Twenty-six duly arrived in August 1918 where they spent their time constructing a rifle range at Shoal’s Hook.¹⁷³¹ There is no record of overt hostility to those Germans housed locally, actual contacts perhaps counting for more than vulgar pastiche of the Huns which the national press had printed since 1914. Actual contact may well have dissolved the preconceptions of Germans which had been created by the press and cinema.

Responses to the outbreak of War

The outbreak of hostilities caused trepidation and fear, especially to the residents of coastal towns and villages. Thus in every sense it was a coastal phenomenon. Pennell has demonstrated how an ‘imagined’ invasion of south-east England was central to

¹⁷²⁶ *H&MHT*, 12 August 1914.

¹⁷²⁷ *PH*, 13 September 1918.

¹⁷²⁸ *H&MHT*, 21 August 1918.

¹⁷²⁹ *PCG*, 28 April 1916; *H&MHT*, 15 May 1918.

¹⁷³⁰ PRO PCC/SE/2/4. Pembrokeshire War Agricultural Executive Committee minutes 1918-19; 24 April 1918; 22 May 1918.

¹⁷³¹ *CE*, 15 August 1918.

how civilians experienced the opening weeks of the conflict which was magnified by widespread reporting of German atrocities.¹⁷³² Lord St. David's thought that Pembrokeshire was highly likely to be attacked by German warships, as he told the committee of the County War Fund.¹⁷³³ The first few weeks of war saw repeated fears of invasion. The inhabitants of one north Pembrokeshire village, Llanycaer, turned out *en masse* to counter the invader, armed with hayforks, sticks and crowbars after interpreting loud explosions as the Germans shelling from Fishguard Bay and an imagined landing at Abermawr. Mercifully it was nothing more than a farmer blasting stones on his land.¹⁷³⁴ The previous week there had been an alarm at Broad Haven by the distant sound of naval gunfire. Even the people of Haverfordwest were awakened by the noise, thinking a German cruiser was being chased. More prosaically they were warning shots from a Haven fort to a vessel unaware of the declaration of war.¹⁷³⁵ The psychological fears of invasion cannot be underestimated. When Dinah Reed of Little Newcastle heard how Germans had landed at Fishguard, she was more than relieved to find it was in fact the arrival of Belgian refugees. Otherwise, she disclosed to her husband, she was quite prepared to kill their daughter, Harriet Mary, lest she fall 'into the barbarous hands of Germans'.¹⁷³⁶ The shelling of East Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby by the German High Seas Fleet on 16 December 1914 generated real public anxiety, especially in Tenby, an 'unprotected and unfortified town.'¹⁷³⁷ War scares significantly only occurred in the early months, before trench warfare defined the nature of the emerging conflict and are not encountered after December 1914.

¹⁷³² Catriona Pennell, 'The Germans Have Landed!' Invasion fears in the South-East of England, August to December 1914', in Heather Jones, Jennifer O'Brien and Christoph Schmidt-Suppran (eds), *Untold War. New Perspectives in First World War Studies*, 113.

¹⁷³³ *TO*, 10 December 1914; *PH*, 14 August 1914, also quoted 'Highly placed military officers thought an attack 'not improbable'.

¹⁷³⁴ *CE*, 20 August 1914.

¹⁷³⁵ *H&MHT*, 12 August 1914.

¹⁷³⁶ *Pers. Com.* Mr Richard Davies of Little Newcastle, Pembrokeshire.

¹⁷³⁷ *TO*, 24 December 1914.

Rumours of War

Civilians' imagined experiences of war could include the manufacture or dissemination of war news mediated through oral communication, although repeating rumours was an offence under DORA since they were likely to cause disaffection and focus on military reverses.¹⁷³⁸ Local residents in Pembroke Dock were perturbed by a rumour that a great naval battle in the North Sea had seen the loss of sixteen ships including Admiral Jellicoe's flagship, although this spurious information was 'from a lying jade'.¹⁷³⁹ One wild rumour at Tenby imagined German submarines duelling with Haven forts, although again it was a fabrication.¹⁷⁴⁰ Rumour-mongering did lead to prosecution. James Evans of Pennar, a dockyard shipwright, was indicted under Section 27 of DORA for making disparaging comments about the British Army and the navy's performance at Jutland.¹⁷⁴¹ Interestingly such prosecutions could be interpreted as discouraging genuinely expressed opposition to the war, or indeed highly accurate commentary on the often parlous state of the British position after March 1918. Two defendants had to pay seventeen shillings costs each for repeating how the British Army was 'surrounded by the Germans'.¹⁷⁴² The owner and editor of the *Tenby Observer* were prosecuted for comments in their newspaper alleging reluctance on behalf of the officers of the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry to serve abroad. Each was fined £25.¹⁷⁴³ One Fishguard correspondent deplored the gullibility of local busybodies; 'If anyone coughs in the vicinity of the harbour it is taken as the firing of a four-point-seven gun.'¹⁷⁴⁴ Despite official discouragement (which could lead to

¹⁷³⁸ *CE*, 17 December 1914.

¹⁷³⁹ *PCG*, 1 September 1916.

¹⁷⁴⁰ *TO*, 13 May 1915.

¹⁷⁴¹ *PCG*, 30 June 1916.

¹⁷⁴² *PH*, 10 May 1918.

¹⁷⁴³ *TO*, 24 February 1916; *TT* 22 February 1916.

¹⁷⁴⁴ *CE*, 19 July 1917.

prosecution) one main medium of war information was inevitably the spoken word with the nuances, distortions and exaggerations which invariably followed in recounting events between people. That such unlikely scenarios could receive such wide currency speaks of the emotional edge which inhabitants felt, especially in coastal communities.

Fears of Aerial attack

Lord Northcliffe's memorable statement 'England is no longer an island' reflected the realisation of the nation's vulnerability to aerial attack which appeared fully justified once Zeppelin attacks commenced in January 1915.¹⁷⁴⁵ Geinitz notes how the twin sentiments of fear and curiosity were not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary emotions generated by such raids.¹⁷⁴⁶ Between April and October 1915 some nineteen air raids were launched.¹⁷⁴⁷ In total the fifty-one Zeppelin attacks inflicted 1,570 civilian casualties, while the fifty-seven German bomber raids added a further 2,857 casualties.¹⁷⁴⁸ Although Pembrokeshire's geographical location made aerial attack unlikely, it could not be entirely discounted. For local civilians this was in every sense an imagined experience of war. The mere sight of aerial craft brought consternation. When a British airship (Illustration 31) from RNAS Pembroke (at Milton, Carew) passed over Pembroke Dock in May 1916 it prompted the inhabitants of one house to seek sanctuary in their cellar.¹⁷⁴⁹ Likewise, an airship alarm at Carew brought people streaming out of their houses, some of them half clad in the grip of

¹⁷⁴⁵ Alfred M. Gollin, 'England is no Longer an Island': the Phantom Airship Scare on 1909', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 13:1, (1981), 44.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Christian Geinitz, 'Strategic Bombing of German Cities', in Roger Chickering and Stig Forster (eds), *Great War, Total War*, 221.

¹⁷⁴⁷ Jonathan Sutherland and Diane Canwell, *Battle of Britain 1917. The First Heavy Bomber Raids on England* (Barnsley, 2006), 4.

¹⁷⁴⁸ Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War*, 68.

¹⁷⁴⁹ *PCG*, 12 May 1916.

genuine fear and witnessing new war weapons.¹⁷⁵⁰

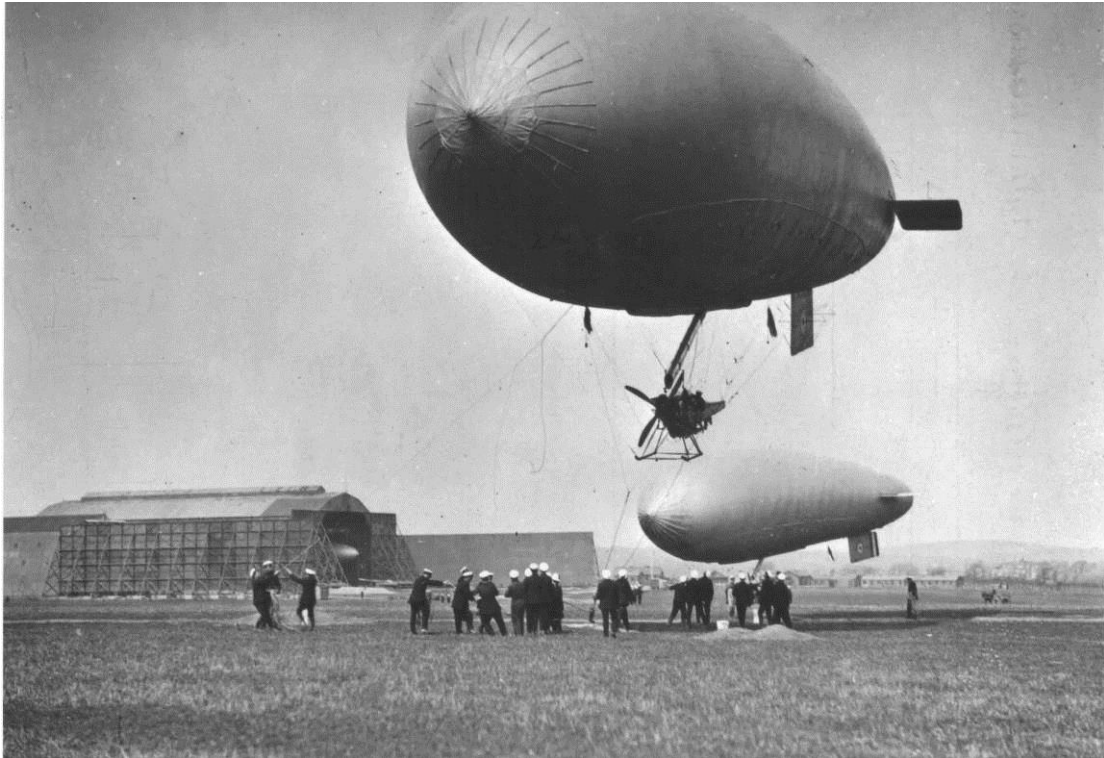


Illustration: 31 SS24 and SS25, Sea Scout airships, coming in to land on 1 May 1917 (Illustration courtesy of Royal Air Force Museum).

Those civilians who had actually experienced Zeppelin attacks in London sought sanctuary in the locality, perhaps communicating their experiences to local residents. One such lady suffering from ‘Zepp nerves’ stayed at Haverfordwest.¹⁷⁵¹ On -edge residents were likely to ascribe any unexpected noise to possible enemy action. There was speculation of a mysterious flying machine over the town, although the discordant sound was produced by the new pumping machine at the culvert works.¹⁷⁵² The Tenby corporation were sufficiently concerned so as to insure their property,

¹⁷⁵⁰ Ibid., 14 April 1916.

¹⁷⁵¹ Ibid., 29 September 1916. The previous year the bombing of Southend was almost portrayed as a reason for visiting, ‘in close quarters to a German bomb seems to add spice to a holiday.’ By 1916 a rather different view prevailed.

¹⁷⁵² Ibid., 24 September 1914.

valued at £18,322, against bombardment for a premium of £38 2s. 3d.¹⁷⁵³ Local councils were responsible for extinguishing street lighting upon notice of an air raid being sounded and were charged with circulating air raid precautions to residents.¹⁷⁵⁴ A signal gun was positioned at Castle Hill, Tenby, despite fears that vibration would damage the Prince Albert Memorial.¹⁷⁵⁵ Fishguard residents were able to buy Zeppelin and Bombardment insurance against loss or damage to their property.¹⁷⁵⁶ Although Pembrokeshire civilians were never exposed to shelling or bombing the anxiety and fear were typical of the psychological impact of new weapons which were often greater than their physical effects, although the great majority of recorded cases occur within the first twelve months of war.¹⁷⁵⁷

The U-Boat Campaign off the Pembrokeshire Coast

The U-boat attacks in the Irish Sea and St George's Channel offered perhaps the most tangible and direct experience of war for Pembrokeshire civilians from February 1915 until the end of the war. It brought the war home to coastal communities even though as Herwig has argued, the rhetoric of total war, demonstrated by two periods of unrestricted submarine warfare, was strictly limited in its economic effects.¹⁷⁵⁸ Nevertheless, even with only twenty-seven operational boats on 18 February 1915, when British waters were declared a war zone, their presence was immediately

¹⁷⁵³ TMAG TEM/SE/30/9. Tenby Borough Corporation. Correspondence; 13 March 1916.

¹⁷⁵⁴ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16; 10 April 1916; HAM/SE/1/8 Haverfordwest Borough Corporation minutes 1908-17; 28 March 1916. In the event of an air raid a gun would be fired from Haverfordwest Castle.

¹⁷⁵⁵ TMAG TEM/SE/30/1. Tenby Borough Corporation Correspondence. In a letter to the Corporation dated 24 January 1919 G.D. Wells of Laston House complained of vibration damage to his property and so much noise was made on Armistice night that his valuable pullets did not lay for a month.

¹⁷⁵⁶ CE, 4 February 1915.

¹⁷⁵⁷ Ian F.W. Beckett, *The Making of the First World War* (London, 2012), 163.

¹⁷⁵⁸ Holger H. Herwig, 'Germany's U-Boat Campaign', in Chickering and Forster (eds), *Great War, Total War*, 205.

felt.¹⁷⁵⁹ The 166 German mines laid off south and west Wales were also a considerable danger.¹⁷⁶⁰ There were sightings of German submarines off Strumble Head lighthouse in March 1915 and there was also an alleged pursuit of the Red Cross vessel *St Andrew* which was reported in the newspapers.¹⁷⁶¹

The torpedoing of the RMS *Falaba* on 28 March 1915 by U-28 some 60 miles west of St Anne's Head resulted in 104 deaths (including an American, Leon Thrasher) and saw the survivors landed at Milford Haven. The SS *Aguila* shared the same fate the following day 50 miles off the Smalls; twenty members of the crew were landed at Fishguard.¹⁷⁶² Both sinkings attracted national coverage and could reasonably be expected to have magnified local fears. One correspondent reflected local concerns when he observed 'The German pirates are coming very close to Pembrokeshire'.¹⁷⁶³ The direct civilian interface with enemy action can be surmised from the sight of survivors, desperate conduits for fears being landed at local ports, the detritus of cargoes washed up on local beaches and the considerable military efforts to counter the U-boat peril.

The sinking of the *Lusitania* on 7 May 1915 with huge loss of life saw a handful of survivors land at Fishguard and local press describe the act as 'Satan at Work' and 'Greatest Sea Crime in History'.¹⁷⁶⁴ British and neutral shipping paid a fearful price with dozens of attacks in the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel. There were a number of losses. In 1915 the crews of *La Libertie*, *Indrani*, *Trudvang*, *Bellglade*, *Victoria*, *Voltaire* and *Olivia* were landed and effectively domiciled in Pembrokeshire for the

¹⁷⁵⁹ Gerd Hardach, *The First World War, 1914-1918* (London, 1977), 40.

¹⁷⁶⁰ Jim Crossley, *The Hidden Threat. The Story of Mines and Minesweeping by the Royal Navy in World War I* (Barnsley, 2011), 62; Captain T. Dorling *Swept Channels* (London, 1938).

¹⁷⁶¹ CE, 11 March 1915; 18 March 1915.

¹⁷⁶² TO, 8 April 1915; CE, 1 April 1915.

¹⁷⁶³ PCG, 2 April 1915.

¹⁷⁶⁴ CE, 13 May 1915.

duration of the war. Many more succumbed after the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare on 1 February 1917.¹⁷⁶⁵ A system of coast watching was witnessed across Pembrokeshire. At Newport on the north coast, three watchers were officially appointed by the Royal Navy complete with special armbands to denote their official status, similar to their colleagues at Manorbier (Illustration 32).¹⁷⁶⁶



Illustration: 32 The Manorbier Coast Watchers *circa* 1915.

Left to right: James Faithful; Tom Davies; Mr Morse of Jameston; ‘Captain’ James; Billy Lewis (a 70-year old mason); Bill Harries (a shoemaker of Jameston village).

Countermeasures included the creation of the Royal Navy base at Milford Haven (designated as HMS *Idaho*) where Admiral Charles Holcombe Dare hoisted his flag in February 1915 at Murray Crescent House. The base eventually controlled a fleet of

¹⁷⁶⁵ PRO D/RTM/10/4. Milford Docks Company. Notary Public Registers 1912-58. In excess of ten ships are listed in this document as having been lost in 1917 with survivors landed locally.

¹⁷⁶⁶ CE, 11 November 1915.

patrol boats, armed trawlers, minesweepers and armed yachts.¹⁷⁶⁷ (Illustration 33 shows the imposing Royal Naval Barracks at Milford Haven) It was an arduous campaign as signified with the 91 deaths at the naval base during the anti-submarine campaign.¹⁷⁶⁸ There was a perceptible increase in naval and aviation resources in Pembrokeshire from 1916 to counter U-boats which could leave little doubt that the war was indeed at hand.

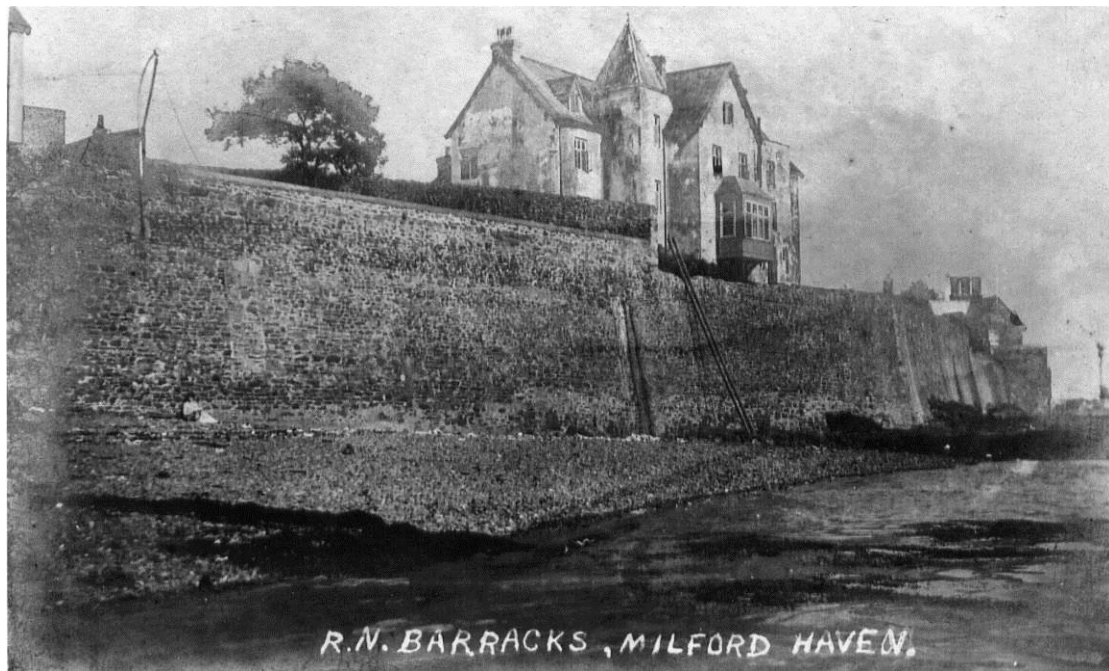


Illustration: 33 The Royal Navy Barracks at Milford Haven (Photograph courtesy of Milford Haven Museum).

Until 1916 little could be done to meet Admiralty concerns of submarines lying off Linney Head, Pembrokeshire, without molestation.¹⁷⁶⁹ Pembrokeshire residents had direct observation of military activity with the creation of RNAS Pembroke near Carew where airships and later fixed-wing aeroplanes mounted anti-submarine

¹⁷⁶⁷ Mckay, *A Vision of Greatness*, 217.

¹⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹⁷⁶⁹ Winston Churchill College Papers, Cambridge, CHAR/13/60/104; 30 January 1915. Telegram from Admiralty to Captain Superintendent of Pembroke Dockyard reporting enemy submarines cruising in the area for 15 to 48 hours unmolested. Asking for report on what patrols were doing to make it possible to lay off Linney Head without being attacked.

patrols. Some 228 acres of land were acquired for the base where the establishment eventually reached 350 men and 50 WRNS. Air patrols were a powerful contributor to deter and detect U-boats and were seen all over Pembrokeshire.¹⁷⁷⁰ The base was operational in 1916 with the first airship ascent noted by the vicar on 25 April 1916.¹⁷⁷¹ One wartime loss was SS15 off Lundy Island which had to be towed back to Freshwater East beach.¹⁷⁷² A RNAS seaplane base was established at Fishguard Harbour in 1917 from where contact, routine and emergency patrols were mounted from 1917.¹⁷⁷³ In one week in March 1918, aircraft undertook thirteen patrols covering 1,418 miles.¹⁷⁷⁴

A few Pembrokeshire people had contact with German submariners. One child recalled the quiet dignity and calmness in a German officer's eyes.¹⁷⁷⁵ Throughout the war the seas yielded a tragic harvest of submarine victims and debris of ships' cargoes. A barrel of fuel oil was washed up on to the landing stage of the Victoria Pier at Tenby while bags of candle wax, barrels of tallow, timber, onions and Spanish nuts came ashore at various locations.¹⁷⁷⁶ Customs officers recorded the retrieval of coconut oil, tar and a naval cap. The psychological impact of reporting and retrieving cadavers was a very real and raw experience of war. One coast guard officer at St David's dealt with twelve bodies in a short period.¹⁷⁷⁷ Perhaps the worst acquaintance with the realities of war occurred with the torpedoing of the SS *Hirano Maru*, a

¹⁷⁷⁰ Colonel John Abbatiello, 'The Myths and Realities of Air Anti-Submarine Warfare during the Great War', *Air Power Review*, 12:1 (2009), 22.

¹⁷⁷¹ William George Spurrell, *A History of Carew* (Carmarthen, 1921), 99.

¹⁷⁷² TNA AIR/1/436/15/275/1. Air Ministry: Royal Naval Air Service Station, Pembroke. Patrol reports and miscellaneous correspondence.

¹⁷⁷³ Martin Hale, *Fishguard's Great War Seaplanes* (Pembroke Dock, 2007), 4.

¹⁷⁷⁴ Alan Phillips, *Defending Wales. The Coast and Seaplanes in Wartime*. (Stroud, 2010), 50.

¹⁷⁷⁵ B. Morgan and B. Meyrick, *Behind The Light* (London, 1973), 69.

¹⁷⁷⁶ *TO*, 17 February 1916; *H&MHT*, 16 January 1918; *CE*, 24 January 1918.; TNA CUST 75/39. Board of Customs and Excise. Outport Records, Neyland, Milford Haven. Wreck and Disposal records 1917-19. Customs Officers recorded the retrieval of coconut oil, Stockholm tar, lubricating oil and a naval cap.

¹⁷⁷⁷ *PCG*, 15 November 1918.

Japanese liner of 8,520 tons, on 4 October 1918 with the death toll of 292 passengers and crew. No fewer than twenty- four victims were washed ashore on various local beaches during one month (16 October-18 November), including Shio Okoshi at Angle and nine more at Freshwater West and Chapel Bay.¹⁷⁷⁸ (Illustration 34) Half – a- dozen were interred at Dale.¹⁷⁷⁹ Bodies and wreckage which were washed up in St Bride’s Bay included a Japanese cork life jacket, bringing local finders in contact with the consequences of enemy action.¹⁷⁸⁰



Illustration: 34 The grave of a Japanese victim of the sinking of the *Hirano Maru* in Angle Churchyard.

The sheer extent of Milford Haven’s involvement with the U-boat menace was reflected in the work undertaken at John Cory’s Sailors’ Rest and Bethel. During the war the crews of 148 torpedoed vessels found succour there (with five crew in one day) with some 33,864 stays and meals to the value of £3,183 13s. 4d. served to

¹⁷⁷⁸ PRO HPR/103/4. Angle Parish burial registers 1902-93

¹⁷⁷⁹ PRO HPR/118/3. Dale Parish burial registers 1813-1958.

¹⁷⁸⁰ PH, 25 October 1918.

distressed mariners.¹⁷⁸¹ The tragedy of this direct wartime experience was well expressed in acts of kindness to the bodies of unknown sailors. One moving elegy was penned for an unknown man found near the St Elvis Rocks at Solva in March 1916:

‘Somebody’s darling, saved from the wave,

Think of him kindly; give him a grave.’¹⁷⁸²

Civilian – Military Contact

Direct military contact became the norm for local residents for the whole duration of the war, since living conditions for a significant proportion of the population were governed by the proclamation issued by the Fortress Commander of the Milford Haven Defences (which extended up to Fishguard) calling upon ‘all classes to co-operate loyally to carry out the foregoing instructions’.¹⁷⁸³ Within days of the outbreak of war the function of the county as a training base through a network of training camps, forts and other military bases provided an interface with civilians who witnessed regimental arrivals, drills, manoeuvres and departures for foreign service. Initially some 2,000 troops were based at Dale where an eight pm curfew (the mouth of the Haven was deemed an important strategic location) was enforced.¹⁷⁸⁴ A similar number were encamped at Scoveston Fort, while the RGA took up residence at Stack Rock, South Hook and Hubberston Fort where they were issued with war rations.¹⁷⁸⁵ By September Pembroke Dock had 10,000 young soldiers ‘about the place.’¹⁷⁸⁶ This extraordinary military influx was accommodated in new or expanded camps. Those at

¹⁷⁸¹ *H&MHT*, 26 February 1919.

¹⁷⁸² *PCG*, 3 March 1916.

¹⁷⁸³ *H&MHT*, 2 September 1914.

¹⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5 August 1914.

¹⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 12 August 1914; *CE*, 27 August 1914.

¹⁷⁸⁶ PRO D/BUSH/4/8. Bush Estate papers. Correspondence regarding the occupation of land by the military 1914-19; 26 September 1914. Letter from C.P. Triscott, General Commanding Western Coast Defences to the Bush Estate agent.

Dale were rapidly proceeding in January 1915 in Dale meadow (Illustration 35), with others at Scoveston, Llanion, Bangeston and Golden Hill. Penally had hut accommodation for 450 men.¹⁷⁸⁷



Illustration: 35 The large military camp erected at Dale Meadow in 1915.

Billeting was one war experience which had positive benefits for hosting individuals and communities through the payment of billeting allowances. Hosting soldiers and economic advantage were thus combined. Initially private houses were canvassed to ascertain spare rooms, while in some Pembrokeshire villages the troops were ‘packed in cottages like sardines in a box’.¹⁷⁸⁸ At least such contact afforded local people an opportunity to strike up friendships with men from elsewhere, a relationship continued through letters from the front. At Neyland a wide range of English North-country accents were noticeable, especially from Lancashire.¹⁷⁸⁹ YMCA facilities became widespread with special huts opened at Scoveston Fort, West Blockhouse,

¹⁷⁸⁷ *PCG*, 15 January 1915; *TO*; 12 November 1914.

¹⁷⁸⁸ *H&MHT*, 2 December 1914; *PH*, 14 August 1914.

¹⁷⁸⁹ *H&MHT*, 6 January 1915.

RNAS Pembroke, Tenby, Fishguard and others.¹⁷⁹⁰ Despite diversions and entertainments, postings could be dreary. One soldier related how he and his colleagues preferred the front rather than spend another tedious winter in Pembroke Dock.¹⁷⁹¹

The Tenby Borough council and tradesmen, eager to extend the scope of accommodation offered from seasonal tourists to the military, were quick to spot the lucrative potential of billeting. Proprietors of small guest houses speculatively purchased additional single beds in anticipation of the 17*s. 6d.* billet money paid per man, thereby ‘putting large sums of money into circulation’.¹⁷⁹² Representations to General Triscott were successful so that by February 1915 40 officers and 630 men were locally billeted, initially of 12 Royal Welsh Fusiliers, 2/7 Welsh Regiment (Cyclists) and 3/4 Kings Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI).¹⁷⁹³ The general verdict was that Tenby had never experienced such a prosperous winter as that of 1915-16.¹⁷⁹⁴ Other towns, including Fishguard, Narberth and Haverfordwest, advanced their own claims for a share in what could be interpreted as positive effects of war for the local economy.¹⁷⁹⁵

The interconnection between civilians and military was not without its tensions, the war years disclosing a critique of occasional trespass, drunkenness, fighting and damage to property. At Pembroke Dock a fracas between the KSLI and young

¹⁷⁹⁰ Ibid., 25 November 1914; *PCG*, 3 March 1916; Ibid., 28 July 1916; *TO*, 11 November 1915; *CE*, 31 May 1917.

¹⁷⁹¹ *PCG*, 12 November 1915.

¹⁷⁹² *TO*, 10 December 1914.

¹⁷⁹³ Ibid., 18 February 1915; Ibid., 21 October 1915; Ibid., 9 December 1915.

¹⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., 4 May 1916.

¹⁷⁹⁵ PRO FGU/SE/1/2. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1912-16, 14 December 1914 ‘that the claims of the district as a suitable place for the billeting of soldiers be placed before the proper authorities’; NAU/SE/2/3. Narberth Urban District Council minutes 1911-20; 5 January 1915. HAM/SE/1/8. Haverfordwest Borough Council minutes 1908-17; 22 September 1914. The town clerk was instructed to write to the War Office reminding them of the facilities of Haverfordwest as a training centre for a portion of the New Army.

dockyard apprentices had to be broken up by soldiers with fixed bayonets.¹⁷⁹⁶ Civilian responses to the military being so palpably in their midst are difficult to judge. The arrival of some of the wounded from Mons provided a ‘stirring sight’, although when a draught of troops left Pembroke Dock for the Front they merely received a perfunctory glance from townspeople.¹⁷⁹⁷ The arrival of wounded soldiers could be seen as a powerful impulse to assist in charitable activity, which we have previously referred to. The novelty of khaki, as we have noted in the previous chapter and the moral concerns for girls and young women of succumbing to ‘khaki fever,’ had long since worn off although the daily sight of sentries, travel and lighting restrictions provided a highly localised interpretation of the conflict which added to knowledge of the war constructed for them in the press.

Soldiers’ Written Views of Combat Transmitted Home

Letters from Pembrokeshire servicemen to loved ones at home represented perhaps the most personal and intimate mediation of combat and living conditions at the Front to civilians. Such communication was enormously important in maintaining morale.¹⁷⁹⁸ The mythic narrative of the war is that of the dividing line between military and civilian which could not be crossed, although Roper reminds us how relationship with home was a source of support in the battle for emotional survival. Despite the immense strain in maintaining such associations, writing to family did enable soldiers to revive personal memories of home.¹⁷⁹⁹ This connectivity was not without its tragic irony. The efficient forces postal service, Fussell argues, was a satire

¹⁷⁹⁶ *H&MHT*, 13 September 1916.

¹⁷⁹⁷ *CE*, 17 September 1914; *PCG*, 9 June 1916.

¹⁷⁹⁸ Peter Doyle, *Tommy’s War. British Military Memorabilia 1914-1918* (Ramsbury, 2008), 153.

¹⁷⁹⁹ Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle. Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009), 51.

on the misery of the troops in their ‘ironic, close exile’.¹⁸⁰⁰ The extent to which soldiers felt estranged or alienated from civilians on account of the horrors which they had witnessed is maintained by Fussell and Leed, although Bourke and McCartney have challenged the extent of the gulf between them.¹⁸⁰¹ Monger adds how many of the disillusionment stories actually developed after the war, as veterans reacted to the disappointments of post-war society with the failure of social reform, demobilisation and unemployment.¹⁸⁰²

The separateness between Pembrokeshire military and civilians was not as vast as the traditional narrative maintains. The local press demonstrated a vital link between the home front and battlefield and consequently British civilians were surprisingly well informed.¹⁸⁰³ The graphic and often brutal realities of combat are encountered in dozens of letters from Pembrokeshire soldiers and sailors, especially during the first eighteen months, mainly written to relatives and friends and passed on to the press for publication to remind civilians of the sacrifices being made for them and to generate support for the war effort.

The sheer scale of modern war awed Bob Trowsdale of Solva with its endless ammunition columns, artillery, ambulance cars, troop battalions and columns of German prisoners. An ex-journalist himself, he wrote a moving account to his schoolmaster friend, of ‘the vernal freshness of the young crops, the soft brown colouring of the warm earth, the red-tiled farmsteads as the apple and hawthorn

¹⁸⁰⁰ Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 65.

¹⁸⁰¹ Roper, *The Secret Battle*, 8. Helen McCarthy and Joanna Bourke argue how far from being separated from their civilian identities by their war experiences, British soldiers remained deeply rooted in them and sought to return swiftly to them after the war. Helen McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorial in the First World War* (Cambridge, 2005); Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men’s Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996).

¹⁸⁰² David Monger, ‘Soldiers, Propaganda and ideas of Home and Community in First World War Britain’, *Cultural and Social History*, 8:3 (2011), 331.

¹⁸⁰³ Michael Finn, ‘Local Heroes: war news and the Construction of ‘Community’ in Britain, 1914-1918’, *HR*, 83:221 (2008), 520.

created a beautiful bloom'.¹⁸⁰⁴ There were some remarkably frank accounts of heavy casualties sustained. Lieutenant Arthur Williams of Milford Haven had only had 40 men left in front of uncut German wire while being shelled.¹⁸⁰⁵ Private Edwin Thomas related how only 270 men of the original 1,000 were left unscathed as the Germans fired 'Jack Johnson's' on their lines.¹⁸⁰⁶ 'It was a miracle how any of our infantry were left after the first battle;' Sapper J.L. Adams candidly admitted in describing the first Battle of Gaza as men charged over 6,000 yards of open ground as Turkish machine guns played along the lines with men 'falling everywhere'.¹⁸⁰⁷ Personal thoughts of first going into battle were often imbued with bravado. Sergeant Derham likened the anticipation to the experience of putting on a pair of boxing gloves.¹⁸⁰⁸ Private Oliver of Haverfordwest candidly disclosed: 'I have given up worrying'.¹⁸⁰⁹ Lieutenant Williams of Broad Haven vividly described: 'Although our trench was being shelled and swept with bullets like hail, our men never hesitated for a second, but went over the top of the trench like one man. Two each side of me were shot dead as we got out. I got 80 yards from the German line, and saw that their barbed wire was uncut, and knew at once that we could do nothing.' The cream of his battalion lay in heaps in front of the trench. The article, published during the currency of the Derby Scheme, was entitled: 'How Pembrokeshire Men Can Die,' it was hardly conducive to voluntary enlistment and shows a remarkable frankness before the censorship of letters home from 1916. The letters were mostly written to family at home who passed them on to the press, although occasionally they were written directly to local newspapers. Responses to such narratives are difficult to gauge although the message

¹⁸⁰⁴ *PCG*, 18 June 1915.

¹⁸⁰⁵ *H&MHT*, 13 October 1915.

¹⁸⁰⁶ *CE*, 3 June 1915.

¹⁸⁰⁷ *H&MHT*, 6 June 1917.

¹⁸⁰⁸ *PCG*, 29 October 1915.

¹⁸⁰⁹ *H&MHT*, 29 September 1915.

was clear, to emphasise the scale of loss and suffering which local men were experiencing and the reality of war. Writing their experiences must have been a cathartic release for those in combat.

Positive and patriotic messages were often conveyed. James John of Pembroke thought the strength of the British guns were enough to blow the whiskers off the Kaiser's face, adding 'the end will come now, any time.'¹⁸¹⁰ Private Phillips of Pembroke Dock wishfully wrote 'the end will come now, any time'.¹⁸¹¹ Soldiers' letters conveyed more humanity than war conditions might suggest. Thus Eddie Rosser of Clynderwen felt pity for the crew of the German cruiser SMS *Blucher* sinking at Heligoland in January 1915.¹⁸¹² Other letters vividly described trench rats as big as cats, bullets buzzing like bees, near misses, snipers, skies raining shrapnel, distressed refugees and devastated villages. Local soldiers on active service eagerly anticipated the local *Telegraph* arriving every Sunday avidly reading 'for news of Haverfordwest and its people.'¹⁸¹³ The vagaries of war combined with the unpredictability of postal communication to create tragic ironies. The wife of Private Harry Gaunt of Prendergast received a letter from him four days after his death at Mons in which: 'Every child I see brings back memories of Haverfordwest and home.'¹⁸¹⁴ Mr and Mrs Thomas of Robeston, Milford Haven, received two letters in the same delivery, one from their son Edwin, which they read first, conveying the reassuring news 'I am quite well and enjoying life', while the second from his company commander conveyed news of his death.¹⁸¹⁵

¹⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2 April 1915.

¹⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*, 22 October 1915.

¹⁸¹² *CE*, 4 March 1915.

¹⁸¹³ *H&MHT*, 15 November 1916.

¹⁸¹⁴ Scott, *When the Poppies Bloom Again*, 19.

¹⁸¹⁵ *CE*, 3 February 1916.

Sights, Artefacts and the Imagination of the Child

The classroom and school yard could be locations where children's imagination about the war could be stimulated. Organised propaganda and patriotic schemes of work aside, school logbooks reveal instances where elementary school children came into contact with artefacts, souvenirs, captured weapons and the like, serving soldiers or became acquainted with military technology. Historians have tended to neglect this material cultural aspect of experiences on the home front. At Bosherton children came into contact with a German oil tank (presumably from a submarine) washed up at Broad Haven and used by them as a sketching and mathematics object lesson.¹⁸¹⁶

The children of Stackpole were sent to Barafundle Beach to gather up the coal washed up from a sunken ship.¹⁸¹⁷

The war brought the novelty of airships and aircraft over the skies of the county. The sense of awe and sense of wonderment in the minds of the young can only be guessed at. The children of Camrose North School saw an 'English airship' above the horizon on 9 June 1916 and they watched attentively until it disappeared from view.¹⁸¹⁸ Those attending Jordanston and Llangwm schools had similar experiences recorded while at Martletwy every child saw their very first aeroplane on 31 May 1916.¹⁸¹⁹

Occasionally children could handle artefacts from the conflict. At Wiston School a general knowledge lesson centred upon a four-inch shrapnel case, rifle cartridges and even fragments of stained glass from Ypres Cathedral.¹⁸²⁰ Visits from servicemen to their old elementary schools afforded an opportunity to recount stirring tales of battle

¹⁸¹⁶ PRO SSR/1/3/2. Bosherton National School Logbook 1900-23; 4 June 1915.

¹⁸¹⁷ PRO SSR/1/145/3. Stackpole Elidor National School Logbook 1906-38; 30 November 1916.

¹⁸¹⁸ PRO SSR/1/12/2. Camrose North Council School Logbook 1914-28; 9 June 1916.

¹⁸¹⁹ PRO SSR/1/52/2. Jordanston, Llanstitinan and Manowen National School Logbook 1900-18; 2 May 1917. The Head Teacher recorded the time of 9.30 am, 'all the scholars saw it distinctly.' SSR/1/27/1. Llangwm-Hook Council School 1914-25; 24 May 1916; SSR/1/22/2 Martletwy Voluntary National School Logbook 1914-52; 31 May 1916.

¹⁸²⁰ PRO SSR/1/87/1. Wiston National School Logbook 1899-1922; 27 September 1915.

to the youngsters. Private Samuel James showed the scholars of his old school at St David's German and British gas masks, while at Martletwy privates Cole and Jenkins spoke to the class having come 'straight from the trenches'.¹⁸²¹ A rousing welcome was afforded to Private Robert Morris of the 3rd Welsh at Lampeter Velfrey when he related how he had been wounded 29 times, including sixteen bullets taken out of his body.¹⁸²² With the proliferation of military camps around Pembrokeshire there were many new distractions for young boys which reflected in pupil absences. A sense of relief was sounded by the Head Teacher of Prendergast School, who recording the departure of 5th Welsh Regiment, hoped it would improve attendance.¹⁸²³

Children's experiences of viewing the machinery of war were an important part of their formative years even in remote localities like Pembrokeshire where there was very little likelihood of them being physically affected by combat. Hitherto this important aspect of cultural experience has not been encountered and so represents a novel expansion of knowledge into juvenile experiences.

War Trophies

Whether appropriated for individuals or community display, the acquisition of trophies or souvenirs provided an abstract connectivity to many without experience of actual fighting. Cornish defines 'trophy' as an object seized by force from the enemy, whether purely symbolic or practical, as distinct from items scavenged from the

¹⁸²¹ PRO SSR/1/14/2. St David's- Carnhedryn Board School Logbook 1894-1918; 1 October 1917. Private Samuel James also related his combat experiences to the pupils; SSR/1/22/2. Martletwy National school Logbook 1914-52; 18 January 1917.

¹⁸²² PRO SSR/1/74/3. Lampeter Velfrey-Tavernspite National School 1905-23; 18 November 1915.

¹⁸²³ PRO SSR/1/58/4. Prendergast Boys' Board School 1911-41; 30 April 1915. On 14 December 1914 the Head Teacher mused over how the Fair, Christmas and the arrival of over 1,000 soldiers for assembly and drill in the Jubilee Gardens had played havoc with attendance.

battlefield.¹⁸²⁴ There was an almost insatiable appetite for trophies, from the prized pickelhaube to fragments of shell, weapons and even boots.¹⁸²⁵ Further, the display of captured enemy weapons, especially tanks and guns, symbolised military victory and bolstered civilian morale. It also spoke a great deal about the commemoration and memorialisation of the war. Towns and cities across Britain were afforded a supply of such prestige objects usually gratis, except for transportation costs.¹⁸²⁶ British soldiers were keenly acquisitive, a trait shared by their Pembrokeshire comrades. One Haverfordwest soldier, Private Stanley Devereux, expressed his desire to ‘get a few helmets’.¹⁸²⁷ Local soldiers returned on leave bringing items from France and Flanders for public display. Mr Tom Birch, outfitter of High Street, Haverfordwest, exhibited time fuses, spent shells and cartridges in his window.¹⁸²⁸ The reasons for soldiers to place such store in these items perhaps stemmed from a desire to memorialise their own war service. When Private T.A. Williams of Neyland, a gas victim, returned home in 1915 he took with him all manner of shells and German swords.¹⁸²⁹ Even fragments of shell were endowed with exceptional symbolic powers. When Thomas Howard Woodruffe married at Llanstadwell Church in 1916 his bride wore a gold pendant containing a fragment of a German shell which had hit his vessel, HMS *Arethusa*, at Heligoland Bight on 28 August 1914.¹⁸³⁰

Considerable quantities of captured enemy *materiel* were given to Lords Lieutenant to distribute after the defeat of the Central Powers. Viscount St David’s had at his disposal some 400 German rifles, bayonets, body armour, entrenching tools and mess

¹⁸²⁴ Paul Cornish ‘Just a Boyish Habit’...British and Commonwealth War Trophies in the First World War’, Nicholas J. Saunders and Paul Cornish (eds), *Contested Objects. Material Memories of the Great War* (London, 2009), 11.

¹⁸²⁵ Doyle, *Tommy’s War*, 171.

¹⁸²⁶ Cornish, ‘Just a Boyish Habit...’ 15.

¹⁸²⁷ *H&MHT*, 8 September 1915.

¹⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*, 24 November 1915.

¹⁸²⁹ *PCG*, 10 December 1915.

¹⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 April 1916.

tins which he made available to local organisations.¹⁸³¹ Local schools were keen to acquire some booty. The Haverfordwest Grammar School answered his circular by requesting two German rifles, one German bayonet, a German helmet, wire cutters, body armour and entrenching tools.¹⁸³² Borough and district councils wanted to possess German artillery pieces as a clear statement of military victory. Such ordnance started to arrive in December 1918. Sixteen German field guns, some painted with camouflage captured by the New Zealanders and Australians, arrived at Pembroke Dock and aroused considerable public interest.¹⁸³³ At Tenby the two German guns were put on display at Tudor Square with another at Narberth (Illustration 36), while Milford Haven council expressed the wish for a British tank rather than the German machine gun and mount which they had been offered.¹⁸³⁴



Illustration: 36 Master Lee-Davies sitting on a captured German field gun at Narberth in 1918 (Photograph courtesy of Narberth Museum).

¹⁸³¹ *H&MHT*, 7 May 1919.

¹⁸³² PRO PCC/ED/10/6. Pembrokeshire County Council Education Committee. Circular 32/19, 17 May 1919. The list of available war trophies also included eleven sets of body armour and four Turkish bayonets.

¹⁸³³ *PCG*, 13 December 1918.

¹⁸³⁴ *TO*, 26 December 1918; PRO MHU/SE/1/1. Minutes of Milford Haven Urban District Council 1918-21; 20 June 1919.

Fishguard council were happy to accept a German gun which they put at Penslade where it was neatly railed and painted.¹⁸³⁵ St David's gladly accepted two German guns and machine guns.¹⁸³⁶ Civilian desire to acquire such weapons was perhaps not matched by ex-servicemen who had so often endured risk to life and limb from them. The triumph over the U-boats was made manifest when U-112 was surrendered and entered Milford Docks and thrown open to public view for a modest entrance fee. (Illustration 37) Some £123 was thus raised for war charities.¹⁸³⁷ War trophies represented military victory in an unprecedentedly destructive conflict and memorialised the war.



Illustration: 37 U-112 in Milford Docks in December 1918.

Artefacts from the war continued to be valued as communion with the conflict, whether the owner had seen active service or not. One visitor to the coastal village of Marloes some years after the war noted how almost every house and cottage had some

¹⁸³⁵ PRO FGU/SE/1/3. Fishguard Urban District Council minutes 1916-21; 17 December 1918; *PT*, 23 June 1920.

¹⁸³⁶ *H&MHT*, 12 February 1919.

¹⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 15 January 1919.

memento of the devastating U-boat campaign in their homes.¹⁸³⁸ War trophies also expressed a strong commemoration of the war which probably equalled the motive to celebrate victory through the appropriation of the enemy's principal weapons.

Pembrokeshire's remote position to the far west of the British Isles rendered it unlikely that its civilian population would be directly or physically affected by aerial attack; indeed the inhabitants never experienced the trauma of shelling or bombing. However, its maritime position in the front line of the U-boat attacks in the Irish Sea exposed civilians living in coastal locations to the harsh realities of war through witnessing the landing of survivors of torpedoed vessels. Moreover, the geographical position gave rise in the early months of the war to a fear of German invasion, fears which helped to stoke the spy mania during August and September 1914. Pembrokeshire civilian experiences of war, whether actual, through contact with U-boat victims, or imagined through war and spy scares, or the sight of new war weapons, were a reminder of the blurring of identities between combatants and civilians which was a trend well accelerated during the war.¹⁸³⁹ It was perhaps the psychological trauma of this, the first occurrence of mass death, which was the most pervasive link between the Western and Home fronts. In this sense there was a very real connection between the 'imagined' and material aspects of war. The publication of soldiers' letters provides perhaps the most effective insight into the harsh realities and chimerical nature of war. One Tenby officer wrote to his wife: 'Some of the big shells are whistling over our heads every now and then as I write, but we are pretty safe so far'.¹⁸⁴⁰ The theme of sacrifice was evident in the correspondence sent by

¹⁸³⁸ *PT*, 14 May 1925.

¹⁸³⁹ Susan Kingsley Kent, 'Love and Death. War and Gender in Britain, 1914-1918', in Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (Oxford, 2006), 160.

¹⁸⁴⁰ *TO*, 3 December 1914.

Lieutenant Kear of the Border Regiment, another native of Tenby, to a friend at Pembroke. Describing their casualties as 365 killed and wounded, he added ‘You can see the price is heavy but there is only one thing to do and this is to stick to it. It would never do to allow these brutes to reach our shores. One has just to glance around this wretched country.’¹⁸⁴¹ The war was made intelligible to nerve-wracked relatives whose lot was an onerous and unavoidable burden, ‘every day, every hour...they probe the unknown’.¹⁸⁴²

¹⁸⁴¹ Ibid., 3 June 1915.

¹⁸⁴² J. M. Winter, ‘Communities in Mourning,’ in *Authority, Identity and the Great War*, 327.

CONCLUSION

Christmas 1918 witnessed a relaxation of Government regulations which had prescribed so many aspects of public life since 1914. The presence of military bases and installations within the county meant that its inhabitants had keenly experienced a range of security restrictions, not least regarding travel and lighting. Pembrokeshire residents welcomed the generous leave granted to their local servicemen, the availability of imported apples, cakes and pastries, double butchers' meat allowance and the blazing, unobscured lights of shop windows.¹⁸⁴³ The Pembrokeshire home front had survived the travails and challenges of a world undamaged by enemy action, nevertheless there were manifestations of social, economic and political change which occurred during the previous 51 months. In excess of 30,000 acres of land had been taken under cultivation; municipal allotments proliferated, as did the dictates of food and fuel control committees. The sight of women working in novel, paid positions, and the fielding of Labour Party candidates and growth of farm labourers' unions during the war seemed to point to changed political realities. Marwick's metaphor of the war as a flood which swept away old Britain and created a new society is well known, as is his assertion of the fortresses of prejudice crumbling in its wake. These Whiggish interpretations of British history where wars generate social change, were concepts well attuned to the decade in which they were postulated, but cannot be supported from the evidence from this Pembrokeshire study.¹⁸⁴⁴

It is clear that no simple impact of the war on social and economic life can be measured with tendencies, counter-tendencies and movements, according to Reid,

¹⁸⁴³ *CE*, 19 December 1918.

¹⁸⁴⁴ Hartmut Berghoff and Robert Friedburg, 'Reconstructing or Reshaping Pre-War Britain? The Repercussions of the Great War', Berghoff and Friedburg (eds), *Change and Inertia*, 11; Marwick, *Women at War*, 157; Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992), 6.

making for sectoral unevenness.¹⁸⁴⁵ Beckett reminds us that the question of social change is not mere comparison between the post- and pre-war worlds, but rather the post-war world with how society might have evolved if there had been no war. He adds for good measure how little long-term impact upon society the war actually had with long-term structural trends being more significant.¹⁸⁴⁶

The new bodies entrusted with administering wartime regulations opened a door for Labour people in Pembrokeshire for the first time to share in the running of their localities. Their appointment to the bench was highly significant in challenging the old social order. In 1916 the Labour Party emerged and made inroads into the traditional political landscape which were modest. Furthermore, no post-war surge in Labour support occurred in either parliamentary or local elections so as to threaten the hold of the Liberals or indeed, the Conservatives, who retook the seat in 1924. Unlike the strong and rampant Labour gains made in parliamentary elections post-1918 in industrial areas of Wales, staying with the Liberals was a feature of Welsh rural constituencies, but in Pembrokeshire also the Anglicised, Anglican communities of the south ensured a good Conservative vote. Within the field of industrial labour, the war also had an enormous impact on Pembrokeshire farm labourers, who for the first time-as in other Welsh rural counties-organised themselves into branches of the Agricultural Labourers' unions, significantly with the backing of the Pembrokeshire Labour Party. In England certain areas had seen farm labourers' unions from the 'Revolt of the Field' from the 1870s as identified by Dunbabin.¹⁸⁴⁷ This new outlook among labourers was an awakening from the earlier passivity and obeisance and affected a major rupture in the old pre-war paternalist relations between labourers and

¹⁸⁴⁵ Alastair Reid, 'The Impact of the First World War on British Workers', in Wall and Winter (eds), *The Upheaval of War. Family, Work and Welfare in Europe 1914-18*, 227.

¹⁸⁴⁶ Beckett, *The Great War, 1914-1918*, 342.

¹⁸⁴⁷ J.P.D. Dunbabin, *Rural Discontent in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1974).

their masters. The impact of the war on Pembrokeshire society was heightened and intensified by virtue of its geographical and maritime position giving rise to a strong military presence. This, in turn, necessitated more stringent security restrictions upon the civilian population. Many of these quickly disbanded after 1919 and so much of the expanded bureaucracy was a strictly temporary phenomenon, although the state's curbing of public drinking was still in force until the national legislation of the early 2000s. The picture presented in Pembrokeshire is of qualified gains by the lower paid, agricultural labourers and municipal roadmen. They did proportionately better than most, especially when it is remembered how the introduction of separation allowances brought direct benefits.¹⁸⁴⁸ The impact of the war on living standards was catholic, although actual experiences were highly diverse and depended upon region, chronology and occupation. The decline in poverty was in many ways transitory but Waites argues it did affect class structure.¹⁸⁴⁹ The old apparatus of workhouse and outdoor relief were quite incapable of meeting the national economic downturn which saw more than 1.2 million people in receipt of relief by 1921.¹⁸⁵⁰

The war raised expectations of long-term revival of farming in Pembrokeshire as a strategic sector demanding special Government protection. One local correspondent was certain the war had been the means of elevating agriculture to its proper status.¹⁸⁵¹ The creation of the Forestry Commission (1919) and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (1920) augured well. Such hopes did not survive the economic slump. The 1920 Agriculture Act which had promised guaranteed prices for four years was abandoned (along with minimum wage regulations), constituting the

¹⁸⁴⁸ *PCG*, 22 October 1915.

¹⁸⁴⁹ Waites, *Class Society at War*, 279.

¹⁸⁵⁰ Rose, *English Poor Laws*, 292.

¹⁸⁵¹ *CE*, 30 March 1916.

‘Great Betrayal’ which soured relations for decades.¹⁸⁵² Pembrokeshire farming in the 1920s and 1930s had fallen very far from the apogee of wartime prosperity. Howell detects a shift to milk production as a result of the ‘disturbed plight’ of most agricultural sectors from the late 1920s to the end of the 1930s.¹⁸⁵³

Pembrokeshire businesses were faced with stimuli and limitations in almost equal measure. Prosperity could be highly localised. At Pembroke Dock, wartime dockyard wages meant prospects had never been brighter.¹⁸⁵⁴ Attempts to promote a munitions factory at the Marsh, Haverfordwest or a local toy industry were unsuccessful.¹⁸⁵⁵ Those firms depending upon peacetime customer demand suffered severely. Thus Charles Young, a builder, who formerly employed 40 men, only had six left on the payroll in 1916.¹⁸⁵⁶ Adaptation was the keystone of local commercial responses to war, as best demonstrated by the Milford Dock Company in its desire to tap into the lucrative nitrate import trade from 1916.

Pembrokeshire’s geographical and maritime position had a direct bearing on the economic experiences. In the first place perhaps the desire to escape the realities of war accounted for the buoyant tourist industry at Tenby, especially from 1917, while the Milford Haven Dock Company sought to capitalise on new war-driven opportunities. The presence of so many military camps resulted in a considerable investment in the road network which was a great boon after 1918.

Women’s wartime credit was short lived. Even before demobilisation attitudes against

¹⁸⁵² R.J. Moore-Colyer, ‘Farming in Depression. Wales Between the Wars, 1919-1939’, *AgHR*, 46:2 (1998), 178.

¹⁸⁵³ Howell, ‘Farming in Pembrokeshire 1815-1974’, 100.

¹⁸⁵⁴ *PCG*, 26 February 1915.

¹⁸⁵⁵ *PH*, 13 October 1916.

¹⁸⁵⁶ *PCG*, 20 October 1916.

the ‘temporary men’ hardened perceptively.¹⁸⁵⁷ The Fishguard branch of the DSSA deplored the tendency for female labour at the presumed expense of more deserving ex-servicemen. Later, the executive committee of the Comrades of the Great War protested against the continued retention of female employees.¹⁸⁵⁸ Local wartime gains evaporated as women were exhorted to go back home. In Pembrokeshire the overall number of females employed was 8,720, 2,500 fewer than before the war. In some cases the services of married women workers were dispensed with. Convention required the return of the ‘angel’ to the home, or as Beddoe has noted, enforced domestic service elsewhere.¹⁸⁵⁹ It is difficult to generalise for the fortunes of a whole gender although it hard to think that all local gains were lost. Perhaps the greatest determinants of progress were the individual variables of class, education and occupation.

Nor is it easy to confirm Winter’s overall analysis of the improvement of civilian health in Pembrokeshire. Mothers and infants surely benefitted from greater expenditure and the securing of housing at the top of the political agenda promised much. It might be that the less abundant alcohol, sugar shortages and dwindling supplies of tobacco, all incidences found in the county, did help to cut cirrhosis and diabetes rates.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the war was the state’s greater responsibility towards the health of the citizen. It is not possible to quantify the psychological consequences caused by the widespread anxiety, depression and grief felt by millions attending on the possible death or injury of loved ones. Here the legacy of war was at

¹⁸⁵⁷ *CE*, 18 April 1918.

¹⁸⁵⁸ *H&MHT*, 17 June 1919.

¹⁸⁵⁹ Deirdre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty. Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (London, 1989), 5.

its most ecumenical.¹⁸⁶⁰ On the other hand, as throughout Britain, there was a discernible rise in the incidence of tuberculosis, a terrible scourge with high rates in Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire in 1918. Highlighting its intensity in certain Welsh counties, figures for death rates for Caernarfon, Merioneth, Cardigan, Pembroke and Carmarthen were the most stricken of all counties in England and Wales.¹⁸⁶¹

Nor is it possible to ascribe fundamental changes to individual identities during the war. Expressions of identity, like that of the concept of patriotism itself, can be both flexible and diverse. Although Stapleton argues for avoiding elision between ‘citizenship’ and ‘patriotism,’ there is no doubt individual’s perceptions of themselves did lead to a wide range of activities which were founded on their basic motivation to express solidarity with the state, whether as ameliorating war through charity, voluntary military service, horticulture or indeed in the classroom.¹⁸⁶² Charitable endeavour was a significant element of self-expression before, during and after the war, greatly aiding the state to bear the burden during the crisis and helped to mobilise national resources and the social capital required to win the war.¹⁸⁶³ Each participant laid his or her very own claim to citizenship even if this was not explicitly stated. Pembrokeshire children played a full role in the war effort through the support of philanthropy and boosting community solidarity through class-driven objectives. Yet, some older children were labelled juvenile delinquents, manifestly a general moral panic as a reaction to uncertain times. The war led to a re-evaluation of the role of adolescents in society, especially during the era when ‘Reconstruction’ was more than just a pipe dream, promising national efficiency and social democracy in which

¹⁸⁶⁰ Jones, *Health and Society*, 53.

¹⁸⁶¹ D.W. Howell and C. Baber, ‘Wales’, in F.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950, Vol. 1, Regions and Communities* (Cambridge, 1990), 295-6.

¹⁸⁶² Julia Stapleton, ‘Citizenship versus Patriotism in Twentieth-century England’, *HJ*, 48:1 (2005).

¹⁸⁶³ Grant, ‘An Infinity of Personal Sacrifice’, 88.

everyone had a part to play.¹⁸⁶⁴ The absence of personal diaries and correspondence makes such evaluation of changing class consciousness (difficult at the best of times) exceedingly difficult for Pembrokeshire. One early example of class levelling and described as such, was a conversation between an officer and a private soldier when discussing war news outside the County Club at Haverfordwest.¹⁸⁶⁵ Perhaps the talk of social levelling can easily be overstated. One Tenby lady took umbrage when her child was photographed with the ‘common herd’ in an Armistice Day parade in Tenby which prompted one commentator to remark that the lady was unaware that those days the local ‘classes’ should assimilate with the ‘local masses’. Even in 1918, Tenby, it was claimed, received premier honours in the whole of south Wales for snobbery.¹⁸⁶⁶ Female citizenship and their very own rendition of patriotism had a different meaning to that of men. Theirs was a voluntary endeavour with no legal compulsion to that which conscripted men. It did at least produce the opportunity to forge a new relationship with the nation state in which they were at last, but not completely, accorded the rights of political citizenship.¹⁸⁶⁷ On this account, at least, there was no return to the pre-war world. Despite the accusations of amateur dabbling at soldiering, wanting the uniform and status without the commitment of regular soldiers, the VTC represented both civic culture and the tension between the centralising state and localities. They advanced the argument for pluralism in patriotic service based on local definitions and complex attitudes of class and self-perception.¹⁸⁶⁸ The new allotment culture was a mode of patriotism which endured after 1918. Legislation of 1920, 1922 and 1925 protected plot holders against arbitrary

¹⁸⁶⁴ Harry Hendrick, *Images of Youth. Age, Class and the Male Youth Problem, 1880-1920* (Oxford, 1990), 219.

¹⁸⁶⁵ *H&MHT*, 21 October 1914.

¹⁸⁶⁶ *TO*, 28 November 1918.

¹⁸⁶⁷ Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 117.

¹⁸⁶⁸ Osborne, ‘Defining Their Own Patriotism’, 72.

ejection and testified to the popularity of the movement.¹⁸⁶⁹ In 1919 Haverfordwest had almost 100 plot holders geographically well-distributed at Merlin's Hill, St Thomas Green, Prendergast, Scotchwell and Scarrowscant.¹⁸⁷⁰ Allotment cultivation was a long-lasting post-war habit and could arguably be interpreted as a form of loyalty, assisting in the production of foodstuffs, where the language of patriotism could be spoken in many tongues, extending our understanding of the manifold forms of duty and service.¹⁸⁷¹

The war was communicated by a variety of media, contacts with 'others', propaganda events, cinema and messages from the pulpit and through contact with objects of everyday life. The war did not discernibly weaken Pembrokeshire churches and the 1920s demonstrates how they retained their vitality with an almost endless calendar of anniversaries, Sunday school events, guilds, choirs and temperance organisations. The great web of churches and chapels across the country of the various denominations began shrinking only in the 1960s. Nor did the numbers attending appreciably diminish. Trinity Congregational Church at Pembroke Dock gave thanks for the 'great ingathering of so many young people'. In November 1918 they welcomed fifteen new members into fellowship.¹⁸⁷² The overt emotionalism witnessed in the Evan Roberts Revival of 1904-5 seemed oddly out of place after 1918, as at evangelical services conducted by W.H. Griffiths, a converted miner, at the North Road Baptist Chapel, Milford Haven. The edifice was crowded, but gone were the emotional outbursts and replaced by a reflective and deeply spiritual atmosphere, where 'many individual

¹⁸⁶⁹ Joanna Bourke, *Working-Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1960* (London, 1994), 87.

¹⁸⁷⁰ *H&MHT*, 15 January 1919.

¹⁸⁷¹ Hugh Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism, 1750-1914', *History Workshop Journal*, 12 (1981).

¹⁸⁷² PRO DFC/C/1/1. Trinity Congregational Church, Pembroke Dock minutes 1908-27; 24 November 1918.

decisions were made’.¹⁸⁷³

Possibly the mental horizons of Pembrokeshire residents expanded due to notably widespread exposure to other nationalities, although responses to aliens were shaped by a variety of cultural and social factors. Whereas anti-German demonstrations occurred in some English cities this was not the picture in Pembrokeshire. Some aliens never left the county. Several lumbermen succumbed to the great influenza pandemic at Nevern, while at Slebech, Edward Renowsky, a 28- year-old Latvian, who had battled German submarines in the Mediterranean (where he was badly injured), ended up at Slebech Timber Camp. With tragic pathos he died and was buried in Slebech churchyard, ‘far from home and all he held dear’.¹⁸⁷⁴

National consciousness was far from clear-cut in post-war Pembrokeshire. While generally the war sharpened a sense of Welsh national consciousness, the linguistic divisions between north and south Pembrokeshire gave rise to separate responses, a lack of enthusiasm for Welsh nationalism and the Welsh language in the south. In 1919 Milford Haven council agreed that St George’s Day be officially celebrated.¹⁸⁷⁵ Viewed from a wider perspective, the war did not appreciably change the negotiation of multiple identities, Welsh, British, Imperial, with a strong sense of unresolvedness characterising the reality of a United Kingdom identity.¹⁸⁷⁶

The war did mark a shift in the psychology of celebration found in the pageantry of propagandist rituals and celebrations. When news of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919 was announced there were subdued celebrations but

¹⁸⁷³ Ibid., 20 November 1919.

¹⁸⁷⁴ Ibid., 7 August 1918.

¹⁸⁷⁵ PRO MHU/SE/1/1. Milford Haven Urban District Council minutes 1918-21.

¹⁸⁷⁶ Jan Ruger, ‘Nation, Empire and Navy: identity Politics in the United Kingdom 1887-1914’, *P&P*, 185 (2004), 160-163.

nothing of the ‘Mafeking’ raucous exhibitionism of a generation before. The subdued enthusiasm was on account of the sobering thought of the sheer cost of the great struggle.¹⁸⁷⁷ The peace celebrations featured the inevitable sports, bonfires and carnivals, although even then there was no effusive, unrestrained celebration of militarism or indeed jubilation against a beaten foe. Rather a tone of ‘deep thanksgiving’.¹⁸⁷⁸

The national media exerted a growing influence on the cultural habits and practices of localities like Pembrokeshire. In this regard the national press, but especially the cinema, which had come into its own during wartime, not least with the screening of stirring wartime-battle films, saw unabated enthusiasm and popularity for decades to come. When the Chaplin classic *Shoulder Arms* was screened at Milford Haven huge crowds came flooding to the cinema.¹⁸⁷⁹ Imitation was the sincerest form of flattery at Fishguard and Goodwick in October 1920 where Charlie Chaplin moustaches were all the rage, a reminder of cinema’s enduring power to mould individual vision and outlook.¹⁸⁸⁰ The presence of so many troops, especially at Pembroke Dock meant that sporting events had a distinctly military flavour.

Along with religious practices, pre-war sporting norms were quickly resumed after the conflict. Golf recovered from its lowest ebb with signs of renewal by June 1919. The Haverfordwest club decided to engage a young professional and reinstate that portion of the course which had been given over to corn growing in 1917.¹⁸⁸¹ Likewise, after the lapse of five years, hunting was in full swing in Pembrokeshire in 1919. A gathering at Cresselly saw a field of 70 horsemen and women, the equal of any pre-

¹⁸⁷⁷ *H&MHT*, 2 July 1919.

¹⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 16 July 1919; *Ibid.*, 23 July 1919.

¹⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5 February 1919.

¹⁸⁸⁰ *PT*, 6 October 1920.

¹⁸⁸¹ *H&MHT*, 9 July 1919.

war outing, and a declaration from Mr Seymour Allen of how wartime hunting had been carried out in a ‘half-hearted manner’.¹⁸⁸² Team sports were quickly and doubtless eagerly resumed as a sign of the return to relative normality. Not everything could return to pre-war norms however. At Milford Haven, prospects for soccer seemed bright with a Comrades team, although it was never likely to match the accomplishments of the pre-1914 Robins. A number of Milford Haven ‘stars’ had truly ‘played the game’, and fallen in the Great War. Ted Hoggins, a stalwart, was killed in action in October 1914.¹⁸⁸³ A benefit match for his widow and children saw almost 1,000 tickets sold.¹⁸⁸⁴ The death of Gunner Leslie Evans RGA in May 1917 brought to three the number of Milford Haven footballers who had died in the conflict (also Harry Daye).¹⁸⁸⁵ Another promising footballer, Private Arthur King RWF, died the following month, and yet another, Sergeant Fred Jeffries, Wiltshire Regiment, became a prisoner of war.¹⁸⁸⁶ They had indeed answered the call of their country as they moved to the whistle of the football field ‘without question.’¹⁸⁸⁷

The uncertainty of war created a nostalgia for older times (promoting conservatism, as noted in a number of social fields). One correspondent noted the sudden popularity for old songs, including one entitled ‘The Englishman’ which had not been sung for fifteen years. Movingly he wrote: ‘We shall appreciate pre-war things more than ever, after this onslaught is over, and many will love to go back to the old-time ballads, although many a Britisher who had sung them years ago will never return to sing them with us again.’¹⁸⁸⁸ This analysis shows some evidence of changing attitudes and

¹⁸⁸² *PCG*, 5 December 1919.

¹⁸⁸³ *H&MHT*, 4 November 1914.

¹⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 30 December 1914.

¹⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 23 May 1917.

¹⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 6 June 1918; *Ibid.*, 31 July 1918.

¹⁸⁸⁷ Huw Richards, *A Game for Hooligans. The History of Rugby Union* (Edinburgh, 2006), 106.

¹⁸⁸⁸ *PCG*, 15 February 1918.

consciousness in Pembrokeshire and the processes at work through the cinema, church, patriotic events and sports which all contributed to the potential for cultural transformation.

Distinctive features of Pembrokeshire's wartime experience emphasise the county's coastal location, facilitating the arrival of large numbers of Belgian refugees, major recipients of the charitable instincts of the local population. Large numbers of troops, concentrated around the Haven aroused considerable anxiety for public order, while the long coastline perhaps explains the enthusiasm in joining the Volunteer Training Corps. Patriotism was a sentiment with an infinite variety of expressions.

The necessity of wartime expediency dictated the timing of many of the changes which were distinctly short-term in their duration. Pembrokeshire was in fact not greatly changed in the basic dynamics of life in the 1920s than it had been a decade before. An examination of Pembrokeshire suggests that of war-generated exceptionalism in social change works less well at a county level with the war acting as the accelerator of existing trends. Two major exceptions remained, however. The war itself led to political Labour's first appearance in local elections and the appearance of farm labourers' unions.

The war however, was a traumatic national and local experience, the scale of which raised the expectation of social change which many contemporaries articulated during the war. An elevated rhetoric invested Reconstruction with revolutionary possibilities, sentiments echoed across Pembrokeshire. After such sacrifices, it was felt, society must surely change for the better. One Pembrokeshire correspondent thought that the war had revolutionised the economic and social conditions of the country so that many 'an old landmark in our habits and customs will have gone by the board, never

to return; and who shall say that some at least of these changes will not be a decided advantage?’¹⁸⁸⁹

Nor could the curtailment of Government intervention be predicted. One correspondent thought it highly unlikely that the vast machinery brought into being for the revival of British agriculture would be scrapped after the war.¹⁸⁹⁰ The legislation of 1921 was to prove otherwise. The prospect of reconstruction, the promise of the New Jerusalem, brought the prospect of good housing, employment and decent pensions, policies articulated across the political spectrum by several of the General Election candidates. The Haverfordwest Board of Union Guardians each received a copy of the Reconstruction report, some 80 copies purchased for £4 4s. and sent to all members.¹⁸⁹¹ Some women awaited even greater freedom in the post-war world. Promising signs were shown early in the war. A Young People’s Guild at Hill Park Baptist Chapel, Haverfordwest, in February 1915 saw a debate on women’s suffrage in which those opposed to the measure ‘depicted with a wealth of imagination the lamentable state of Britain if ever men were mad enough to give women the suffrage’. The vote when taken was nevertheless unanimous in favour of enfranchising women.¹⁸⁹² At a prize-giving ceremony held at Tasker’s High School, Haverfordwest, in December 1916 the Head Teacher excitedly reflected how ‘those who are now young will build up an England greater than all our dreams, purified by the strain and sacrifice of today. In that great building women will have their share. There will be careers and opportunities for public service open to our girls.’¹⁸⁹³ There was indeed great promise in pointing to the new Millennium where the wartime

¹⁸⁸⁹ *TO*, 4 May 1916.

¹⁸⁹⁰ *H&MHT*, 18 July 1917.

¹⁸⁹¹ PRO SPU/HA/1/9. Haverfordwest Union Board of Guardians minutes 1915-21; 29 May 1918.

¹⁸⁹² *PCG* 19 February 1915.

¹⁸⁹³ *PH*, 15 December 1916.

comradeship between men and women was sure to persist.¹⁸⁹⁴ With such widespread expressed sentiments, coupled with unprecedented death and destruction, the hope that the end of the war would make for a better world seemed irresistible.

However, tradition was not seen off, according to DeGroot, who sees the forces of conservatism and tradition equal to the challenges of war, absorbing the impulse of change through convention, tradition, repression and an appeal to authority and nostalgia.¹⁸⁹⁵ In many respects post-war Pembrokeshire was not fundamentally different to how it had been in 1914. Several more decades elapsed before women began to occupy political office at a local level in anything like significant numbers with, as we have seen, fewer in employment in 1921 compared to the decade before. The fortunes of agriculture fell into depression after the repeal of the Corn Production Act in 1921, explaining the tendency towards dairy farming in the 1930s. Nor did the political dynamics shift markedly. The 1919 county council elections only returned a handful of Labour candidates and the party did not succeed in capturing the parliamentary seat even in the landslide election in 1945.

In one important respect, however, the war caused a major shift in attitudes, namely in the relations between farmers and labourers, which was a distinctly Welsh phenomenon. The old, pre-war paternal relations were significantly though not entirely eroded. Labourers resented the failure of farmers to raise wages in the context of wartime price rises. In 1918 one Pembrokeshire labourer insisted ‘the truth is that we are not such dull old fools as we formerly were’.¹⁸⁹⁶ Irreversible, too, was the sale of the large landed estates in Pembrokeshire, a pre-war phenomenon which accelerated appreciably from 1917. The tendency of tenant farmers to purchase their

¹⁸⁹⁴ *TO*, 15 August 1918.

¹⁸⁹⁵ DeGroot, ‘The First World War as Total War’, 262-263.

¹⁸⁹⁶ Howell, ‘Farming in Pembrokeshire’, *Pembrokeshire County History, Vol IV*, 108.

holdings was more marked in Welsh-speaking areas of the north, as in the Cilrhedyn district which were obtained at ‘fancy ‘prices.’¹⁸⁹⁷

However, perhaps a profound impact of the war was visited not upon classes and structures, but upon the individual through psychological and emotional experiences of Pembrokeshire residents, whether they had endured combat or not. The war did create innumerable opportunities for individuals to be exposed to entirely new experiences, whether it was new avenues of employment, political activity or taste of military life. Self-discovery and self-realisation were perhaps the powerful social changes which occurred within individuals themselves. At a meeting of Neyland Urban District Council one member, Councillor Hier, reflected on how some of the bitterest battles of the war were fought by the fireside in the hearths of homes across the country.¹⁸⁹⁸ The emotional impact and personal outlook on the world were perhaps the most enduring legacies of the war upon Pembrokeshire. At a meeting of the Pembrokeshire Education Committee, Mr Howard Griffiths reflected on the need to bring up children better and live more earnest lives once the war was over.¹⁸⁹⁹ Those entertaining the profound expectation of a new world in order to rationalise the carnage and sacrifice, might expect an entirely new social, political and economic landscape. As it was, the new world looked remarkably similar to the old one.

¹⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

¹⁸⁹⁸ *PCG*, 11 August 1916.

¹⁸⁹⁹ *PH*, 5 February 1915.

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Dinas Board School 1894-1917	SSR/1/103/2
Llandissilio West- Brynconin Council School 1914-25	SSR/1/85/1
St. Issells- Pentlepoir Council School 1908-22	SSR/1/106/3
Nevern- Llwynhirion Board School 1916-48	SSR/1/111/2
Talbenny National School 1906-45	SSR/1/113/2
Dale School 1879-1936	SSR/1/116/1
Carew National School 1913-40	SSR/1/7/2
Narberth Board School 1913-28	SSR/1/117/3
Clarbeston Voluntary School 1916-77	SSR/1/10/2
Narberth-Templeton Board School 1909-36	SSR/1/119/2
Rosemarket National School 1913-31	SSR/1/120/1
St. Issells- Saundersfoot Board School 1912-49	SSR/1/69/3
Hubberston-Hakin Junior School 1909-24	SSR/1/132/1-2
Monkton Board School 1912-33	SSR/1/129/3
Pembroke East End Board School (Boys) 1914-51	SSR/1/114/3
Pembroke East End Board School (Girls) 1915-57	SSR/1/114/4
Walwyns Castle National School 1902-19	SSR/1/89/3
Hubberston National School 1910-36	SSR/1/134/3
Llanfairnantygof National School 1902-21	SSR/1/136/2
Crunwear Voluntary School 1906-35	SSR/1/8/1
Manordeifi- Upper (or Newchapel) School 1904-25	SSR/1/141/2
Llandewi Velfrey National School 1907-31	SSR/1/124/2
Prendergast Girls Council School 1904-26	SSR/1/140/2
Penally National School 1913-42	SSR/1/142/2
Milford Haven, Charles Street National School 1914-27	SSR/1/143/1
Pembroke Dock Meyrick Street-Albion Square Council Girls' School 1900-25	SSR/1/96/26
Pembroke Dock Coronation Board School 1912-67	SSR/1/96/27

Bolton Hill Board School, Steynton 1903-58	SSR/1/86/15-16
Stackpole Elidor National School 1906-38	SSR/1/145/3
Warren National School 1896-1921	SSR/1/146/22
Fishguard National School (Girls') 1908-30	SSR/1/137/140
St. Florence National School 1909-27	SSR/1/147/3
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Begelly Council School 1914-19	SSM/1/8
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Brawdy Council School 1917-28	SSM/1/103
Camrose North Council School 1913-20	SSM/1/11
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Clunderwen Council School 1910-17	SSM/1/173
Freystrop N.P.School 1904-46	HPR/7/17
Lampeter Velfrey Council School 1916-34	SSM/1/48
Letterston Council School 1904-19	SSM/1/47
Llandewi Velfrey N. P. School 1905-26,	SSM/1/151
Llangwm N.P.School 1903-21	HPR/6/50
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Narberth School 1916-34	SSM/1/48
Nash School 1879-1947	HPR/14/16

Pembroke Dock School Group 1910-48	HPR/1/105
Redberth National School 1894-1932	HPR/20/12
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Talbenny National School 1904-55	HPR/52/15
Walwyn's Castle N.P. School 1886-1926	HPR/59/10
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