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**'NEITHER BEASTS, NOR GODS, BUT
MEN.'**

**Constructions of Masculinity and the Image of the
Ordinary British Soldier or 'Tommy' in the First
World War Art of: C.R.W. Nevinson (1889-1946);
Eric Henri Kennington (1888-1960) and Charles
Sargeant Jagger (1885-1934).**



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ABSTRACT.

In part this thesis was inspired by a reading of Frederic Manning's novel of the First World War, *Her Privates We*, published in 1930. In the novel's foreword Manning suggests that the men who did by far the most fighting and dying on the side of Britain during the First World War, ordinary soldiers in the ranks, had been fundamentally misunderstood by those writing about the war after the end of hostilities. Manning asserted, using the words I quote in the title of the thesis, that the men with whom he served in the ranks during the murderous battle of the Somme were not just soulless killers nor were they cattle-like victims who went to their deaths with no conception of why they fought. He remembered his comrades as ordinary men who consistently displayed an extraordinary capacity for endurance and ingenuity amidst the most atrocious conditions. Manning's perception of the ordinary British soldier, or 'Tommy' prompted me to explore the relatively under-researched and poorly appreciated area of imagery of the First World War created by British official and unofficial war artists. Those who had fought valued tremendously the imagery of the British soldier from the ranks created by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger. One of the principle objectives of this thesis will be to uncover reasons for why this was the case. In addition, art of the First World War operates in an area over which a number of disciplines overlap, such as art history, military history, anthropology, literary history and gender studies. This thesis seeks to offer, in a manner which has not been hitherto attempted, to integrate approaches from the aforementioned disciplines in an attempt to enrich understanding of how various participants reacted in the way they did to images of British combatants created by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger. In particular, this study acknowledges the advances made in the realm of Masculinity Studies over the past decade and argues that deployment of such research can considerably enhance our appreciation of why certain images, whether they be a painting or a drawing or a piece of figurative sculpture, could be greeted with widespread approbation or equally comprehensive condemnation. The author has been pleasantly surprised by the extent of unpublished material there still exists concerning the three artists under investigation despite the fact that, during their heyday, they were collectively regarded as among Britain's brightest artistic talents. There remains far more to be said, and argued, about the imagery of soldiers produced within Britain during one of the most traumatic and destructive episodes in human history. This thesis does not, in itself, constitute a definitive study of the careers of three fascinating and important artists during and immediately after the First World War. However, it is offered in the hope that the information it contains will spur future students of the era to further investigation in what remains an extremely fertile area for thought-provoking research.

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INTRODUCTION

Much has written about the First World War by military, political, social and economic historians. However, there has been relatively little interpretation of the war's protagonists, the ordinary soldiers whose powers of endurance ensured that this murderous conflict lasted as long as it did, from the perspective of gender theory. Even less study has been attempted on the subject of the war art created during the conflict, the experience of war artists and how they perceived the ordinary servicemen they drew or painted. My research for this thesis was initially stimulated by the belief that there would be considerable scope for employing some aspects of recent gender theory, especially from the developing area of masculinity studies, to explore the image created of the ordinary British soldier, popularly known from the middle of the nineteenth-century as the 'Tommy'¹, during and immediately after the First World War. It was during that war that Britain, for the first time in its history, raised a mass army composed of volunteers and then, after January 1916, conscripts. The largest portion of that army, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), was dispatched to the continent of Europe. Once there, for the best part of two years (1916-18), the BEF engaged the armies of the Kaiser's Germany, one of the most formidable military machines the world has ever seen. In the opinion of the majority of contemporary British military historians, an amateur British citizens' army, despite making numerous mistakes and suffering horrendous casualties, learned how to fight a modern industrial war with a combination of the latest weaponry including heavy artillery, light and heavy machine guns, tanks, aeroplanes and poison gas. Furthermore this army went on to play "the leading role in the final victorious advance in 1918 on the all-important Western Front."²

There have been a few books published on the subject of the work produced by British artists in response to the First World War such as *The War Artists* (1983) by Meirion and Susie Harries and Richard Cork's sweeping *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War* (1994). Neither utilise any gender theory when discussing images of British soldiers. Indeed, both accounts prefer to concentrate on images of the ravaged landscapes created by the war rather than on images of the soldiers who did most of the fighting and the dying. The former is more concerned with a blow-by-blow account of when Britain's first war art programme was established in the summer of 1916 and in what order and with what remits various war artists were appointed. In the latter, Richard Cork makes no secret of the fact that he considers Paul Nash's landscapes of the Western Front as by far the greatest works of art about the conflict produced by any British artist.³ Indeed, part of the title of his book is derived from an oft-quoted letter Nash wrote to his wife in November 1917. In this letter Nash announced he intention to paint works that would expose the "bitter truth" about the war to those at home who wanted the war to go on and on, despite the ever lengthening casualty lists. Nash

preferred to keep the presence of the ordinary soldier in these images to a minimum. This was only partially because, as he would have been the first to admit, he was not comfortable drawing the human body. The reason why he adopted this line may be related to that most problematic of figures now, and surprisingly then, of the British soldier or 'Tommy'. To many on the home front he was a mystery, an elusive, puzzling figure. Nash barely served three weeks in a quiet sector of the Ypres salient, early in 1917, and had little opportunity to actually witness the soldiers under his command in action. In this day and age, as the military historian Stephen Badsey has recently commented, popular perceptions of the Western Front have been shaped and moulded by the BBC television series *Blackadder Goes Fourth*, first broadcast in 1989 and then repeated frequently thereafter.⁴ This series has played a critical role in perpetuating a common misconception of the archetypal 'Tommy' as the eternal victim, hapless, gormless, entirely lacking in any military skill and not at all threatening.⁵

Perhaps Cork's interpretation of First World War art suffers from a defect identified by the historian Correlli Barnett as early as the 1970's. Barnett noted a tendency to view British experience of the war almost entirely through the perspective and writings of ex-public school temporary junior officers. These officers had either been educated at Oxbridge, or were destined for an education there that was interrupted by the outbreak of war. He took writers, such as Robert Graves and Siegfried Sassoon, to task for emphasising the "horrors" of trench warfare while "masking the fact" that the men they commanded were "killers as well as victims".⁶ Recently, the social historian Joanna Bourke caused some consternation by reminding her readers of this very fact. Though the majority of German casualties were caused by British artillery fire, many German soldiers were killed at relatively close quarters by British soldiers from the ranks of the BEF. Since it was the men from the ranks, who were responsible for most of the killing, rather than officers armed just with revolvers and swagger canes, a considerable proportion of these ordinary 'Tommys' must have become skilful killers. Some, indeed, may have even grown to enjoy the sensation of taking life with a rifle, a grenade, and a cosh or by pulling the trigger of a Lewis automatic rifle that fired nearly fifty rounds in as many seconds.⁷

I was impressed by the argument recently advanced by Brian Bond that one can derive a more accurate sense of what the ordinary British soldier was really like on the Western Front from Frederic Manning's *The Middle Parts of Fortune*. This was initially published in 1929. An expurgated version, from which all the frequent obscenities used by soldiers in the field were removed, was published the following year as *Her Privates We*. This account is probably unique because it was written by an educated middle-class ex-public school male who had served for six months, during some of the heaviest fighting of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, as a private in an all-volunteer New Army battalion of the King's Own Shropshire Light Infantry.⁸ Taking into account

the attitudes displayed towards the war by Eric Kennington (1888-1960) and Charles Sargeant Jagger (1885-1934), two of the war artists whose war art I will discuss in detail, I believe Bond is justified in his claim that Manning wrote *The Middle Parts of Fortune* in such a way that it is "impossible to categorise as pro or anti-war." Manning certainly made no attempt to offer a sanitised view of the disgusting conditions of the Western Front or the terrors felt by every combatant during a major battle. I would agree with Bond's analysis that Manning's "realistic descriptions of the horrors of combat, and other negative aspects of military experience did not necessarily entail an overall anti-war stance."⁹ Taking this a step further, I wish to argue that it was possible to combine in war art a bleak, unromanticised view of life at the Front for the ordinary soldier alongside a more positive and uplifting sense that men in the ranks endured, developed supportive friendships, engaged the enemy with grim determination, and displayed great skill in their use of weaponry. Furthermore, Manning strikes me as an apposite choice because I discovered that his view of combat, as a test of character in which "those who came through achieve a lasting sense of liberation and self-knowledge"¹⁰, was shared by Kennington and Jagger. As for C.R.W. Nevinson (1889-1946), the third artist under consideration, he anticipated the Manning viewpoint through his adherence to the militaristic creed of Futurism. This avant-garde movement stressed that, to be properly modern, the male must embrace a hyper-masculine role and throw himself at the earliest possible opportunity into furious combat. However, to his chagrin, Nevinson discovered that the modern battlefield ruthlessly exposed his mental and physical shortcomings. Consequently, he was compelled to adopt a more static, passive role behind the lines as a medical orderly. There he performed admittedly harrowing duties in the care of the grievously wounded. However, before the war, such duties were widely identified as tasks best undertaken by women.

I thought it appropriate to utilise a line from Manning's to *The Middle Parts of Fortune* for the title of my thesis because it seems to encapsulate the general attitude displayed by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger towards the war during hostilities and to a certain extent after the Armistice. In his 'prefatory note', dated 1929, Manning wrote "War is waged by men; not by beasts, or by gods. It is a peculiarly human activity. To call it a crime against mankind is to miss at least half its significance; it is also the punishment of a crime."¹¹ Manning's overall interpretation of the war struck me as valid because his writing was greatly respected by the three war artists I will be discussing. Nevinson knew of him in 1916, through his friend the artist William Rothenstein. In turn, Rothenstein mentioned Manning to Kennington during the summer of 1916. At the time Kennington was trying to arrange a visit to the front-line in France as a semi-official artist-visitor. Years later, towards the end of the 1920's, Kennington encouraged Manning to publish *The Middle Parts of Fortune*, as did their mutual friend T.E. Lawrence. Meanwhile, Jagger bought a copy of the book when it was first published in a limited edition in 1929. Indeed, it was found in his studio, after his death, covered with

mainly approving annotations. The attention Jagger paid the book is significant as he was not much of a reader. He rarely aired any opinions about the war novels he had read. However, from what he said about the First World War, to friends such as Graham Seton Hutchison and Sidney Rogerson, Jagger's conviction that war was an inescapable part of existence seems uncannily similar to the sentiment at the heart of *The Middle Parts of Fortune*.¹²

The selection of Nevinson, Kennington, and Jagger was principally determined by the fact that, between the wars, they were widely regarded as having produced some of the most painfully compelling and honest images inspired by the First World War. In addition, I suspected that, despite the high reputations they enjoyed during their lifetimes, their close association with war art caused them to rapidly fall into critical obscurity after their deaths. Only in the past three years has there been something of a minor revival of interest in Nevinson, prompting efforts to properly assess his place in British twentieth-century art history. In 1999 the Imperial War Museum held a retrospective exhibition, which, understandably given the venue, concentrated on his First World War imagery.¹³ Recently, Michael Walsh has published a detailed and illuminating study of Nevinson's life and work. It has done much to correct the many vagaries and mistakes, concerning the artists' activities and output, which litter Nevinson's 1937 autobiography *Paint and Prejudice*.¹⁴ Indeed, until the publication of Imperial War Museum exhibition catalogue, and of Dr. Walsh's book, the one published resource available was Nevinson's enjoyable and yet highly partisan and error-strewn autobiography.

Dr. Walsh and I have extensively drawn upon a wealth of hitherto unpublished source material. I, for example, have worked through some twelve bulky volumes of press clippings, covering the bulk of the work Nevinson exhibited between 1913 and 1920. These volumes were deposited by his widow in the Tate Gallery Archive, London. In addition, relevant, hitherto unpublished, correspondence has been located in the New York Public Library, the Houghton Library, Harvard University, the Beinecke Library, Yale University and Cornell University. Two volumes of correspondence, in the Archives of the Imperial War Museum's Department of Art, between Nevinson and his employers at the Department and then the Ministry of Information between 1917-20, have also proved extremely useful for charting Nevinson's career as an official war artist.

There is still considerable scope for further study of Nevinson's First World War images since out of the ten chapters in Dr. Walsh's recent book, only four deal with that period. In addition, it was not the purpose of the book to analyse individual images at any great length or in depth. Neither the exhibition catalogue, nor Dr. Walsh's book, attempt to analyse Nevinson's First World War work from the perspective of gender

theory and recent developments within the field of masculinity studies. As early as March 1915, Nevinson's *Returning to the Trenches* [Plate 19] was hailed as an iconic image, which honestly acknowledged that the individual mattered far less in this new and terrible war than the disciplined unit rendered anonymous by wearing mass-produced uniforms and bearing mass-produced weapons. Many of his images of unofficial war art had such an impact because they were exhibited within eighteen months of Britain entering the war and as the country raised its first mass all-volunteer army – Kitchener's New Army. Nevinson's work partly caused a stir because of the way in which he painted the human body but, also, because his imagery emphasised that individual heroism counted for little if the soldiers lacked the necessary weapons and equipment that needed to be produced on an unparalleled scale. As early as April 1916, the painter Walter Richard Sickert wrote, after having seen Nevinson's *La Mitrailleuse* [Plate 26], that it would "probably remain the most authoritative and concentrated utterance on the war in the history of painting."¹⁵ Some of his unofficial war art images were rapturously received and his first solo exhibition, held between September and November 1916 and devoted entirely to images of the war, proved to be a sensation. Frank Rutter (1876-1937), prominent art critic of the *Sunday Times*, was convinced the exhibition revealed Nevinson to be "the first British painter to give really profound and pictorial expression to the emotions aroused by the war."¹⁶

Though Nevinson's official war art was stylistically less adventurous, it did not lose its ability to shock, create controversy and make beholders think about the men who were doing the fighting, killing and dying. Robert Ross (1869-1918), defending Nevinson against an accusation, made within the British War Memorials Committee [BWMC] that the artist had deliberately made his latest war art images less dynamic and immediately eye-catching, stated that "Nevinson's work, which appears fantastic to other people, is declared by soldiers – who know nothing of art – to represent the spirit of the war better than anyone else."¹⁷ One work, judged especially harshly, was *A Group of Soldiers* (1917) [Plate 56], which may strike us today as innocuous enough. However, the War Office at first did not want it displayed in public. When the canvas was included in Nevinson's 1918 exhibition, of his official war art, it moved some observers to apoplexy. One review described the soldiers as: "A crew of hooligans or rather dummy hooligans – they have no inward life – curiously reminiscent of those semi-idiotic puppets that ventriloquists employ."¹⁸ However, to others, he had succeeded in creating a highly persuasive image of the ordinary 'Tommy' from the ranks. His grimy front-line soldiers forcefully struck another commentator as truthful and authentic, precisely because the artist had not attempted to make them look at all ferocious or intimidating. They had not been drawn "according to the conventional type, but are charged with a sort of uncouth virility."¹⁹ At this stage the 'Tommies' of *A Group of Soldiers* were still being interpreted as possessing the potential for impressive fighting abilities. However, in September 1918, Nevinson published a book of

reproductions of the war paintings he had produced for the Ministry of Information. He ensured that *A Group of Soldiers* was accompanied by a text which presented a rather different image of the 'Tommy'. They appear far closer to the stereotype of the 'Tommy', as uncomprehending, passive, eternal victim, that Bond and other military historians claim remains tenaciously prevalent to this day. Nevinson's soldiers were described as standing

in the mud, with their dingy accoutrements and shabby convict-like garb. A little forlorn ... with a certain sense of ... half-consciousness of taking an unwilling part in a dull masquerade, a stupid gaze of which they know the rules but not the purpose. Their heart is not in the job.²⁰

A passage such as this, approved by the artist, suggests that the image of the 'Tommy' so entrenched today, as haplessly unheroic, was taking shape even before the end of the war. Indeed, the book of reproductions was published even as these supposedly 'unwilling' infantrymen were storming the Hindenburg Line. The German commander, Ludendorff, believed this Line was well nigh impregnable and would take the advancing British months to overcome. The passage quoted also serves to neatly demonstrate that the discourse of masculinity as performance, ritual and masquerade, outlined succinctly by Judith Butler in 1995, can be applied to images of First World War British soldiers created by their contemporaries.²¹

The inclusion of and focus on Eric Kennington struck me as logical as, during the war, he was widely regarded as the other major war artist alongside Nevinson. His *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* [Plate 34] produced a sensation when it was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery towards the end of April 1916. The publicity it generated was comparable to that stimulated by the images of war Nevinson had exhibited a few months previously, such as *La Mitrailleuse* [Plate 26] and *La Patrie*. [Plate 61] Indeed, in June 1916, *La Patrie* was exhibited in the downstairs room of the Goupil Gallery while *The Kensingtons* was still on display upstairs in the room directly above. Given such circumstances, critics unsurprisingly drew comparisons between the two paintings. They dwelt on the different way Nevinson had depicted French 'Poilus' as opposed to the unapologetically Pre-Raphaelite manner in which Kennington depicted 'Tommies' from the platoon of the Kensingtons with whom he had served as a private between August 1914 and January 1915.²² Little has been published about Kennington since his death in 1960. In 2001 I produced an exhibition catalogue about his graphic art. This contains my essay on the work he produced as a war artist during both World Wars. In addition, in 2002, I published a monograph on Kennington's impressive career as a sculptor.²³ Unfortunately, there was insufficient space within the monograph to comment on his First World War art and memorials in any searching detail. However, while writing the catalogue and the monograph, I was given access by the artist's family to a large archive of Kennington's letters and personal papers. This archive has not been made available to a scholar before.

It is clear from letters in this archive Kennington wrote to his elder brother William, while the artist was convalescing in England from a gunshot wound to his left foot, that he did not seek to downplay the rigors of the three months he had spent in the trenches of north-eastern France. For example, he did not over-estimate the battle skills actually possessed by his comrades. They were brave enough, perhaps excessively so, and this caused entirely unnecessary casualties. In February 1915 Kennington wrote to his brother:

Our soldiers are hopelessly careless. They will have their food, tea etc. and light large fires, which bring the bullets flying from everywhere. The earth flies all around, spoils the tea or bully stew and the soldiers say 'Fuck the bastards. Let's give 'em a few rounds.' Then they show themselves too much and one or two get their heads blown off.²⁴

He also appears to have admired the Germans, two hundred yards away across 'No-Man's-Land', writing to his brother: "The Germans are a very different enemy to that which the papers portray ... the best German troops, now well decimated, are magnificent in bravery, physique and skill."²⁵ However, Kennington remained confident that the Germans could not prevail in the long term against the "mastery of the English in brains and courage."²⁶ It is striking that he could hold such an adamant conviction since he had already seized a brief opportunity to encounter the enemy as real human beings, rather than as a demonised generality. To some extent Kennington regarded the war as a struggle between two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. No more than two months after his participation in the 'Christmas Truce' of 1914, Kennington felt able to write to his brother that France had been "saved [by] the British regulars" while he was convinced that "the average German is our inferior as the English have never yet fled ... before them."²⁷ However, he by no means harboured any illusions as to whether the British public knew anything about the true, horrifying, conditions in which the present war was being fought. After his evacuation, in January 1915, from France to England Kennington noticed that an ever-widening gulf existed between what the combatants knew of the war on the spot and the coverage of events in France produced by the newspapers.²⁸ As far as Kennington was concerned "the war will go on for a v[er]y long time" but the "English" would eventually win it. However, the sooner the people back home were made to confront the "unpleasant truth" the better. Personally, he had found there was precious little glory to be acquired from winter fighting in northern France when it entailed "standing in mud and ice up to your balls and, perhaps, in places up to your chest and not changing [your uniform] for a week after."²⁹

Kennington's letters to his elder brother, from the convalescent home early in 1915, indicate that two months in the trenches had been more than enough to prevent him romanticising the war. If he had been disillusioned, however, it did not cause him to

think that the war was no longer worth fighting or to doubt that British 'Tommy's' in France would eventually triumph over the Imperial German Army. Kennington's reaction anticipated that experienced, only a couple of years later, by Robert Graves, war poet and future author of one of the key texts shaping how we understand the First World War today. It is no coincidence that, in April 1918, Kennington and Graves met and became firm friends. Indeed, Graves wrote a laudatory preface for the catalogue of Kennington's June 1918 exhibition, 'The British Soldier', at the Leicester Galleries. He praised Kennington as the sole official artist to possess "the trench point of view" and as the only one prepared to equally convey the dismal reality of life in the trenches as well as the truth that the British Army still contained men who were magnificent fighters.³⁰ Graves' approval for Kennington's war art tends to support the contention, recently advanced by Brian Bond, that literary historians have been over hasty in assuming that Graves became an anti-war writer. According to Bond, Graves in *Goodbye To All That* heaped contempt on what he perceived to be the criminally incompetent way in which the High Command conducted the war. Yet it is also patently evident in the same book that Graves was immensely proud of the fighting prowess of the regiment to which he belonged, the Royal Welch Fusiliers. It is also clear he thought the Germans had to be categorically defeated while he immensely admired the courage and endurance displayed by the ordinary soldiers under his command.³¹ According to Bond, correctly in my estimation, Graves was "deeply grateful for the unique experience of comradeship" which he took away from his time in the trenches. He shared this powerful feeling of gratitude and necessary obligation with Kennington after the war. Graves was delighted when, in 1922, Kennington asked him to serve as the model for one of the three soldiers he was carving as a memorial to the 24th Infantry Division in Battersea Park. [Plate 94] One should not be surprised by Graves' reaction since his battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers had once formed part of the division. The writer was also very pleased to be associated with a memorial whose symbolism was interpreted as implying that something positive could be derived from the experience of having fought in the First World War.³²

The exhibition in 1916 of *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* [Plate 34] established Kennington, in the minds of many, as the one artist able to produce an image of the British soldier in the field which created an illusion that it was truthful and admiring without being sentimental, patronising, or woefully improbable. The reaction of Arthur Clutton Brock (1868-1924), in *The Times*, was shared by many when he stated that Kennington had painted what was "so far the one picture of the war ... The picture convinces us that it is like life, but it is not at all like a photograph ... he has painted the war for us so that we know what it is, in all its squalor and glory."³³ Towards the end of 1917 and after a fortnight attached to the 24th Infantry Division, Kennington wrote to his friend William Rothenstein that the authorities had no conception of how much "an artist is appreciated out here [in France] ... I never imagined an artist could be so

encouraged, the enthusiasts are legion." Evidently, these 'enthusiasts', wanted to be represented back home in the guise of a Kennington portrait, as they asked their officers to enquire from the authorities when these portraits were to go on public display, or be reproduced in a mass circulation newspaper.³⁴

The existence of such requests from the Front rather lend credence to as assertion Kennington made in March 1918 to Robert Ross, who was working as art advisor to the Ministry of Information. Kennington wrote that his sitters in the trenches wanted their portraits to be given maximum publicity back in Blighty: "An internal question at the Front is 'Where shall we see it printed, to buy it? What will be the name of the publication? [sic]'"³⁵ It is quite possible that the soldiers Kennington drew near the front-line, during his stint as a war artist between August 1917 and March 1918, sensed that he wanted to create portraits of them that would be idealised without being completely and risibly far-fetched. At the Front, towards the end of 1917, he agonised as to what option he should follow as an official war artist. If he produced absolutely unsparing images of the terror, death, and filth he saw all around him, they would only undermine civilian morale if they were ever exhibited. At the same time the men of the units with whom he had stayed would regard such work as a betrayal of the trust he had established with them. These were men who, while of course not relishing their trench lives, still thought the war was worth fighting until victory was achieved. An interesting conundrum for an artist to face, whether to remain unwaveringly committed to the truth of what he saw or alienate men whose high opinion of him he valued above all.³⁶

Eight years after the war, in one of his few newspaper interviews, Kennington admitted that he had briefly succumbed to pessimism and disenchantment when he retitled *The Conquerors*, a canvas he painted in 1920 for the Canadian War Records Scheme, *The Victims*. [Plate 84]. He described the new title as a "bitter protest against the causes of war and war itself" and yet "at all times he was moved to passionate admiration for the men whom he drew."³⁷ However, the actual process of taking the best part of two years, 1921-23, to carve the 24th Infantry Division memorial brought him to the conclusion that war was an inescapable part of human existence. He realised that one way to give the war meaning, was to create a sculptural affirmation of the value of war service for those ordinary men in the trenches he had so admired. I believe Kennington's war art, and what he wrote about it, offers ample evidence that an artist could despise a war and yet tremendously admire the men of his own side who had fought and won it.

I thought Jagger would be an appropriate choice as the third war artist for discussion because, after his premature death in November 1934, he was universally hailed as the creator of many of Britain's most memorable and compelling First World

War memorials. Gilbert Bayes, Vice-President of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, described Jagger as "our biggest sculptor and his death has robbed the world of an irreplaceable artist. I know of no one in England, or on the Continent, who can take his place."³⁸ Particular praise was lavished on the bronze figures in the round and the low-relief carvings in stone he had provided for his masterpiece, the Royal Artillery Memorial on Hyde Park Corner London. This combination of stunning, yet chilling, sculpture and architecture was unveiled in October 1925.³⁹ [Plate 96] The completion of the Royal Artillery memorial, approximately, provides the date at which this thesis closes. Though numerous war memorials were erected in the UK, after the Royal Artillery Memorial, a consensus formed that none had surpassed Jagger's work. It was widely recognised as the one memorial equally cherished by ex-servicemen and the general public alike. At the time the 'London Correspondent' of the *Manchester Guardian* commented "since the Cenotaph was unveiled, I do not think that any London war memorial has stirred the quality of public interest and emotion."⁴⁰

Jagger was also widely described as the one sculptor who had consistently created war memorials that communicated directly with and were appreciated by First World War veterans from the ranks.⁴¹ The Royal Artillery memorial appears to have been regarded as unusually convincing because its decoration was the work of a man with combat experience and who had won the Military Cross for bravery under fire. In addition, any artistic detail that could be regarded as remotely feminine or sentimental had been ruthlessly expunged at the artist's insistence. The imagery on the Royal Artillery memorial did not attempt to sanitise the horrific conditions in which artillerymen had to fight, or sidestep the fact that in a major battle the period within which an artilleryman was likely to be killed or seriously wounded was four days.⁴² Some even claimed the Royal Artillery memorial conveyed a "new idea of art to the people." It would help ex-servicemen from the ranks to explain to their loved ones just what they had endured fighting in the war "men will bring their wives and children here to show them things they have never been able to tell them – what happened and what they went through ... soldiers who have never spoken to their home folks of what they went through [are] given a new means of expression."⁴³ In my estimation, the interpretation of such a passage could only be enriched by utilising approaches derived from the field of gender studies. In this case, for example, the writer clearly implies that ex-servicemen, seven years after the end of the war, can only open up emotionally to their loved ones through imagery created by another male with access to direct experience of what the Front had been like.

Akin to Nevinson and Kennington, before the First World War, Jagger was considered an artist to watch. He then later achieved fame as a war artist.⁴⁴ In a similar fashion to the other two, he sought to participate in the war as soon as he could and volunteered as a private in the infantry in September 1914. Jagger also shared

Kennington's deep admiration for Kipling. After Jagger's death, his second wife recalled that he carried a volume of Kipling's verse around him throughout his time in the trenches.⁴⁵ Indeed, there is an intriguing coincidence that, in 1919, Jagger wanted to inscribe a line from Kipling's poem 'For All That We Have and Are' on his first commissioned war memorial design. The memorial, with the inscription, was eventually erected on the Wirral Peninsula, at West Kirby, in December 1922.⁴⁶ [Plate 88] Jagger always claimed to be repelled by sentimentality. Thus, one can understand why he was so attracted by the final ten lines from the last stirring, yet harsh, stanza of Kipling's poem "No easy hope or lies Shall bring us to our goal, But iron sacrifice of Body, will and soul/ There is but one task for all, One life for each to give/Who stands if freedom fall? Who dies if England live?"⁴⁷ The poem was first published in *The Times* on 2 September 1914, the very day Jagger volunteered to serve as a private in the 'Artists' Rifles'.⁴⁸

Another reason for including Jagger in this study is the fact that he possessed more front-line combat experience than any other artist appointed by the Ministry of Information, as an official war artist. For four weeks, between October and November 1915, he served as second lieutenant with the 4th Worcesters at Gallipoli. Later in the war, between October 1917 and April 1918, he was a lieutenant/acting company commander with the 2nd Worcesters in north-eastern France close to the Belgian border. His unit was just south of the much fought over city of Ypres. Jagger was, I believe, the only official war artist to have fought in a major First World War battle. Early in April 1918, his battalion was caught up in a massive German offensive against the British lines to the south of Ypres. It was for the courage and cool, calculating, leadership he displayed in April 1918, in command of a company at the Battle of Neuve Eglise, that Jagger was awarded the Military Cross. During the battle for the town Jagger was involved in some extremely fierce fighting while attempting to defend a strategically important complex of buildings on the outskirts from a succession of attacks by German stormtroopers. It is likely he killed a number of stormtroopers, with a Lewis automatic rifle, as they attempted to outflank the position he was holding and infiltrate behind him.⁴⁹ This fact makes the war-related work Jagger produced after the war very interesting because it can be usefully related to Joanna Bourke's thought-provoking recent exploration of killing at close quarters in the wars of the twentieth-century.⁵⁰ Indeed, the fact that Jagger had participated in such combat and lived makes him something of a special case. As far as one can deduce, while he did not boast about the Germans he had killed in 1918, Jagger never gave any indication that he ever felt any shame or guilt over the matter.⁵¹

Jagger was wounded twice during his First World War active service. In November 1915, at Gallipoli, he was shot through the right shoulder by a Turkish sniper. In April 1918 a German machine gun bullet hit him in the left shoulder, leaving a

large exit wound in his back.⁵² I suspect Jagger's view of the ordinary 'Tommy' was immensely influenced by the fact that, on both occasions, men from the ranks in the units under his command risked their lives to drag him to safety under heavy fire. At Gallipoli a corporal from his platoon took twenty minutes to crawl fifty yards to reach Jagger lying wounded in 'No-Man's-Land'. It took the man a further half an hour to put a dressing on Jagger's wound and then slowly drag him over the uneven terrain back to the British lines. All the while they were under Turkish rifle and machine gun fire and rudimentary Turkish grenades exploded around them. One grenade landed so close to Jagger, it blew off his left tunic pocket.⁵³ Given such circumstances, it is not surprising that Jagger, after the war, felt an intense debt of gratitude to those anonymous men from the ranks who had saved his life on two occasions. He employed ex-servicemen to work as assistants in his own studio while recommending others to sculptor-friends who had also fought in the war, such as William Reid Dick and Gilbert Bayes, for employment in their larger studios.⁵⁴ He also made a point, much commented upon during the 1920's, of only employing ex-servicemen with good war records to serve as models for his war memorial figures.⁵⁵

I intend to argue that Jagger's attitude towards the purpose of war art was very similar to that held by Kennington. Jagger created harsh and painfully realistic images of the war without implying that he either condemned or revelled in it. Akin to Kennington, and to a lesser extent Nevinson, Jagger was frustrated during the war by stock images of the 'Tommy' projected by the press. Such images commonly depicted British soldiers as either manically grinning 'happy warriors' or as hapless victims inviting pity. After the war, Jagger commented he had resolved, during his time at Gallipoli, that if he survived he would devote himself to war memorials.⁵⁶ Furthermore, these memorials would depict "the British 'Tommy' not in the stereotyped style associated with previous wars, but as the very different animal I had known and admired in the front-line trenches".⁵⁷ Jagger and Kennington both seemed to have felt that the First World War had been thoroughly worth fighting. Indeed, both suspected that, if it was to remain a major world power, Britain simply could not avoid fighting future bloody and costly wars. Shortly before his death, Jagger told his wife that if he lived until he was 150 years old he would never forget "the horrors of war" he had personally witnessed in the trenches. However, he added that if the country needed him for another war, he would "of course go to fight."⁵⁸

In our day and age, such an attitude is not easy to fathom. It may explain why Jagger's career has been somewhat neglected since his death in 1934, despite the fact he has been frequently identified since as one of the most gifted sculptors, working in an uncompromisingly 'realist' manner, this country has ever produced. A retrospective of his work was held in 1985 at the Imperial War Museum. The exhibition was accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue containing essays exploring the artist's life,

his relationship to artistic tradition, and the course of the Royal Artillery memorial project.⁵⁹ The critical reaction to the exhibition strongly suggests that the majority of commentators harboured no suspicions that Jagger might actually have been fiercely proud of his service record during the First World War and of the fact that he had won a medal for courage and resource under fire. The majority of critics appeared unable to grasp that Jagger did not automatically regard the ordinary 'Tommy' as a doomed victim or that, while he acknowledged the carnage had been appalling, he might interpret the First World War as part of the inescapable historical destiny of a world empire.

Richard Cork, for example, interpreted Jagger's war memorials as proof that he had quickly become "disillusioned" after the end of hostilities and that his guiding principle had been one of "unrelenting pessimism".⁶⁰ Waldemar Januszczak took the artist the task for creating a convincing sculptural representation of a new twentieth-century "myth", that of "the Great British 'Tommy' ... brave and big hearted, tough, working-class and cheery". Of course, Januszczak reassured his readers, "we can recognise him as cannon-fodder." It never seems to have occurred to him that the artist himself did not see the men he had commanded in action, some of whom on two occasions had risked their own lives to save his, in such a derogatory, patronising, and dismissive light.⁶¹ Only one commentator on the exhibition, Marina Vaizey, sensed that Jagger resisted being placed in the compartment marked with the automatic 'post-war disillusionment' label. Indeed, here was a highly talented artist who sought to create a new form of war memorial which, first and foremost, was intended to satisfy the men who had done the lion's share of the fighting and managed to survive.⁶²

The thesis is roughly organised along chronological lines. Chapter One will explore the images of the male working-class body produced and exhibited by Kennington and Nevinson between 1910 and 1914. This chapter will also comment on why both Kennington and Nevinson were so attracted by the figure of the working-class costermonger, whose numbers in the capital were already in decline when the artists began to depict them in their work. Nevinson's involvement with the Futurist movement, between 1913 and 1914, will be discussed in detail as will the extent to which his understanding of normative masculinity was influenced and structured by his exposure to the ideas of the movement's founder, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1875-1944). I would argue that Nevinson willingly responded to Marinetti's exhortation for the modern male artist to embrace and enact in every day life a new and stridently heightened form of male behaviour. It is possible that even as Nevinson championed this form of male conduct, which has evocatively been labelled 'hyper-masculinity', he sensed there was something artificial and unsustainable about this option with its unsettling implication that masculinity was inherently a performance, a 'masquerade'. This persuasive line of argument within gender studies has been developed by, among

others, Lisa Tickner⁶³, Abigail Solomon Godeau⁶⁴ and Judith Butler.⁶⁵ I have found their work of enormous benefit while analysing the image of the First World War soldier throughout this thesis.

Chapter Two will discuss Nevinson's experiences in uniform during the first eighteen months of the First World War. Between November 1914 and January 1915, he initially served as an ambulance driver for a Quaker medical unit. When his body failed him, after no more than a week operating near the front-line, he was reassigned to work as a nursing orderly in a hospital on the outskirts of Dunkirk. In June 1915 Nevinson volunteered at a London military hospital for service as a Private in the RAMC. The essentially unofficial war art he exhibited between 1914 and 1916 evolved from a Cubo-Futurist style to a more immediately accessible, shorthand, Cubist manner. A detailed examination is offered of Nevinson's remarkable *La Mitrailleuse* [Plate 26], which created a sensation when it was exhibited in London in March 1916. This painting effectively helped to launch Nevinson as the first artist to adequately acknowledge that, on the modern battlefield, manpower had been irreversibly subordinated to technology.

Chapter Three charts the reluctance among both writers and painters to depict the British male in uniform as a competent soldier and their anxiety at the transformation of the peacetime civilian, via training and life at the Front into an efficient, even ruthless, professional killer. Eric Kennington's *The Kensington's at Laventie: Winter 1914* [Plate 34] will be subjected to a comprehensive examination in an effort to explain why this painting was accorded such an overwhelmingly positive reception on its exhibition in London towards the end of April 1916. Why did Kennington's depiction of the 'Tommy' convince so many influential critics and pundits, some of whose writings condition the collective memory of the First World War to this day, that he was the first British artist to offer an accurate and unvarnished image of the ordinary British infantryman at the Front?

Chapter Four will concentrate on what appeared to be the new and shocking phenomenon of " created by the unprecedentedly appalling and historically unparalleled conditions of trench warfare. The chapter will trace some of the ways in which war artists attempted to depict the physiognomic markers of battle-induced trauma in their images of British soldiers. In addition, it will explore many of the contemporary assumptions concerning the gendering of mental illness. For example, prior to the war 'hysteria' had commonly been identified as a predominantly feminine complaint, while 'anxiety' was the label usually applied to men exhibiting emotional distress. Much of the conceptual approach underlying this chapter was derived from recent work by Elaine Showalter that explores why the twentieth-century appeared to have given birth to the condition known as 'shell-shock.' This condition has eventually acquired the much-

debated diagnostic term of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This chapter also explores the extent to which the First World War exposed so-called 'normal' masculine behaviour as a construct fabricated by medical orthodoxy and, thus, comparable with the label 'hysterical' so frequently applied to ordinary soldiers traumatised by combat.⁶⁶ Special attention will be directed to the experience of Nevinson who, for over five months in 1915, was in charge of a ward at the 3rd London General Military Hospital containing 40 men under observation for suspected shell-shock. I will also examine in detail works, such as Nevinson's *A Group of Soldiers* [Plate 56] and Kennington's *A Man Chosen for Dangerous Work*⁶⁷ *Queens Hero* [Plate 58] because, initially, the War Office in London sought to prevent them from being exhibited in public, even though the artists in question thought they had presented a truthful and positive image of the 'Tommy'. Evidently, War Official censors detected in the gait, demeanour and physiognomies of these soldiers clear evidence of 'degeneration', as well as intimations of the intense battle strain that could trigger a man's complete emotional collapse.

Chapter Five explores images by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger, as well as a few other artists with front-line service, of French and British soldiers lying wounded or sick in hospital or who had paid the ultimate price and been killed on the battlefield. I would argue that images of the dead and wounded created by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger were accepted as particularly authentic and accurate by contemporaries, veterans and civilians alike, because the artists themselves had experienced life in and near to the front-line. Furthermore, they had been wounded in action, or had fallen ill at the Front and had been subjected to the discipline of a military hospital. Indeed, Nevinson and Kennington had only secured their release from military service after being invalided out of the Army on health grounds. Nevinson, for example, was discharged in January 1916 from the Royal Army Medical Corps [RAMC] after having spent the two previous months lying ill from rheumatic fever - the effects of which permanently damaged his heart.

For his part Kennington spent over two months in British military hospitals in France and England after suffering a gunshot wound to his left foot. The wound led to the amputation of his middle toe.⁶⁷ He spent a further month recovering from the surgery in a convalescent home knowing he would have to convince military doctors that he had not deliberately shot himself in the foot to avoid further front-line service. Evidently, he did produce a convincing explanation for he was granted an honourable discharge. Thereafter, I would argue that when drawing soldiers in casualty clearing stations in France, he was particularly sensitive to the reasons why a soldier was receiving medical attention. Was the condition of a patient 'legitimate', or was it more problematic? Some soldiers were known to have engineered their illness in the hopes of being evacuated from the front-line. Still, the images of the wounded he sketched during February and March 1918, while himself undergoing treatment for 'trench fever',

in a Casualty Clearing Station, were greatly admired when they were exhibited in June 1918. The facial expressions of the wounded were interpreted as communicating that they were experiencing pain and intense discomfort but were equally able to maintain a laudable high degree of self-control. This self-discipline, widely defined as commendably 'manly', manifest itself in an ability to look at the artist drawing them unwaveringly in the eye. [Plate 75] As mentioned previously, Jagger probably had more front-line combat service than any other official war artist. He was wounded twice during the war and spent over ten months in various military hospitals located on Malta and in Britain. However, his perception of dead bodies on the battlefield was an unusually stark and unsparing one, as I argue with regard to his plaster low-relief *The Listening Post/No-Man's-Land* [Plates 78-80]

The final chapter will explore the surprising variations in the image of the 'Tommy' that emerged in prose and in visual imagery after the war had ended. Since the British Expeditionary Force [BEF] in France had made the major contribution to the defeat of the German army in 1918, it is not surprising that the 'Tommy' was a source of pride for many commentators. However, this fact has today largely been forgotten by the majority of the British population and has remained so until military historians, during the past decade, have attempted to readjust this state of affairs through books and television programmes.⁶⁸ Despite the plentiful evidence for the 'Tommy's' success on many First World War battlefields, even within a year of the end of the war, the man in the ranks became a focus for anxiety. Influential opinion formers, such as the journalist Philip Gibbs, voiced their fear that hundreds of thousands of ordinary Britons had been transformed into ruthless professional killers by their army training. The irony was, without such training, ordinary Britons could not have become the formidable combat troops who had won the war on the Western Front.⁶⁹ Other journalists who had spent time on the Western Front, such as Gibbs's contemporary C[harles].E[dward]. Montague, were at same time developing a view of the British 'Tommy' that was equally negative and unflattering but for rather different reasons. Montague argued that, although the BEF had eventually triumphed in France, the troops within it who had achieved the critical advances actually came from the ten Dominion divisions. These formations comprised men from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Indeed, Montague asserted a view, that became common currency soon after the war and endures to this day in the opinion of some historians, that the average soldier from the Dominions was mentally and physically far superior to his British equivalent in the ranks. They were commonly presented as more resourceful, skilful in the deployment of weaponry and as far more adept at fighting tactically at the small-unit level.⁷⁰ The chapter will attempt to relate these conflicting interpretations of the British 'Tommy' to large-scale works such as Nevinson's *The Harvest of Battle* [Plate 81] and Kennington's *The Conquerors/Victims* [Plate 84] These two paintings were respectively

executed, between 1919 and 1920, for the collections of the Imperial War Museum, London and the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

In addition, Chapter Six seeks to build on recent work by Adrian Gregory⁷¹ and Alex King⁷², concerning the function of war memorials and the processes by which they came to be commissioned. It will explore whether the fact a sculptor, such as Kennington and Jagger, possessed front-line combat experience made the imagery they produced for their war memorial designs more hard-hitting, brutal, uncompromising, unsentimental, and more 'masculine' - in the sense that no trace of the feminine was permitted to linger within the final design. Attention will also be paid to a war memorial produced by John Millard, a sculptor who was too old to serve in the war and whose design combines a male figure in uniform with female figures occupying both symbolic and contemporary roles. The evidence tends to suggest that these memorials were well received by the communities that paid for them because they were interpreted as appealing to all elements within the local population - male and female, young and old, men who had fought and men who had worked in 'reserved' occupations throughout the war. On the other hand, memorials commissioned by military men to honour the dead from a military organisation, whether it had been disbanded shortly after the end of the war such as Kennington's 24th Infantry Division memorial (1921-24) [Plates 94-95] or were still very much in being such as Jagger's Royal Artillery memorial (1921-25) [Plates 96-102], appear to have been far more exclusive. Such memorials were conceived by artists, with combat experience, to specifically appeal to ex-servicemen from the ranks of those units. These memorials simultaneously acknowledged that the war had been a horrific event and that many veterans wished to look back with pride on how creditably they had acquitted themselves in battle. Many veterans also derived considerable consolation from the memory of the comradeship with other men, they had experienced at the Front, which had greatly helped to keep them going.

It would seem that it is far too simplistic to judge men's responses to their war experience purely in terms of their deploring it, wishing to forget it or even glorifying it. If the experience of researching this theme has taught me anything, it has been to avoid sweeping generalisations concerning the ordinary British 'Tommy'. To one civilian observer writing in 1916 the 'Tommy' was a mystery, an inexplicable yet vital 'thing apart ... the most incomprehensible of Gods' creatures ... protean in the forms he assumes', and on his reliability rested the entire fate of the British war effort.⁷³ Writing four years later Philip Gibbs suspected that the majority of the soldiers were mysteries to themselves, unable to explain how as ordinary men they had just achieved an extraordinary feat of arms.⁷⁴ One might have expected Frederic Manning to provide some sort of informed explanation, after his six months in the ranks during the Battle of the Somme. However, he could not. A decade after the Armistice, he concluded that

there was "an extraordinary veracity in war, which strips a man of every conventional covering he has, and leaves him to face a fact as naked and inexorable as himself."⁷⁵ Manning is silent as to the details of this 'fact' which enabled men to endure what, at first glance today, appears to us absolutely unendurable. However, Manning also revealingly referred to front-line life as a mystery, which "encompassed" each soldier "for he was a part of it; he could neither separate himself entirely from it, nor identify himself completely with it. A man might rave against war; but war, from among its myriad faces, could always turn towards him one, which was his own."⁷⁶

CHAPTER ONE.

Futurism, Masculinity and The Pre-World War One English Working-Class Male Body c. 1910-1914.

A small selection of images worked on, produced and exhibited by C.R.W. Nevinson (1889-1946) and E.H. Kennington (1888-1960) between 1912-1914 will be discussed in this chapter. These images reveal their fascination with certain aspects of pre-First World War London working-class life. I believe they can also be interpreted as touching on middle-class male desire to observe, record and identify with working-class masculinity. I will also discuss how it may be possible to decode the particulars of the working-class male subject constructed from a bourgeois artistic male perspective. In Nevinson's case I shall make much use of detailed biographical (from his parents) and autobiographical material, which illuminates his complex, multi-layered and ambiguous appreciation of the worker and working-class masculinity. Lisa Tickner has already written most persuasively about a 'crisis of masculinity' experienced immediately prior to the First World War within British urban avant-garde artistic circles. The existence of such a 'crisis' may explain why this avant-garde embraced certain aspects of modernism with alacrity such as hostility towards Feminism and to the effeminacy associated with the 1890's English literary and visual aestheticism of Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley. While agreeing with Tickner's general model of avant-garde artistic masculinity self-consciously perceiving itself to be under threat I would like to expand her hypothesis and argue that the 'crisis' was predominantly experienced by middle-class male artists who perceived themselves as being increasingly squeezed between one aspect of modernity, monopolistic capitalism with its attendant organizational structures and mass production techniques, and another inescapable facet of modern life; a turbulent skilled male urban proletariat restlessly awaiting a major socio-economic change that would give them far more political power within existing British society.⁷⁷

It is arguable that Nevinson and Kennington were both attracted to and detached from their working-class subjects for cultural and artistic reasons. Both sought their working-class subjects not amongst regulated and regimented factory workers but amongst men working out of doors: along or on the river Thames; by the side of London canals, in the docks of London, digging up roads or selling fresh produce and Georgian 'fast-food' in the streets of the capital, such as the costermongers who so fascinated Kennington. More, perhaps, than Tickner I would be inclined to attribute a higher importance to class as the most significant determinant in constituting a middle-class male artist's prejudices, fantasies, pre-occupations, perceptions, and perspectives of working-class people and in fabricating what Norman Bryson has termed "the

masquerade of the masculine" in which the male "is not only the bearer of the male gaze ... but is also the object of that gaze"⁷⁸

One will start with an examination of the impact Nevinson's up-bringing and secondary education had on the problematic construction of the masculine 'masquerade' he chose to select for himself. His education may also partially explain why he embraced Futurism when he did in the spring of 1913. Nevinson's mother, Margaret Wynne Jones (1857-1932), recalled in her autobiography, that at one of the preparatory schools her son attended "A good deal of caning went on and the injustice, which children feel so keenly, preyed on his mind. He suffered from bad dreams and night horrors and, for the first time in his life, he began to have headaches and to eat little food." The family doctor predicted that if her son was not immediately moved from the school he would develop "brain fever."⁷⁹ Nevinson was enrolled, at Uppingham School, Leicestershire, by his mother, in September 1903. In his autobiography Nevinson recalled the:

brutality and bestiality in the dormitories at Uppingham ... I possessed, at the age of fifteen [c.1904-5], a more extensive knowledge of sexual manifestations than many a 'gentleman of the centre.' ... the hearties indulged in sadism and masochism ... Boys were bullied, coerced and tortured for their diversion and many a lad was started on strange things through no fault or inclination of their own ... religion has always left me untouched, my public school training having killed the mystic that lurks within me ... I suffered three terrible years at ... public school.⁸⁰

Nevinson states that, during his early years at the Slade (i.e. during 1910), he became friendly with Mark Gertler, Adrian Allinson and Edward Wadsworth. Around the time of Nevinson's twenty-first birthday (i.e. August 1910) was the height of what he termed his 'Slade Coster Gang' period, a masquerade involving the wearing of an approximation of working-class male dress: flat caps, mufflers, brightly coloured silk scarves, flamboyantly patterned waistcoats, pegged moleskin trousers, stout leather boots, and the carrying of coshes or heavy, lead-weighted walking canes. The 'gang', apart from Nevinson, Wadsworth and Allinson, also included John Currie, Stanley Spencer, John 'Badger' Moody and Maxwell Lightfoot. Its members engaged in boisterous, half-serious, bouts of fisticuffs with the police in Tottenham Court Road, with medical students from University College Hospital, pro-female suffrage members of the Men's Political Union, Fabian vegetarians, anti-vivisection protesters, and Christian Union men. Members of the 'gang' even fought with real life costers and cockney toughs to be found in the rowdy audiences of the music halls, including the New Bedford on Arlington Street, Camden Town, so often painted by an artist Nevinson admired throughout his life, Walter Richard Sickert.⁸¹

At this juncture, it would be germane to inquire just what it was that attracted young males from the Slade, largely hailing from comfortable, well-heeled, middle-class backgrounds, to the distinctive attire and persona of the male coster. What

characteristics were attributed to them, what variety of associative behavioural connotations did costers possess prior to 1914, and what qualities were costers regarded as possessing that were identified as desirable or undesirable and by whom? The coster enjoyed a prominent place in Victorian social literature, their habits, morality and dress being extensively described by Henry Mayhew during the 1850's and early 1860's. However, it is evident by the Edwardian era that in accounts of working-class London life, in the minds of middle-class social commentators the figure of the male coster was virtually indistinguishable from that of the bumptious, insolent, truculent, irrepressible cockney as an urban trouble-maker. Mayhew clearly distinguished between the cockney and the costermonger. The former had a fixed abode, somewhat squalid and unhealthy from a middle-class perspective, usually in the East of London, or in those areas hugging the wharves and docks south of the River Thames, in which they worked as porters, stevedores and Dockers. The latter was identified as an itinerant streetseller or small, independent market trader dealing in fresh fruit and vegetables, fish and some pre-prepared snacks bought from the main open-air markets. Mayhew seems to have both admired and feared the costermonger. He admired their colourful, robust, self-confident independence and commercial acumen. He feared their potential as a destabilizing influence within society and regarded them as a threat to the social order, cohesion and rigid moral conventions and orthodoxies the Victorian middle-class sought to impose upon their social 'inferiors', in order to make them into more respectable members of society.

Mayhew argued that coster street folk were essentially alien, belonging to the primitive "wandering tribes of the world [with] broad, lozenge-shaped faces ... owing to the great development of the cheek bones and pyramidal skulls" and, culturally, on a level with the African bushman or Hottentot, the Lapps and the Arabian Bedouin. The coster male was not at all domesticated, he spent his life out of doors and:

his leisure is devoted to the beer shop, the dancing room or the theatre ... They have a marked fondness for 'sparring' ... the 'sparring' is not for money but for beer and 'a lark'; bouts usually only last for a quarter of an hour until one coster has given another a ... bloody nose. The costermongers boast of their skill in pugilism as well as in skittles ... Among the men rat-killing is a favourite sport ... Nearly every coster is fond of dogs ... Their dogs fights are both cruel and frequent ... A good pugilist is looked up to with great admiration by the coster and fighting is considered to be a necessary part of a boy's education. Among them cowardice, in any shape, is despised as being degrading ... it is important for a lad, and even a girl, to know how to 'work their fists well.' If a coster man or woman is struck they are obliged to fight ... Everybody practices fighting and the man who has the largest and hardest muscle is spoken of in terms of the highest commendation. It is often said of such a man that " ... he could muzzle half a dozen bobbies before breakfast" ... To serve [knock] out a policeman is the bravest act by which a costermonger can distinguish himself ... In their continual warfare with the force, they resemble many savage nations from their cunning and treachery they use ... It is called "plucky" to bear pain without complaint. To flinch from expected suffering is scorned and he who does so is sneered at and told to wear a gown as being more fit to be a woman ... They also delight in tattooing their chests and arms with anchors and

figures ... During the whole of this painful operation the boy will not flinch, but laugh and joke with their friends.⁸²

There is considerable evidence to indicate that, by the Edwardian era, the interference of and regulations imposed by municipal authorities, coupled with the evangelising actions of religious groups, had done much to diminish the numbers of costermongers and curb their peripatetic anarchic spirit. The author of a history of the coster Mission in Shoreditch, published while Nevinson's 'Slade Coster Gang' was still in being, noted that during the 1880's there had been many prosecutions of costers for affray and assaulting the police in Hammersmith, Hoxton and Hampstead. However, during the last twenty years, costers had become increasingly law-abiding and responsible. Their days of agitation, concerning their right to roam where they wished, were long past with the local authorities of London encouraging costers to move from the street to fixed, regulated market sites.⁸³

While Protestant Evangelical organizations welcomed the inclusion of the coster into 'respectable' society, other observers of London life complained that the capital's working population had become far less colourful, less individualistic, less idiosyncratic, less resourceful, less dynamic and energetic, less physically robust, less characterful, less sartorially heterogeneous since the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. It was now markedly more monochrome and homogenous, wearing the same sorts of clothes and using the same vocabulary. The working man, rather than carefree, nomadic and mobile, was more likely to be cooped up for hours within a constrictive, regimented, unhealthy, soul-destroying factory, small business or office and leading a less physically demanding and more sedentary life than the confident, cocksure coster of the 1880's. There was a suspicion that factory and office life had sapped the vitality from the working man, leaving him spiritless, sickly looking and under-developed in physique and musculature.

This perception fed a reinvention of the cockney, as an urban character, incorporating elements of behaviour and dress previously attributed solely to the costermonger. Edwin Pugh, writing in 1912, dismissed the inhabitants of the East End slums as "for the most part stunted, deformed, sickly, without a thought beyond the satisfaction of the day's bodily needs." He invested his hopes for a future reinvigoration of the London working man in the amalgamation of two types or personalities whom he defined as 'Arry', the typical Cockney and 'Bill the Yahoo.' The latter appears to exhibit many of the characteristics Mayhew attributed to his male costers half a century earlier. The former was envisaged as a sort of male London working-class everyman, a regular wage earner "in factory, workshop, warehouse or office ... He dresses poorly and without individuality or ostentation ... he reeks of cheapness and [his clothes] are all of a shoddy quality and seem to have been made for somebody else." 'Arry' leaves an overall impression of:

cheapness and tawdriness ... He is the young man who gives each new catchphrase its vogue. He is quite harmless, quite honest, not at all vicious, very good-natured, more intelligent than he seems and inveterately plucky ... Arry is small. Bad and insufficient air, bad and insufficient food, too much hard work at too early an age ... has retarded his growth ... has warped and stunted him ... he is tough and wiry ... brimming over with superabundant vitality ... His feet are big and clumsy, cheap, ill-fitting boots account for that. His hands are big ... because his arms are small and puny and so he has used ... to do with his hands alone what bigger, stronger, more hefty men do mainly with their biceps He has a wide, lipless mouth that alternates between sullenness and a kind of spiteful, sneering humour ... He has, as a rule, rather a good head, round and compact, with plenty of room for the imagination above the ears ... In this he differs markedly from his rustic cousin of the debased and ape-like skull.⁸⁴

Alongside 'Arry' Pugh was taken with the more physical and less law-abiding figure of 'Bill the Yahoo':

We think of him, in the raw, crude state, as a hooligan ... just big boys overflowing with animal spirits ... who enjoy fighting with policemen, jostling the middle-aged and prosperous and ... the painless humiliation of some ... member of that smug upper class the superiority of which the hooligan ... secretly envies and would fain attain ... he is, above all things, a poseur. His large air of recklessness, of indifference to others, of insisting upon himself ... are all part of an elaborate masquerade ... while he cannot disguise his contempt for long-hair, eccentric headgear and elaborate walking sticks, his attitude towards life ... is invariably, inflexibly, reactionary, aristocratic and [as] intolerant as that of any hard-riding, hard-drinking, hard-swearing Tory of the old school. There are some nobles with Liberal leanings, but every costermonger is a Conservative in grain.⁸⁵

Pugh then proceeds to make an interesting comparison between the coster, or 'Bill the Yahoo' type, and the upper-class swell that may help to explain how Nevinson could identify with the coster male in terms of their brightly coloured silk neckerchiefs, broadly checked waistcoats and tightly cut trousers. All such sartorial attributes were interpreted as markers of innate aristocratic dandyism. Pugh bemoaned the passing of the male 'yahoo'/coster but hoped that some of his example would rub off on to the masses of undernourished, unprepossessing 'Arries' who thronged the streets of London "The Cockney ... is the supreme type of Englishman: in his sturdy optimism, in his unwavering determination not only to make the best of things as they are, but to make them seem actually better than they are ... and in his supreme disdain of all outside influences that threaten his self-sufficiency."⁸⁶

I believe one can detect in the writings of a number of Liberal-minded commentators on London's working-class, during the period 1910-14, a refashioning of the archetypal figure of the Englishman. This involved a distinct move away from the John Bull tradesman/shopkeeper towards Mayhew's turbulent, belligerent and brutish costermonger In addition, this convergent coster-cockney figure was combined with a type emerging within the London music halls of the 1890's, the regular private in the British Army. This figure was championed in the prose and verse of Rudyard Kipling during the same decade To some extent he found a partner in the figure of the suave,

rugged, rather ruthless ex-public school educated Man About Town as imagined by Anthony Hope in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, E.W. Hornung in *Raffles* and, ultimately, after the Great War began, in the figure of John Buchan's tough and resourceful Richard Hanney.⁸⁷

Turning to Nevinson's perception of himself, as an art student there is some evidence to suggest that he was acutely aware of his swarthy complexion, even his friend Adrian Allinson was known to refer to him as "Bucknigger". He was also very hurt that an English girl and fellow Slade student, Dora Carrington, should find an East End Jew, Mark Gertler, physically more appealing than himself. Nevinson mused "it seems so natural to me for a girl to prefer Gertler to me and I am always prepared to take second place purely from a matter of good taste on the girl's side ... if only Gertler was bigger of stature, he would be absolutely superhuman with that highly sensitive brain of his."⁸⁸

While studying in Paris, at the *Academie Julian*, Nevinson liked to indulge in subterfuge and role-playing. For example, he passed himself off as a Russian called 'Nevinski' and pretended, in dress and behaviour, that he was an *Apache*, a quarrelsome and knife-wielding member of the Parisian underworld. *Apaches* were known for their readiness to take offence, for carving each other up in knife fights, for walking around Paris armed, for bank raids, gambling and for their disdain for women, and fondness for pimping.⁸⁹ Later, in his autobiography, Nevinson went almost out of his way to portray himself, as a young art student, in the most unflattering light "I was always fat, ugly, indifferent and promiscuous, with a terrible roving eye, more from force of habit than from real desire. A most unpleasant creature ... I was ... with a mind more than half-feminine."⁹⁰

From how Nevinson imagined himself as an art student, I want to turn to one of his first images to feature working men, painted while he was still at the Slade and entitled *Gasometers* [Plate 1] It was also one of the first images he ever exhibited in public. In the left foreground, two men strain against a rope pulling a barge piled with coal. Rather like the man at the wheel of a barge in *A View of Bradford* [Plate 2] they appear both diminutive and diminished in the presence of totems of modernity, in this case factory chimneys belching smoke and gasometers silhouetted against a glowering grey sky. Without the gasometers and the telegraph pole this scene could be from any time during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the golden age of canal construction and use. Nevinson chooses to emphasize the fact, from the attitude of the two figures, that the men must rely upon sheer brute muscle power to pull the barge;

either they cannot afford the horse team, which would normally pull such a heavily laden barge, or the tow-path is insufficiently wide for a horse.

For the slightly later *La Villette/Canal at Ghent* (c.1913) [Plate 3], in a typical example of Nevinson's pictorial practice, he extracted the detail of two men hauling a canal barge from *Gasometers* and magnified it, setting the men against a far more enclosed and claustrophobic urban backdrop.⁹¹ Through magnification comes concentration on the act of physical labour, with the two figures dominating the foreground and occupying about a third of the picture surface, and an intensification of a more pronounced sense of exhausting strain and effort in the bodies of the two workers. Nevinson has so cropped the composition that the men are depicted pulling on a rope attached to something out of sight. His treatment of the two men, I feel, indicates how adept Nevinson was at suggesting inner emotional states through posture and bodily demeanour. Their bodies lean into the composition in such a way as to suggest that both men are putting their every ounce of grim determination into pulling whatever they have to pull. No information can be derived from the face of the man in profile, he is literally expressionless, a cipher, his features composed from a small number of simple shapes and angles. Unable to read any emotion into the one face we can make out, one is forced to concentrate one's gaze on their straining torsos and limbs and on their palpable physicality. Their reason for being is their capacity for straightforward but very demanding manual labour. They are not skilled men, used to the management of machinery in a factory, and probably appealed to Nevinson precisely for this reason. They are working out of doors in air that seems far from fresh and invigorating. At the same time the blank wall of factory buildings, with their perfunctory windows, and the chimney stacks belching smoke into the air, seem to press down on to the backs of the men, already bent forwards in order to take the strain of their load.

Perhaps Nevinson's most eloquent pre-1914 evocation of the heroic male worker, within an industrialised urban environment, is *Allotments: East Ham* [Plate 4]. This could well be the oil referred to by H.W. Nevinson, in his diary, as "an allotment garden" sold at the Private View of the Friday Club exhibition held late in January 1913.⁹² The urban allotment may not now seem to be a particularly 'modern' subject, but it was one of contemporary importance and of considerable interest to Nevinson's father. H.W. Nevinson had become interested in allotments, for the 'deserving' urban poor, through his friendship with the exiled Russian anarchist writer and thinker Peter Kropotkin. In *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, published in 1899, Kropotkin argued that many industrial centres in what are now termed 'developed' countries were surrounded by land which had been left empty and unproductive at a time when millions of working people were undemourished. Since they earned so little in wages they could not afford to supplement their daily diet with fresh, healthy, food. In a later book *The Mutual Age: A*

Factor of Evolution, published in 1902, Kropotkin argued that the urban allotment was a fine example of the instinctive desire of the worker to co-operate with his fellow workers productively and a repudiation of the kind of competitive social Darwinism that was claimed to be a natural part of life within a capitalist system. H.W. Nevinson also advocated the extension of the 1887 Allotments Act. This entitled four or more people, deemed to be from the ranks of the 'labouring poor', to petition a parish, town, borough, district or metropolitan council for land they could rent to grow food, and only food, in an attempt to enhance their existing diet. Groups were permitted to lodge a petition so long as they had exhausted all efforts to rent land from a private owner. H. W. Nevinson also had in mind the events of the Summer of 1906 in which so-called 'Land-Grabbers', desperate unemployed skilled workers, occupied unused land in Manchester, Bradford, Leeds and in Plaistow, East London and attempted to set up collectively run market gardens.⁹³

At the time his son painted *Allotments*, H.W. Nevinson was much pre-occupied with what he perceived as the moral, physical and mental degeneration of the British people and, especially, its working-class. His journalism, for the *Nation*, indicates that he was very sensitive to the appearance of predominantly working-class crowds:

How stunted, puny and ill-developed the bodies are! How narrow-shouldered the men, how flat-breasted the women! ... the faces, how shapeless and anaemic ... how deficient in forehead, nose and jaw ! Compare them with an Afghan's face; it is like comparing a chicken with an eagle. Deficient in blood and bone, the products of stuffy air, mean food and casual or half-hearted parentage, often tainted with hereditary or acquired disease ... how insignificant and indistinguishable ... are the faces ... in an English working crowd, even an Englishman finds it difficult to distinguish face from face. Yet, as a nation, we have always been reckoned conspicuous for strong and even eccentric individuality.⁹⁴

H.W. Nevinson believed, and argued, that an allotment would supply a space in which an unemployed working man could rediscover his male dignity through the manual labour entailed by growing his own food and through reconnection with the land and nature. The worker would be endowed with a stake in the system renting out the land to him. As Henry Nevinson imagined it, the allotment was expressly gendered as an exclusive male preserve. The working man would cultivate the earth and grow the food, not flowers, which his wife would cook. Through working on an allotment H.W. Nevinson hoped that the working man would see the merits of vitamins and of a balanced diet, not only to improve his mind and body but also the minds and bodies of his wife and children.⁹⁵

As a member of the Worker's Educational Association, founded in 1905, Henry Nevinson's efforts, and those of many others including the Agricultural Organization Society, were rewarded in 1908 with the passage of the Small Holdings and Allotments

Act.⁹⁶ For the first time all municipal administrative bodies were legally bound to rent out land, on request, to four or more members of the 'labouring poor' for cultivation as allotments. Nearly a thousand allotment plots were allocated by East Ham council, presently the London Borough of Newham, between 1908-14.⁹⁷

Nevinson, in his painting, has obviously drawn upon the influence of Jean-Francois Millet (1814-1875) as a sort of filter in his approach to a working-class male figure in a semi-urban environment, as well as a means for showing off his art-historical knowledge. His treatment of the subject matter indicates an awareness of such works by Millet as *The Angelus* (1855-57, Musée du Louvre) and, in particular, *Man with a Hoe* (1860-62, Private Collection, USA). Whereas, in the latter case, Millet's exhausted, ragged, mud-caked, labourer looks up to draw a momentary breathe, and has been reduced to beast-like level, Nevinson's dapperly dressed Allotment holder is a respectable member of society. He may not yet be a property owner, but he has some legal claim to the land he works. There may be an irony in operation here in that, while Millet's peasant is symbolically earth-bound, Nevinson's Sunday afternoon gardener looks up and out, in a conspicuously ennobling and heroicising attitude towards factories on the horizon. Presumably, he is employed in one of these factories. Thus, he is subject to the equally unbending routine of factory life. His ancestors may well have been agricultural labourers, or even farmers, but now his only contact with the land is this small two or three acre portion which he doesn't even own but only rents. The money to pay for that annual rent comes from his factory wages, the very factory whose pollution permeates the environment in which he attempts to grow 'healthy' food for his family. Millet suggests that there is nothing redeeming or morally enriching about hard, manual labour, it is an inescapable part of the struggle for survival and the daily hunt for food. Nevinson's working man, as a wage earner, can approach the growing of food as a hobby, useful but not vital to his survival.

In his appreciation of the allotment as a space inhabited by the heroicised male manual labourer Nevinson may have also been aware of George Clausen's (1852-1944) work on the theme such as *Allotment Garden* of 1904 (oil on canvas, Tate Gallery, London.) One should recall that Clausen had been a visiting tutor and examiner at the St. John's Wood School of Art during the time Nevinson was studying there, between 1907 and 1908. Clausen usually depicted men actually working on the earth with hoes, backs bent low to the task, while Nevinson's urban allotment holder stands erect and gives the impression of being monarch of all which he surveys. He pauses to take stock, perhaps to momentarily ease aching muscles from the work he has undertaken, holding a spade by his side.⁹⁸ This pose may have a specific ideological grounding linked to his father's close connections with the Parliamentary Labour Party. Nevinson claimed, in his autobiography, that one of his first formal

commissions came from the Independent Labour Party to design an election poster "depicting a working man looking at a new dawn and hint at the great future of peace and prosperity which lay before him ... My poster was a dismal affair; too black, too overworked and the hands of the labourer were more Dürer than Dürer."⁹⁹

Nevinson may have secured the commission through his father who was friendly with the then Labour Party chairman (between 1906 and 1909) and later party leader (in 1922) Ramsey MacDonald (1866-1937). MacDonald was also the MP, between 1906 and 1918, for H.W. Nevinson's home-town of Leicester.¹⁰⁰ Nevinson was certainly not above reusing an old design if the subject matter seemed appropriate. For example, Nevinson would later reproduce the pose of the allotment holder in the figure of a British Army pioneer private standing, with his face tilted towards the rays of the sun, in the left-hand foreground of a lithograph he made early in 1918 entitled *After A German Retreat: Labour Battalion Making A Road Through A Captured Village* [Plate 5]. By extension, from doing good work in the allotment, the worker exchanges a cloth cap for an Army one and turns his hand to equally useful constructive work behind the lines on the Western Front. There is no real difference between the factory worker and the citizen soldier; both perhaps can be imagined daydreaming about a better future. The pre-war figure gazes upon a smoke-besmirched skyline while his wartime equivalent looks upon the sun illuminating the twisted piles of wreckage he must clear away to build anew.

A year later, in 1919, Nevinson exhibited a large lithograph entitled *The Workers* [Plate 6] The print may have been derived from an oil painting that had its origins in an event Nevinson witnessed in 1911. In August 1911 Henry Nevinson noted that he and his son had attended a rally of striking Dockers held in Trafalgar Square. The rally was addressed by Benjamin Tillett (1860-1943), leader of the Dock, Wharfside, Riverside and General Workers Union and a talented public speaker.¹⁰¹ He was impressed by Tillett's expressive body language, rousing, impassioned rhetoric, the broad-brimmed hat he held in one hand and used to enforce points he was making, and his shock of white hair that blew evocatively in the breeze. The distant figure glimpsed in *The Workers*, standing on a raised embankment and gesticulating with a raised, clenched fist, may have been derived from Nevinson's memories of Tillett in Trafalgar Square. Indeed, he may have already painted a figure in such a pose as Henry Nevinson noted, in June 1912, that his son had recently finished an oil of the "Tower Hill strike."¹⁰² If *The Workers* reproduces the composition of the oil from 1912, perhaps Nevinson already anticipated a violent working-class uprising with an expectation tempered by dread. Certainly, the victory of the Dockers and the railway workers in the summer of 1911 appeared to herald a new era in industrial relations and politics, with the Unions enjoying a much greater influence than ever before. As there were, according to the

census of 1911, about 14.7 million people who could be classified as working-class and only 4.9 million belonging to the middle and upper classes, Nevinson, perhaps, thought it might be prudent to visually associate himself with the cause of the increasingly restive proletariat. One should also recall that H.W. Nevinson, while covering the events in Russia of 1905-6, had seen for himself the bloody reality of revolution and its consequent repression by the authorities.¹⁰³

At this juncture, a watercolour and gouache study produced by Eric Henri Kennington c.1912, for a mural he painted on a wall of the Crosse and Blackwell canning factory on Nine Elms Road, Vauxhall, is deserving of comment since it sheds light upon another conception of the Edwardian working-class body. [Plate 7] From the exhortational and morally improving texts, culled from the New Testament, that surround the mural design, I believe it quite likely that Kennington was inspired by the example of Ford Madox Brown's early Pre-Raphaelite epic of 'everyday life' *Work* (1856-63) [Plate 8] In the version of *Work*, exhibited in London in 1865, inscribed above the five brawny road-diggers or 'navvies' – derived from the 'navigators' who dug the canals in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and laid the nation's railway network during the Victorian era - is a quote from John 9;4: "I must work while it is day, for the night cometh, where no man can work."

Above the figures of the two 'brain-workers', the historian and author of *Past and Present* (1843) Thomas Carlyle and one of the founders of Christian Socialism and the then Principal of the Working Men's College, the Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice, is a quote from Proverbs 22;29 "See thou a man diligent in his business ? He shall stand before kings." Along the left-hand edge of the canvas, from 2 Thess. 3; 8 one can read "Neither did we eat any man's bread but wrought with labour and travail night and day." Finally, below the main group of navvies digging up Heath Street, Hampstead, is inscribed from Genesis 3; 19 "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."¹⁰⁴

Running along the top edge of Kennington's mural design, for the Crosse and Blackwell factory at Imperial Wharf, Nine Elms Road, Vauxhall, is the following inscription "From Busy Day The Peaceful Night." On the right-hand edge, "Rich From The Very Want Of Wealth." Along the left-hand side, "From Toil He Wins His Spirits Light." Finally, along the bottom edge, "In Heaven's Rest Treasures, Peace and Health." The texts Kennington deployed would suggest that he accepted the orthodox Anglican position of his day that poverty, coupled with punishing manual labour, was somehow morally redeeming and elevated the working man above his wealthier fellows in the afterlife. Otherwise society, as it stood, was to be left unchanged with the rich sporadically dispensing charity to those poor whom they deemed to be 'deserving'.

Kennington may have influenced on this question by contact with the Christian Socialist thinker, theologian and economist William Cunningham (1848-1919) whose portrait Kennington painted in 1908. (oil on canvas, National Portrait Gallery, London.) Cunningham, a disciple of the Reverend F.D. Maurice and champion of the work and aims of the Workers Educational Association, did not seek any violent change either in the existing economic organization of society or in the distribution of wealth and privilege. He advocated a process of gradual change in which the lot of the worker would be ameliorated through a combination of improving their educational opportunities, encouraging employers to adopt a paternalistic and protective attitude towards their employees, and persuading the state to allow the trade unions a greater say in improving wage, health and living conditions for their members. Without such improvements, Cunningham predicted the eventual collapse of society into bloody inter-class struggle.¹⁰⁵ It has struck me as incongruous that, while Kennington has depicted an out-of-doors scene, those at whom the mural was directed worked indoors and within an environment structured by the relatively advanced level of automation achieved by the British canning industry before World War One. At the Crosse and Blackwell factory a rudimentary, hand-propelled, assembly line or conveyor belt system was operated, moving the cans as they were filled.¹⁰⁶

Though, ostensibly, an outdoor scene the composition of *The Costermongers* (1914) [Plate 9] suggests its protagonists exist within an enclosed and restrictive environment. In this next section I shall explore why Kennington elected to paint these particular sub-group within the itinerant, non-unionised, Georgian pre-war working-class, with such gravity and on such an unprecedented scale. The canvas was exhibited, to great acclaim, at the prestigious International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers held in April 1914. According to a mini-biography of Kennington, written by a close friend in the early 1940's, he had first been attracted to the "costers and navvies of Walham Green" about two years prior to the outbreak of the First World War.¹⁰⁷ At the time of the picture's exhibition, one journalist noted that Kennington had invited some of his subjects to pose in his studio and that, on occasion, he had accompanied them on their hawking rounds. As the journalist was reporting for an eminently respectable paper, he must have imagined Kennington's fondness for common people would give his readers a frisson of disgust. It was thought decidedly odd that the son of Thomas Benjamin Kennington, a well-respected genre painter, a former Secretary of the New English Art Club and, in 1914, Vice-President of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters, should actually invite such degraded 'types' from the streets into his workplace¹⁰⁸

Observing this image, one cannot take it for granted that the adult male and female were married to each other, in what a contemporary would have regarded as

being in the conventional sense, or that the young girl and boy are their children, or even related to the adults. It is possible that they are the offspring of other costers casually employed on a daily basis to help with food preparation and the actual selling of the snacks. Hawking hot chestnuts or baked potatoes was regarded as rather beneath the dignity of an adult male coster; that sort of activity could be left to children or adult females. If aged between fourteen and sixteen, the young boy and girl could already be 'stepping out' together in an unregulated form of coster marriage, which was not recognized by the state and was deeply disapproved of by religious organizations.¹⁰⁹

The adult male coster possess by far the most strongly and vividly realized features of all the figures in the composition. It is his challenging gaze, from close-set eyes, that warily confronts the spectator or potential customer. His stare is effectively buttressed by a cigarette aggressively jutting from the right-hand corner of his mouth. He wears the classic attire associated with the coster: flat cloth cap; negligently tied patterned muffler at his throat, a long, check-patterned cord waistcoat, tight-fitting, narrow-cut cord trousers and large stout black leather boots which have seen considerable wear. His features have a certain rodentine cast about them, recalling a description given by the cockney 'laureate' Albert Chevalier, in 1895, of the sort of impersonation he typically placed at the centre of his act and which proved extremely popular with late Victorian music hall audiences:

a puny, crouching, angular figure - a sort of human ferret. A peaked cap over a close-cropped head; a rag of coloured cloth where the rest of us wear a collar...a check-patterned jacket on a meagre body ... I would say the genuine type of East End costermonger in his habits, as he lives.¹¹⁰

The boy, absorbed with scraping a potato, or preparing chestnuts, sports a more brightly coloured, flamboyantly patterned neckerchief, which was deemed as a characteristic of the male coster. As mentioned previously, one cannot assume that this boy is related to the adult male behind him. It is quite possible he might have been adopted by the older man, who has chosen to clothe him and instruct him in the approved ways of costering. Mayhew noted that:

Almost every costermonger, who trades through the streets with his barrow, is accompanied by a boy ... aged from ten years to fifteen ... Boys are judged useful for 'calling' ... the adults realizing that many customers prefer to buy from a child ... believing that if the lad did not succeed in selling his goods he would be knocked about when he got home ... Some costermongers have been known, when they have taken a fancy to a boy, to dress him like themselves ... silk handkerchiefs and all.¹¹¹

In the manner of Ford Madox Brown, obsessed with detail, Kennington is equally determined to accurately, and faithfully, record every detail of detritus from popular,

everyday, street culture such as discarded matchboxes, orange peel, nut shells, packaging and sheets of newspaper. One discarded newspaper page bears the heading 'Football Star' and might be to hand to wrap the food being sold. In the upper right hand corner there appears to be a placard advertising another cheap, populist newspaper and precursor to the tabloid of today, the *Evening News*. This could be construed as Kennington's understated comment on the state of the mental development of his costers. For their view of the outside world they were reliant upon the sort of sensationalist, 'yellow', journalism that C.F.G. Masterman, writing in 1909, claimed was corrupting and debasing the characters of ordinary working people:

England seen through the medium of its Sunday Press; the Press, which, to seven out of ten of its present inhabitants, represents the sole picture, they possess of the world outside, takes upon itself an appearance of violence and madness. Men and women knife each other in the dark. Children are foully butchered by unknown assailants. Suicides sprinkle every page ... a long procession of murderers, thieves, absconding solicitors, fraudulent company promoters ... the continuous parade of brutality, outrage and unnatural crime ... cities visibly given up to the dominion of lust and greed. All this is England.¹¹²

While examining the critical reception of *The Costermongers* it is noticeable that a majority of the critics discussed at length its flat colour, the stylised lighting, the eccentric perspective and Kennington's debt to Pre-Raphaelitism, anything but engage with the actual subject matter. Some of the more populist newspapers objected to a respectable art society allowing the exhibition of such "sordid, foul, gross, filthy and dirty" subject matter. Not surprisingly, *The Star* objected to its name being literally placed in the gutter and ignored by the very people it would have regarded as part of its natural readership.¹¹³ A more politically conservative reviewer, C.H. Collins Baker, thought that Kennington had taken his unashamed heroicisation of such unprepossessing street types too far. Indeed, he believed they did not look:

genuinely sordid ... Mr. Kennington seems to have scrupulously hired authentic costers to pose in his studio ... he has made careful studies of potato ovens, shop windows and placards. His figures are players in an admirably got up Pre-Raphaelite tableau; they are not people surprised in the very act of costering ... thick with ... the roughness, the shrewdness, the raucousness of their tribe.¹¹⁴

Randall Davies, in the more left-wing *New Statesman*, thought *The Costermongers*:

quite establishes Mr. Kennington as one of the best painters who have appeared of late ... His costers are real live people in modern clothes, his accessories real bits of paper and pots and pans and other common objects of the lee-shore of a costers life ... only he has composed them and coloured them as Van Eyck would have done.

In a manner, reminiscent of Glyn Philpot's recently exhibited bronze masks of Black African males, Kennington was "working out the real facts that constitute the fascination

of the most virile types of *Homo Sapiens* ... divested of all sickly sentiment about race, morals or politics.¹¹⁵

As far as Davies was concerned, Kennington had convinced him that an artist could truthfully and unpatronisingly depict real working-class people, transcending political and artistic agendas, and without saccharine flattery, sentimentalism, or romanticism. Of course, such an achievement, for a middle-class artist was unattainable, though it may be significant that Davies thought Kennington was aiming at an unvarnished and 'true' presentation of working people. Kennington, I would argue, set out to idealize his coster subjects because they were not ordinary working-class people who would have worked in a factory or within some other form of enclosed and strictly regulated environment. By painting them in the manner of the Northern or Italian Renaissance, Kennington has elevated these costers not only to make them worthy of a large canvas but also to locate them within a sort of elegy for a way of life. His costers occupy a niche of open-air working-class independence that seemed to be threatened by developments in modern urban life such as the growth of bureaucracy and regulation, the influx of unskilled labour from the surrounding countryside into London and the replacement of horse drawn cabs and omnibuses with motor buses and taxis. Kennington, however, has had the grace to slyly suggest that the adult male coster is just as wary, of the spectator and his motives, as a critic, such as Collins Baker, would have been if he had encountered a coster on the street in the spring of 1914.

I think one can argue for a connection, an evolving correspondence, between Kennington's Walham Green costers and navvies, who constituted his primary subject matter for the period 1912-14, and the British infantrymen he drew, three and four years later for the Department of Information. For example, there is the imperturbable Private in the Royal Engineers of the Kipling stamp with his magnificently groomed and carefully waxed moustache in *Laying A Field Telephone Wire* (1917) [Plate 10] *The Ration Carrier* (1917) [Plate 11] or *The East Surrey Farrier* (1917) [Plate 12] could have emerged directly from some bucolic rural idyll as imagined by Thomas Hardy. For me, these later drawings suggest how much time soldiers spent during the First World War not actually fighting but repairing, fixing, in makeshift construction, in man-handling supplies of food, small-arms ammunition, medical supplies, military equipment and trench protection materials from the rear to the front-line. Constantly undertaking backbreaking fatigues and carrying parties, the average infantryman was always extremely tired. If anything, the proliferation in the use of technology actually multiplied the tasks Engineers and ordinary soldiers were required to perform. From being an active and dynamic figure in previous wars, in this first war of the first industrial age, the combat soldier served no purpose once he had run out of ammunition. He spent most

of his time as a beast of burden and as a substitute for the mechanical and automated means of moving objects. The First World War 'Tommy' effectively became an organic structure wearing a mass-produced uniform on which mass-produced articles were hung.¹¹⁶

Kennington offers a very different conception of the male in modern urban life to that projected by Nevinson in his self-proclaimed 'Futurist masterpiece' *Tum Tiddly Um Tum Pom Pom* [Plate 13]. He began work on this huge canvas in April 1914, the same month in which *The Costermongers* was exhibited and exhibited it at the Allied Artists Association summer show two months later.¹¹⁷ On one level the two works appear poles apart; while Kennington appears concerned with clarity, stability, solidity, order, and the coherency, harmony and legitimisation offered by tradition to further emphasize the purposeful activity of a particular section of society, Nevinson seems infatuated with a very different stylistic conception of modernity. This conception is characterised by violent disintegration, flux, interpenetration, fragmentation, disjunction, fusion and the untrammelled release of emotion, energy and movement amidst pleasure-seeking bodies engaged in vulgar display and frivolous consumption. Though Nevinson's work was, stylistically, more enmeshed within the concerns of avant-garde modernism, both he and Kennington depict a group of people whose manner of dress and way of earning a living would have seemed utterly alien to the average comfortable middle-class spectator.¹¹⁸ Indeed, despite Nevinson's formal experimentation, I would argue that, in *Tum Tiddly Um*, he is just as concerned as Kennington with isolating and celebrating an aspect of London working-class experience.

However, before pursuing this matter further, I wish to explore the circumstances in which Nevinson encountered, admired and then came to assimilate the stylistic trappings of Futurism into his own work. What ramifications would this decision have for Nevinson's perception of the kind of masculinity he was required to perform in public as an adherent of the movement? In turn, I would argue that the kind of masculinity Nevinson felt necessary to perform was embedded within the form of masculine behaviour the Futurists encouraged the press to interpret as characteristically Futurist.

It would appear that Nevinson's father first came into contact with the founder of Futurism, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944), amidst a war in October 1912. H.W. Nevinson was working as a journalist covering the outbreak of the First Balkan War on the Bulgarian side. He later recalled how he found himself marooned with Marinetti, alongside sixty-eight other journalists, in the small Bulgarian frontier town of Stara Gora.¹¹⁹ Neither H.W. Nevinson nor his son seem to have been aware of Marinetti's *The Founding Manifesto of Futurism*, published in the Parisian daily newspaper *Le*

Figaro on 20 February 1909, or taken much notice of the Futurists first exhibition in England held, early in March 1912, at London's Sackville Galleries. When he eventually read Marinetti's *Founding Manifesto*, early in 1913, H.W. Nevinson was impressed with many of the explosive and bellicose sentiments it proclaimed such as:

- (I) We intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness;
- (iii) Up to now literature has exalted a passive immobility, ecstasy and sleep. We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and the slap.
- (vii) Except in struggle, there is no more beauty. No work without an aggressive character can be a masterpiece.
- (ix) We will glorify war - the world's only hygiene - militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for and scorn for women.¹²⁰

H.W. Nevinson was also flattered by Marinetti's high opinion of English military prowess and the pre-eminence of English naval technology "You [the English] have an unbridled passion for fighting in all its forms, from boxing -simple, brutal and swift - to the roar from the monstrous throats of the guns crouched in their revolving caves of steel on the decks of your Dreadnoughts."¹²¹

It is significant, given the admiration C.R.W. Nevinson felt for his father, that H.W. Nevinson also concurred with Marinetti's less than complimentary appreciation of English youth:

As for your twenty-year old men, almost all of them are homosexual for a time ... at thirty they show their heels to Sodom in order to marry a shamelessly licentious young lady ... making haste to condemn the born invert severely, the counterfeit man, the half-woman who fails to conform.¹²²

However, given H.W. Nevinson's deep and sincere commitment to the cause of women's rights, it is not easy to understand how he could reconcile his admiration for Marinetti's vitality and dynamism with the Italian's frequently expressed visceral contempt for women. For example, in his 1910 diatribe, *Let Us Murder Moonshine*, Marinetti declaimed:

our nerves demand war and despise women ... What can they want ... women, the sedentary, invalids and the sick ... To their vacillating lives, broken by dismal agonies, by fearful dreams and heavy nightmares, we prefer violent death ... which we glorify as the only thing worthy of men, that beast of prey ... See the furious coitus of war, gigantic vulva stirred by the friction of courage, shapeless vulva that spreads to offer itself to the terrific spasm of final victory!¹²³

C.R.W. Nevinson did not come into direct contact with Futurism until at least April 1913, while he may have been prompted to take an interest in the movement by his Father. It was certainly through H.W. Nevinson's contacts that he met the Futurist painter Gino Severini soon after Severini's one-man show opened at the Marlborough

Gallery on 7 April 1913.¹²⁴ Eleven days later, H.W. Nevinson noted that Severini had visited his son at the family home and been taken out for a spin on his son's motorcycle down Haverstock Hill and into the City. Early in 1913, C.R.W. Nevinson had purchased a motorcycle and this appears to have made him both more receptive to depicting machinery in a formally experimental way and to the Futurist exaltation of speed and technology.¹²⁵ Ironically, given Nevinson's pretensions to pass himself off as a Futurist daredevil in newspaper interviews before the outbreak of World War One, chronic ill-health compelled him to sell his motorcycle within a year. Indeed, during the pre-war period in which he closely associated himself with the Futurist cause, one is struck by how often Nevinson was ill, displaying symptoms that can be interpreted as nerve-related and psychosomatic.¹²⁶

Severini was very taken with Nevinson and his motorcycle. In a letter, written later in 1913 to Marinetti, he described Nevinson's confident handling of the machine and praised him as "a real Englishman."¹²⁷ On returning to Paris Severini quickly alerted Marinetti that there was a potential English convert to Futurist painting in London and urged him to send Nevinson a selection of manifestos. These arrived at the Nevinson home early in August 1913.¹²⁸ It took Nevinson some time before he decided to paint an aspect of a London working-class holiday crowd in a Futurist manner. He first depicted such suitably technologically Futurist subject matter as steam locomotives, ocean-liners and the interior of a moving London underground train in *The Departure of the Train de Luxe from the Gare St. Lazare*, exhibited at the Doré Galleries in October 1913 and *The Non-Stop*, exhibited with the London Group in March 1914. Unfortunately, as is so often the case with Nevinson's Futurist works, the whereabouts of both are presently unknown. In his approach to the subject matter of *Tum Tiddly Um Tum Pom Pom*, Nevinson was considerably influenced by the attitude of his father towards the working-class cockney London crowd and by his own perception of growing feminine power within the city with its alarming potential for generating disorder. When a photograph of the large canvas was reproduced in *The Western Mail*, in May 1914, it was accompanied by the following caption "A Futurist Masterpiece. It represents Hampstead Heath of a Bank Holiday. Real confetti has been showered into the paint. The picture shows - at least the artist claims that it shows - the chaotic movement, noise and enthusiasm of the Bank Holiday crowd."¹²⁹

A long-established literary convention existed, especially amongst more liberal-minded middle-class social commentators, that the Heath on a Bank Holiday was a site for pathologically hysterical behaviour. With the advent of the women's suffrage movement, and the frequently destructive activities of the Women's Social and Political Union, this hysteria had been identified as the product of aberrant women. There was something very disturbing to the middle-class intellectual mind about all these working-

class bodies in the same space and about the behaviour and dress of working-class young women. In the spring of 1914, Bank Holiday Monday fell on 13 April. Hampstead Heath was only ten minutes away, by underground train, from the Nevinson family home on Downside Crescent. Nevinson probably went to the Heath, as he had done many times before. His father had already written a piece for *The Nation* about Bank Holiday on the Heath in which he argued that the occasion supplied disturbing evidence of the degenerate appearance of the imperial capital's working-class:

I should rather be a Zulu than a British workman ... on looking round upon the London crowds ... my first thought was that [T.E.] Huxley's paradox remained true. The crowds that swarmed Hampstead Heath were not lovely things to look at ... the Newspapers calculated that nearly half a million beings were collected on 'Hampstead's swarthy moor' ... "like bugs - the more, the worse," Emerson said of city crowds and ... in no other country in Europe ... could so colourless a crowd be seen ... smudgy, dirty, evil-smelling creatures ... I suppose that, out of that quarter-million people on the Heath ... hardly one percent wears clothes that no one has worn before him, hence the sickening smell that not only pervades an English crowd but hangs, for two or three days, over a space where the crowd has been ... Pre-Historic man, roaming through dust and forest, in his own shaggy pelt was infinitely better clad ... And more than half-concealed by that shabby clothing, what shabby forms and heads we must divine! How stunted, puny and ill-developed the bodies are! And the faces, how shapeless and anaemic!¹³⁰

When C.R.W Nevinson's Futurist evocation of the Heath was exhibited, in June 1914, a number of art critics interpreted its imagery in terms of feminine hysteria, or Suffragette violence towards works of art and public property. One thought *Tum Tiddly Um* was "a hymn to the modern spirit ... he [Nevinson] remains masculine comparing, indeed, favourably in this respect with his Latin counterparts ... His picture expresses, very well, the popular conception ... of what an attack by militant Suffragists looks like!"¹³¹ This critic appears to have accepted earlier comparisons, made by others, between the large grinning face in the centre of the composition and photographs that supposedly revealed the contorted, and unnaturally hate-filled, physiognomies of a succession of women who had attacked paintings in public galleries earlier in 1914. Mary Richardson, slashing Velasquez's *Rokeby Venus* in the National Gallery in March 1914, and Mary Wood, attacking John Singer Sargent's portrait of Henry James in the National Portrait Gallery in May 1914, were often cited as the most notorious cases. *The Daily Mirror*, typically, ran a series of illustrated features entitled "The Suffragette Face: A New Type Evolved By Militancy." These included photographs of female demonstrators described as "Screaming with Impotent Rage", "Frustrated and Deluded" and "Ecstasy on Arrest".¹³² Whether Nevinson meant the work to be associated with feminine violence is hard to say. He had been peripherally involved, as a spectator, in a couple of suffragette demonstrations in 1913. These had been violently broken up by mounted police and he was, no doubt, aware that his father had, in February 1914, helped to found an organization dedicated to the suffragist cause.¹³³ It could have been a natural reaction of son against the beliefs of the father that, as his involvement with Marinetti and his movement deepened, his actions and statements became increasingly

misogynist. Though Marinetti had praised the daring of "London and New York suffragettes" in 1913¹³⁴, he was attracted far more by the prospect of women engaged in violence with men, and being clubbed by policemen, than by any belief that women deserved the vote and more equitable treatment in society.

It is distinctly ironic that a violent, disruptive, feminine agenda should have been accredited to Nevinson's 'Futurist Masterpiece' since Marinetti, on the whole, identified anti-state or revolutionary violence as a male activity. Meanwhile, Nevinson's manifesto *Vital English Art*, published in *The Observer*, 7 June 1914¹³⁵, denounced:

the commercial acquiescence of English artists, the effeminacy of their art ... the English public who stupidly adore the pretty-pretty, the commonplace, the soft, sweet and mediocre, the sickly revivals of medievalism ... Aestheticism, Oscar Wilde, the Pre-Raphaelites ... The English notion that Art is a useless pastime, only fit for women and schoolgirls, that artists are poor deluded fools to be pitied and protected.

He claimed that English Futurism sought:

an English Art that is strong, virile and anti-sentimental ... [and] That English artists strengthen their Art by a recuperative optimism, a fearless desire for adventure, a heroic instinct of discovery, a worship of strength and physical and moral courage, all sturdy virtues of the English race.¹³⁶

However, his attempt to co-opt his fellow members of the Rebel Art Centre into the nascent English Futurist movement, by a *coup de main*, seriously backfired. Nevinson found that former allies, such as Lewis and Wadsworth, along with other avant-garde artists, such as Jacob Epstein, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, William Roberts and David Bomberg, turned against him. Nevinson managed to antagonise them to the extent that they purposively excluded him from the formation of Vorticism, an artistic project that was envisaged as a specifically English foray into artistic experimentation. Nevinson was denounced in the press¹³⁷ while his attempts to explain Futurism at public lectures were repeatedly disrupted.¹³⁸ For his part, while asserting the primacy of masculine creativity, Wyndham Lewis did not care to be reminded by Nevinson that he was only able to finance his 'Rebel Art Centre', with a grant from a female admirer, and could only scrape a living by painting interiors for rich female patrons such as Kathleen, Lady Drogheda. Lewis replied by exhorting the young middle-class English male to revitalize himself to avoid the fate he envisaged in a number of newspaper articles. For example, Lewis warned, "at home ... in the suburbs, with his pipe and slippers, he [the modern Englishman] becomes just a stomach, an invalid bag of mediocre nerves, a silly child"¹³⁹ Ironically, during the same period, Lewis was often caricatured as an archetypal dissolute, disreputable, and degenerate Bohemian. In one he was depicted holding a poisonously coloured cocktail in one hand, and a cigarette burning away to ash in the other, as he sat morosely slumped in a plush corner of the *Cafe Royale*.¹⁴⁰

Nevinson found himself, with Britain's declaration of war on Germany, trapped by the attractiveness of and the assumptions imputed to the very masculine masquerade he had so willingly embraced in the spring of 1913. By the summer of 1914, after their well-publicised exhibition at the Doré Galleries in April-May and the series of 'Futurist Noise Concerts' featuring Marinetti and Russolo at the London Coliseum between 15 and 20 June 1914, the Futurists had succeeded in projecting themselves through the English metropolitan press as models for a new kind of modern masculinity. This new mode of masculinity was aggressively heterosexual, belligerent, energetically thrill-seeking and fascinated with modern warfare and technology.¹⁴¹ Alongside this perception, however, ran a parallel xenophobic identification of Futurism as a comic-opera, novelty movement characterised by the posturing, emotional instability of the 'Latin temperament' of its creators.¹⁴² With the outbreak of war it was assumed that, given their reputation, Futurists throughout Europe would rush to volunteer to fight. However, the warrior image of Futurists was undermined by the fact that Italy remained a neutral power until May 1915. Only then would Marinetti and his Italian followers have an Austro-Hungarian opponent to fight. In the meantime, some of England's more conservative cultural commentators and opinion-formers crowed that the failure of its homegrown modern artists to enlist had exposed their essential cowardice, effeminacy, and irrelevance. They further expressed the hope that the war would kill off Futurism and all the other despised avant-garde art movements, if ever some of their adherents discovered the courage to fight. Edmund Gosse in October 1914, in tones reminiscent of Marinetti's *Founding Manifesto of Futurism*, described the war as 'the sovereign disinfectant ... which will clean out the stagnant pools and clogged channels of the intellect in our young men.'¹⁴³ Meanwhile, the editor of *The New Age*, A.R. Orage, in the same month, thundered 'Once more I express the hope that they ... Futurists, Imagists and such triflers may all perish in the war.'¹⁴⁴

What of Nevinson? Had he taken up the Futurists burden and become a soldier? Earlier in 1914 a *Daily Mirror* article posed the question 'How would a Futurist Die?' The answer did not allow Nevinson much of a choice. If he still wished to advertise himself as 'England's only Futurist', once war had been declared 'A Futurist would infinitely prefer to die a violent death by fighting than on a sick bed.'¹⁴⁵ Nevinson took the best part of three months to get into a uniform and, when he did, it was not that of the British Army but of a non-combatant medical unit organized by the Society of Friends. This, of course, was a Society that preached pacifism and international brotherly love! To be fair to Nevinson he had tried to follow the logic of his Futurist convictions and volunteer at the beginning of the war. However, his family doctor had told him that he possessed such a poor health record it was highly unlikely he would pass a medical examination; even with many army doctors prepared in the first months

of the war to turn a blind eye in order to help the willing to enlist. Nevinson later recalled his nuanced determination to join up:

Brass bands, union jacks and even 'Kitchener Wants You' had no power to move me. The thought of general service was far from my mind owing to my limp and ... I was well aware that I should pass no doctor ... I was pursued by the urge to do something, to be 'in' the War, although I succeeded, in the end, and I was 'in' it, I was never 'of' it.¹⁴⁶

Though he does not make it explicit, I suspect the "urge to do something" was embedded in his appreciation that, to maintain his artistic credibility as a modernist firebrand, he must be seen to perform the masquerade of masculinity associated with Futurism in England.

CHAPTER TWO.

C.R.W. Nevinson, War, the Male Body and the 'Hallucination of the Machine' c.1914-1916.

In the previous chapter I attempted to explore the conceptualisations of masculinity C.R.W. Nevinson perceived as desirable and sought to perform in early adulthood. By embracing Futurism, prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Nevinson committed himself to acting out a certain form of hyper-heterosexual masculinity, which he found fulfilling to perform and hoped would register effectively with the general public. I will now explore how Nevinson's personal experiences of the war, his service for two and a half months with The First Anglo-Belgian Ambulance Unit/Friends Ambulance Unit, between 13 November 1914 and 30 January 1915, and for seven and a half months in the Royal Army Medical Corps [RAMC] at the Third London General Territorial Hospital, Wandsworth, between 1 June 1915 and early January 1916, reconfigured his pre-war perception of what constituted a fulfilling and desirable masculinity. In addition, I will discuss the extent to which this perception restructured his appreciation of the male body as well as the ways it influenced the depiction of such bodies in action, at rest, under stress, and in pain.

I also wish to emphasise the cultural ramifications of how the events of the war, and its realities, undermined confidence in pre-war ideas of industrial organisation such as Frederick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*, published in 1911. As the apostle of the time and motion study Taylor argued that productivity and efficiency could be greatly increased if factory-based workforces were imagined as organic machines. He advocated that any management could mould and dictate the motivation of their workforce by rigorously structuring every minute of their time through a controlled factory environment. This environment would dictate what they wore, when and where they could talk and when and where and what they could eat. Taylor's arguments were complemented by the publication, in 1914, of Professor J.B. Watson's *Behaviour. An Introduction to Comparative Psychology*. The book's title gave its name to the concept of 'Behaviourism' in free market industrial relations which argued that, given a suitably constituted and controlled environment, the exterior body and the interior psyche of a human subject could be shaped according to the dictates of a sufficiently intrusive and powerful organisation.¹⁴⁷

In this respect, the Battle of the Somme, fought between July and November 1916, was not only a watershed in terms of bringing home to combatants and civilians alike how bloody and unromantic the war had become. It also undermined faith in the

totalising concepts of industrial and military organisation advocated by Taylor and Watson. Contemporary readings of the battle, and its disappointing outcome, compounded the perception of front-line soldiers that the public at home and the High Command were utterly remote from comprehending the mentality and motivation of those who fought. The press may have been mesmerised by statistical gigantism, the much trumpeted amassing of huge amounts of mass-produced technology prior to a battle and preliminary bombardments, with their expenditure of millions of shells. However, the military reality was that an offensive, for all the vast organisational effort, could be frustrated by comparatively small groups of committed and determined defenders. Equally, the success of an attack might rest with a handful of extraordinary individuals. It is possible that the manner in which Nevinson characterised the militarised male body, in his unofficial war art of 1915 and 1916, assisted a deepening divergence between how front-line combatants wished to imagine themselves, and the attempts of civilians at home to construct an image of the British soldier through the guarded testimony of survivors on leave, and through the distorted official propaganda image offered by the press. On the one hand, civilians sought reassurance in a literary and visual convention that the war was a vast, unimaginable and ungraspable process in which the individual soldier became a marginalised figure once subordinated to the all-pervasive power of the military machine. Front-line combatants, however, still perceived themselves as rounded individuals as a necessary part of the process by which they motivated themselves to endure and fight. This process included an intrinsic psychic 'illusion of immortality' which, for each individual serviceman, was translated into the prosaic daily hope that another man would always be the one to be killed or maimed.

By the time of Nevinson's first one-man show, which opened in September 1916 ten weeks after the Battle of the Somme began, critics spanning the spectrum of hostility towards or approval of qualified forms of visual modernism, acknowledged that Nevinson had, alone, formulated a pictorial mannerism for conveying the convention that militarised masculinity en masse had become to assume the attributes of the machine:

if he [Nevinson] says anything in these paintings, it is that our age is becoming a mechanical one, that man is part of a machine, that this is especially true in war, that an army of men is a machine without individuality. The geometric convention, which Mr. Nevinson uses so successfully, helps him to make an army *look* like a machine and, in this way, he perhaps conveys to us his protest.¹⁴⁸

It would be useful to now examine how, in his 1937 autobiography, Nevinson sought to retrospectively construct a satisfying facade of militarised masculinity for himself through description of his war experiences. Reading *Paint and Prejudice*, one cannot help noticing the significance Nevinson accorded two episodes that took place during

his first exposure to front-line life as a volunteer with the Friends Ambulance Unit. Firstly, there was his experience of tending the wounded in a makeshift temporary dressing station nick-named 'the Shambles' and, then, the destruction of the motor ambulance he was driving by a shell. It may be possible to tease out, from sources closer to the events in question, how Nevinson represented his reactions and behaviour, to the sight of pain and the prospect of death, and sought to fabricate a robust masculine facade to conceal the reality of mental and physical collapse.

Nevinson left London, for France, on the evening of 12 November 1914. On arrival at the Unit's Dunkirk headquarters during the afternoon of the following day he was immediately put to work in one of the 'evacuating sheds'. These 'sheds' were actually ordinary covered goodsyards beside Dunkirk railway station on the outskirts of the town. French and German casualties had been packed into them and then forgotten. According to the Unit's official records Nevinson spent a week, between 13 and 19 November 1914¹⁴⁹ as a stretcher-bearer working in and around one of the sheds. In his autobiography, Nevinson describes one of these sheds as

full of dead, wounded and dying ... nicknamed 'The Shambles' ... the wounded had been roughly bandaged and packed into cattle trucks which were to carry them to hospital. Here they lay, men with every form of terrible wound, swelling and festering, watching their comrades die ... They lay in dirty straw, foul with old bandages and filth...gaunt bearded men, some white and still with only a faint movement of their chests to distinguish them from the dead by their side. Those who had the strength to moan wailed, incessantly, "Ma Mere, Ma Mere" ... There was a strong smell of gangrene, wine and French cigarettes, although a spark on the straw would have turned the place into a crematorium ... in five minutes I was nurse, water-carrier, stretcher-bearer, driver and interpreter ... I felt I had been born into a nightmare. I had seen sights so revolting that man seldom conceives them in his mind and yet there was no shrinking even among the most sensitive of us. We could only help and ignore shrieks, pus, gangrene and the disembowelled.¹⁵⁰

Though Nevinson wrote this account some twenty-two years after the events he describes, its essential details are corroborated by contemporaneous diary entries made by his father. For example, visiting his son the day after he had started work in 'the Shambles', H.W. Nevinson noted:

Went to the sheds again ... saw many hideous wounds among the Germans who lay on the straw neglected. One man told me how he had not had his dressing changed for fourteen days ... his leg was one swelling gangrene. One was shot through the back, the bullet coming through and cutting off the penis, perforating the bladder ... so that when we cut away the foul bandage, his water gushed out from a hole in the groin with terrible pain. All the Germans, about thirty in all, suffered much. Their stench was sickening.¹⁵¹

In *Paint and Prejudice* Nevinson gives every impression of being immensely proud of his service as an ambulance driver. He describes picking up wounded from close to the front-line, transporting them to a forward Friends Ambulance Unit dressing

station at Woesten, about two miles behind the then front-line, and then driving other consignments of wounded from Woesten back to Dunkirk:

It was a Woesten that I had a shell go clean through the back of my ambulance. I was amazed and a trifle indignant. Certainly, I was not as frightened as I ought to have been ... if my van had not been a flimsy affair it would have exploded. Instead, I had nervous indigestion, but I slept like a log. Of this I am inordinately proud. I was nothing of a soldier and considered my work as something that applied to both sides. Looking back, I know very well I was too vain to show much fear. It was only after a succession of events that men's nerves cracked and, I am thankful, indeed, that I escaped the strain unimpaired.¹⁵²

The incident he describes seems to have possessed immense significance for Nevinson and was central to his understanding of how well he had met the test of masculinity under fire. It would appear, from the official records of the Friends Ambulance Unit, that Nevinson, at most, spent eight days, between 20 and 27 November 1914, driving an ambulance from Dunkirk to Woesten and back. He was then reassigned to the new Friends Ambulance Unit hospital in the Dunkirk suburb of Malo-les-Bains, where he worked as a ward orderly.¹⁵³ There is supporting evidence to suggest that, while Nevinson was based at Woesten, the ambulances operating from there were frequently shelled. At least one ambulance was destroyed by a stray shell while standing, empty and stationary, in the dressing station's yard. In two dispatches to the Quaker journal *The Friend*, the head of the Friends Ambulance Unit, Philip Baker, wrote that towards the end of November 1914:

at least twenty-two shells fell around us while the cars were being loaded [between the front-line and Woesten] and on November 23rd [1914] four shells fell in the centre of Woesten of which one carried away the footboard and one of the back wheels of one of the Mors motors [ambulances] ... Happily, no one was in the car at the time ... it was evident that the shell was a spent one which indicates that the village is barely within range of effective bombardment.¹⁵⁴

H.W. Nevinson noted in his diary, five days after his son began driving an ambulance to Woesten, that he had just received a "Long letter from Richard ... describing a drive to Boulogne and a night at Woesten when a shell smashed his ambulance."¹⁵⁵ Whatever fate actually befell Nevinson's motor ambulance, he spent the rest of his time with the Friends Ambulance Unit in the less glamorous, but still very useful role, of chief nursing orderly at the *Hôpital St. Pierre* in Malo-les-Bains.¹⁵⁶ His father visited him there, in December 1914, and found Nevinson:

doing orderly work in a ward of ten or twelve wounded ... some very terrible and scarred ... He seems to be a great success as an orderly, interpreter, driver to the hospital ship and singer but he has been put off driving through rheumatism ... Richard is very much liked by the wounded for his sympathy ... One [of the wounded] who cannot pass water, owing to a wound in [his] back, was crying and screaming incessantly from [an] inflamed bladder ... Richard stroked his arm 'til he was almost silent.¹⁵⁷

In his autobiography, Nevinson quickly glosses over his time in the hospital at Malo-les-Bains writing cursorily that "I was expected to give a hand in the operating theatre ... and ... quickly adapted myself and was soon handling instruments to doctors with the deftness of an experienced nurse." He does make much of being bombed by a Zeppelin, while driving wounded to a hospital ship in Dunkirk harbour¹⁵⁸, noting: "I was one of the first men to see a child who had been killed by it [the Zeppelin] ... Then I crocked up and was sent home."¹⁵⁹ Nevinson does not elaborate on the reason why he 'crocked up' and seems to suggest, from the structure of his explanation, that his unit had sent him home. In fact he requested a period of leave from it. On returning to London, Nevinson was quick to encourage the impression that he had spent the bulk of his time with the Friends Ambulance Unit as an ambulance driver within the sound of the guns. For example, he wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* indignantly correcting an earlier article it had printed that stated Red Cross volunteers were being kept well out of harm's way in France:

Our hospitals at Y.[pres] and W.[oesten] were often bombarded and part of the former was destroyed. We were several times forbidden the shortest routes, as they were under too heavy shell-fire, and ... I myself had my motor ambulance destroyed by shrapnel.¹⁶⁰

Whether the incident happened to Nevinson quite in the manner he later recalled, the conviction he had come close to death, while driving an ambulance, came to possess a deep significance for him. Even if only for a short while, he had lived up to the Futurist ideal of the male as fearless warrior-technologist who was ever ready to risk one's life in pursuit of new and exhilarating sensations. It is, perhaps, not surprising that Nevinson actively sought to represent himself as an intrepid ambulance driver. In December 1914 he sent Marinetti a photograph-cum-postcard of himself standing beside a motor ambulance, wearing a long driving coat, leather gauntlets, and a peaked cap with driving goggles perched on top. [Plate 14] It says something for Nevinson's sense of priorities at the time, and his single-minded commitment to self-promotion, that he possessed the presence of mind to have someone on hand to record the fact that he had been an ambulance driver, if only for a week. Nevinson's attempt, in the photograph, to present himself as the daredevil Futurist 'automobilist' incarnate, at one with his machine and impervious to the threat of danger, is somewhat undermined by his appearing distinctly ill at ease in his poorly fitting Friends Ambulance Unit uniform. It was not enough, however, for Nevinson to demonstrate to Marinetti that he was in uniform. He carefully scored into the photograph bold lines, incised in pen and ink, to indicate how prodigiously the side of this very same ambulance had been riddled with shrapnel fragments and also what part of the vehicle had been 'totally destroyed by a shell'. It is as if Nevinson was seeking some sort of recognition from the founder of



Futurism, an acknowledgment that the movement's only English adherent was fulfilling the demands of the dynamically masculine Futurist public persona.

If Nevinson was actively seeking to perpetuate the fantasy imagining of himself as an indestructibly intrepid Futurist ambulance driver, one could understand the logic of his exhibiting a plaster bust, *The Automobilist*, as his most formally challenging contribution to the Friday Club early in February 1915. [Plate 15] Given that the exhibition opened only a week after he left Dunkirk for London, I think it likely that Nevinson began work on the bust, inspired by the plaster sculptures Boccioni showed at the Doré Galleries in April 1914, before he joined the Friends Ambulance Unit in October.¹⁶¹ When the art critic P.G. Konody (1872-1933) first saw *The Automobilist* he described it as "a bust constructed of more or less disjointed planes ... spheres on one side of the face and cubes on the other. It is like a Picasso drawing translated into sculpture and bears a superficial, close, resemblance to the Italian's ... Boccioni's, freakish exhibits at the Doré Gallery last year."¹⁶² I interpret the bust as a self-portrait with the title constituting a calculated reproof directed at Wyndham Lewis who had, previously, dismissed Nevinson derisively as "the only authentic Automobilist left in Europe, except Marinetti."¹⁶³ Furthermore, when he first saw the bust, H.W. Nevinson described it as "a Futurist bust of a chauffeur."¹⁶⁴ Indeed, when Nevinson first joined the Friends Ambulance Unit, on his registration card he described his professional skills as those of a 'chauffeur' and a 'mechanic'.¹⁶⁵

If Nevinson wanted *The Automobilist* to be read as a portrait of himself, wearing the peaked cap, driving goggles and leather driving coat of a daredevil motor ambulance driver with the Friends Ambulance Unit, the bust-sized format, with its suggestion of incompleteness, becomes problematic. It may have been that he lacked the time or the expertise to make a more triumphalist and compelling full-length figure along the lines of Boccioni's plaster figure *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* [c.1913, exhibited Doré Galleries April-May 1914, bronze cast 102.5 cm high, Museum of Modern Art, New York.] While this figure is a thrilling and compelling evocation of the dynamic Futurist male, perpetually and implacably marching onward, the truncation and fragility of *The Automobilist* strikes a note of vulnerability rather than one of assurance. Furthermore, the ambulance driver is somewhat of a problematic figure in terms of bodily action and display. He asserts his masculinity in his mastery of a machine, in hand-eye co-ordination, the strength, suppleness and responsiveness of wrists, hands and arms and the staying power of shoulders, rather than in actual corporeal movement and dynamism. Perhaps, the choice of format, for *The Automobilist*, was informed by Nevinson's perception of how flimsy and vulnerable to a shell-bust or to shell-splinters his motor ambulance had been. Dynamic interpenetration of a viscerally tangible, rather than metaphorically, Futurist kind could have so easily occurred. Even a near miss, from a shell, would have driven fragments of metal from the interior of the ambulance

cab, as well as shards of glass from a shattered windscreen, into his own body. He could not have even used the speed of the ambulance to escape as the condition of the roads required him to drive with care to avoid inflicting unnecessary suffering on the wounded he was transporting.

The only contemporary photograph of the work, and a poor one at that, was reproduced in *The Daily Graphic* in September 1915 and depicted Nevinson, now wearing the uniform of a private in the RAMC, explaining the meaning of *The Automobilist* to one 'Private Smith.' The Private, a veteran of the Battle of Mons in August 1914, was convalescing at the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth, where Nevinson worked as a ward orderly.¹⁶⁶ [Plate 16] The image is saturated in irony in that Nevinson is essentially 'explaining' a fantasised imagining of himself, as an intrepid dynamic ambulance driver at one with the momentum of his machine - a role in which one should remember he had lasted for about a week before his body failed him, to a combatant who had actually served in the trenches and been wounded. However, beside Nevinson's artfully constructed fragment of virile, mechanized masculinity, the authentic combatant 'Private Smith', ensconced in a bath-chair with his heavily bandaged foot and cretinous gaze, emerges as a faintly comical and rather pathetic figure. Nevinson later re-exhibited the bust at his first one-man show, held at the Leicester Galleries, between September and November 1916, with the new title of *The Mechanic*.¹⁶⁷

This aggrandized image of himself, as the dynamic ambulance driver, must have possessed great personal resonance for Nevinson since he later produced at least two portraits of himself as a *Motor Ambulance Driver*. [Plates 17 and 18]¹⁶⁸ When the pastel drawing of *Portrait of a Motor Ambulance Driver* was exhibited, in June 1916 [Plate 18], one newspaper described its protagonist as a "khaki titan with one huge gauntleted hand fixed on the steering wheel ... an exceptionally able simplification, convincingly, and challengingly carried through ... and ... based on vital investigation."¹⁶⁹ P.G. Konody was later to describe the ambulance driver as "a complete fusion of man and machine ... The driver has almost ceased to be a man. He is merely the controlling force. His body is rigid, his hand clutches the steering wheel; his eyes are glued upon the road; he is an integral part of the car."¹⁷⁰ Presumably, Nevinson did not object to this interpretation as he had asked Konody, at the time, to write a text for a book on which they were to collaborate. The only note of colour is that of the homely red scarf wrapped tightly around the neck of the driver. This detail suggests the ambulance could not have been completely inviolate to his unforgiving environment, if he required an item of home-knitting to keep out the chill. The driver does not appear to have his eyes fixed on the road ahead, rather he seems to balefully regard the spectator from the corner of one goggle covered eye, along with the

suggestion of a sardonic grin. Nevinson's deliberate magnification of the right hand, clamped on to the steering wheel, may be less an assertion of personal strength than an egotistically coded reference to the swelling of the joints in his hands that prompted Nevinson to invaliding out of the RAMC in January 1916.¹⁷¹ He later described his condition, prior to being discharged from the Army "I went down with an attack of acute rheumatic fever ... my hands were in an appalling state, scarcely human, and I was given to fainting."¹⁷²

After the exhibition of *The Automobilist* Nevinson showed himself extremely sensitive to any suggestions he had left the Friends Ambulance Unit on account of a combined mental and physical breakdown. When a reporter, from the *Daily Express*, wrote that Nevinson's "sensibility was not trained in the same school as the iron nerve of a Marinetti ... His nerves gave way, his health broke down and he had to return ...", the artist indignantly replied "Beyond a severe attack of rheumatism, my health is better than before the War and I am in absolutely no way suffering from any form of nerve trouble."¹⁷³ This does not accord, however, with Nevinson's description, in his autobiography, of the nervous reaction he experienced to a near miss from a shell while driving his ambulance in Flanders:

Like many sensitive men, I can honestly say that I have never felt fear at the moment of danger ... But some hours later, and when in complete safety, I suffer intensely from delayed shock, beginning with terrible elation, followed by uncontrollable tremblings and ending with vomiting, with all forms of anticipation of evil and with eventual prostration.¹⁷⁴

I will now consider *Returning To The Trenches* (1914-15) [Plate 19], which had a huge impact when it was reproduced in the *Daily Express* at the end of February 1915 and first exhibited at the London Group early the following month. It struck such a chord with critics, who had been antagonistic towards Nevinson in the past, because it was one of the few works in the London Group show that referred directly to the war. In addition, the image gave the impression Nevinson had discovered a formula for visually expressing the new dynamics of machine-age warfare. In the composition of *Returning To The Trenches* Nevinson began to work his way towards a shorthand style that suggested his pictorial practice was far more imbued with the formal concerns of Futurism and analytical Cubism than in actuality. It is evident, from an unfinished charcoal study, that once he had established a satisfying rhythmic pattern, in the upper left-hand corner with the superimposed succession of marching feet, he had the key component for the entire composition. Once that key detail had been established, the image would require no further elaboration. [Plate 20] He was also able to work into the design the novelty of the uniforms worn by French soldiers observed during his time

with the Friends Ambulance Unit in Flanders. These uniforms were far more brightly coloured than the regulation drab khaki of the British Army.¹⁷⁵

The pen and ink version *On The Way To The Trenches*, sometimes erroneously described as a woodcut, was reproduced in the *Blast! War Number* issue of July 1915. The French soldiers are condensed into an almost abstract pattern, in which the level of interpenetration and implied dismemberment is far more pronounced than in the oil painting. [Plate 21] In the later drypoint version of the design, executed in 1916, [Plate 22] Nevinson exploited some of the properties of the medium to suggest that the men within the column are far more harassed and closer to collapse than in the oil painting. In reversing the composition Nevinson manages to convey the impression that the ranks of the marching men are beginning to lose the momentum and purposeful coherency conveyed by the oil painting. This sense is reinforced by Nevinson's delicate use of needle-point and burr to achieve greater facial definition in the marching men, picking out narrowed eyes, furrowed brows, hollowed cheeks, sharp protruding cheek bones, stubble, and thick neglected beards to convey both a palpable impression of physical exhaustion and strain and a dogged determination to keep one foot in front of the other. Indeed, only the drypoint design can sustain the interpretation offered by Richard Cork of the French soldiers as "beleaguered" or "menaced."¹⁷⁶ I would suggest that, in the initial version in oils, Nevinson was more concerned to convey a sense of grim concentration on the part of the soldiers and unstoppable, implacable, momentum.

In connection with the opening of the London Group show Nevinson gave a number of interviews in which he reaffirmed his faith in Futurism, rather than, as some readings have suggested¹⁷⁷, repudiating Marinetti's fervent belief in the efficacious effects of warfare. His endorsement of the movement was nuanced by what he had witnessed at the Front. However, his commitment, to the aggressively muscular and specifically heterosexual masculinity associated with Futurist artists, appears to have remained undiminished:

Unlike my Italian friends I do not glory in war for its own sake, nor can I accept their doctrine that war is the only health-giver ... However, ... this war will be a violent incentive to Futurism, for we believe there is no beauty except in strife, no masterpiece without aggressiveness ... I have tried to express the emotion produced by the apparent ugliness and dullness of modern warfare ... Our Futurist technique ... expresses the crudeness, violence and brutality of emotions seen and felt ... All artists should go to the Front to strengthen their art by a worship of physical and emotional courage and a fearless desire of adventure, risk and daring and free themselves from the canker of professors, archaeologists, cicerones and beauty worshippers. Modern Art needs not beauty not restraint but vitality. The public cannot realize too soon that the modern artist is not the puny and effeminate long-haired creature of the [eighteen] nineties.¹⁷⁸

While distancing himself from Marinetti's much publicised celebration, in the 1909 *Founding Manifesto of Futurism*, of war as "the world's only hygiene", it is obvious that Nevinson did not fundamentally disagree with the other key elements of the Futurist

creed. Indeed, the interviews he gave were infused with vocabulary and phrases derived directly from Marinetti's *Founding Manifesto*¹⁷⁹ and from the 1910 *Manifesto of Futurist Painters*. Drawing on the latter manifesto, Nevinson singles out the effeminate artistic male for scorn and identifies this figure with that of Aubrey Beardsley and his 'aesthete' followers.¹⁸⁰ A year earlier Nevinson, in his *Vital English Art Manifesto* of June 1914, had vehemently denounced Beardsley and the cult of *The Yellow Book* as exemplars of the pernicious influence of Oscar Wilde, and the deviant, homosexual English aestheticism associated with him.¹⁸¹ Simultaneously, Nevinson strenuously sought to disassociate himself, in the public mind, from this tainted heritage by insisting that he had volunteered for front-line duty. This act had, consequently, exposed him to the possibility of physical harm. Surely, Nevinson argued, this conclusively demonstrated that he did not possess the stereotypically "puny and effeminate" body of an artist. He responded to an article claiming he had only paid a brief visit to the Front, in order to further his artistic career, with a pained denial. This culminated in a ringing condemnation of what he believed to be wrong with English art:

as a matter of fact I have spent some three to four months there [in France and Flanders] in the capacity of a mechanic, stretcher-bearer and driver of a motor ambulance ... I am firmly convinced all artists should immediately enlist and go to the Front, no matter how little they owe England for her contempt of modern art ... and free themselves from ... effeminacy, old fageyism and snobbery.¹⁸²

After his brief stint with the Friends Ambulance Unit Nevinson experienced a traumatic period as an ordinary private in the RAMC. This constituted his first exposure to having to live and interact with other males, from a variety of class backgrounds, within the rigid discipline imposed by the 'machine' of military organisation. Having seriously overstayed his allotted sick leave, the Friends Ambulance Unit refused to have him back when he tried to rejoin it in May 1915.¹⁸³ As conscription had yet to be introduced, Nevinson could have legitimately remained a civilian. He, however, determined that, to live up to his Futurist public persona, he had to be seen wearing some sort of respectable uniform. It has emerged that he did not feel equal to serving abroad in any caring capacity. On 1 June 1915 he enlisted as a private in the RAMC at the Third London General Territorial Hospital, Wandsworth, on, it would appear, the strict understanding that he would remain based in London, and not be sent abroad to Mesopotamia or Gallipoli.¹⁸⁴ Nevinson was also probably reassured by the knowledge that the Hospital Commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel H.E. Bruce Porter, was an admirer of his father's journalism and had already told H.W. Nevinson that he was committed to keeping the writers and artists under his command out of harm's way.¹⁸⁵

By the time Nevinson arrived at the Third London General, the hospital had evolved into a major medical establishment expanding from 520 beds in March 1915 to nearly 1,800 in January 1916 with the addition of new wards, kitchens, operating

theatres, X-ray and massage departments, store and bath houses and a recreation room. This room was equipped with a cinematograph projector and screen to show films regarded by Lieutenant-Colonel Porter as a useful supplement to the convalescence process.¹⁸⁶ Life at Wandsworth was Nevinson's first experience of repetitive, back-breaking and intensive manual work under regular army discipline. Both the work, and the discipline, came as a rude awakening to Nevinson who was soon complaining vociferously to his father. Only five days after Nevinson's arrival at Wandsworth, H.W. Nevinson received a letter from his son moaning that he was "unutterably miserable among the men, nurses and officers ... and the food is appalling."¹⁸⁷ After Nevinson had been about a month at Wandsworth he was visited by his father, who found him to be "much depressed at hospital work and [his] treatment at the hands of the nurses and expectations of being sent out."¹⁸⁸ A year after leaving Wandsworth, and while trying to avoid conscription into the military, Nevinson gave his Father the impression that the aspects of Army life he had most dreaded were the degrading and punishing manual labour and being shouted at by abusive and authoritarian regular army sergeant-majors.¹⁸⁹ In his autobiography, Nevinson wrote bitterly:

I shall look back with horror on my life, at the Third London General, not because of the War, or the work, its dullness and squalor but, partly, because ... I was under Army nurses ... they were the most repulsive bosses, thinking of little but currying favour with the doctors and with a magnificent indifference to truth and justice.¹⁹⁰

An accurate idea of the sort of duties Nevinson would have undertaken at Wandsworth can be constructed from the writings of another RAMC private at the hospital; a middle-class pre-war journalist called Ward Muir. He enlisted at Wandsworth only a few days before Nevinson and appears to have been friendly with the Hospital Commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel Porter, who encouraged him to set up a hospital magazine. The first issue was published in October 1915.¹⁹¹ In a letter to a Fleet Street colleague written in August 1915, and later published in the *Gazette of the Third London General*, Muir described the RAMC private as "not only parlour maid and waitress; he is charwoman and messenger boy, bathchair-man, barber, bootblack, window-cleaner, bath-attendant, gardener, valet, washer-up and odd-job man all rolled into one... [in] this labyrinthine machine of ours."¹⁹² He concluded that, despite the exhaustion and the sight of ghastly wounds "It's the sense of camaraderie, the social side which is so important and keeps me going ... I have discovered a sudden fondness for the role of super-housemaid."¹⁹³

Critically, Muir did not find the reality of caring for wounded working-class men, which included dressing and undressing them, pushing them around the hospital grounds in wheel chairs, taking them for baths and writing letters to wives and relatives,

at all demeaning. Nevinson, from his perspective as a middle-class Futurist, found such duties far too uncomfortably subservient. They required him to wait upon, and show tenderness towards, males whom, before the war, he would have regarded as his social and intellectual inferiors. There was also something passively unmasculine in having to bestow on other men the sort of sensitivity, compassion and solicitude, traditionally identified as the sole preserve of female nurses. Moreover, Nevinson found it particularly galling that, as an ordinary orderly, he was subject to the authority of the regular nursing sisters and was required to show them the same deference and compliance due to a male RAMC commissioned officer.

I have dwelt at some length on the duties required of an RAMC orderly because Nevinson's recollection of them was deeply inscribed into those images he produced which are related to his time at the Third London General Hospital. One element, which I believe is central to all such images, is Nevinson's conception of the hospital organization as a form of dehumanising machine; a conveyor belt for receiving, processing, repairing 'damaged' units of fighting value (soldiers) and then discharging them for future use by the state. Ward Muir had, in 1915, referred to Wandsworth as "this labyrinthine machine." He described elsewhere in detail how care of the wounded had been incorporated into an impersonal and bureaucratised assembly line that literally reduced the individual to the status of a statistic and an anonymous number on a metal ticket.¹⁹⁴ Muir, later, explicitly related his imagining of Wandsworth as an organisational 'machine' to two images on which Nevinson had worked while a RAMC private: *Night Arrival of the Wounded* (1915-16) [Plates 23-24] and *The Receiving Hall* (1916) [Plate 25] An article which Muir contributed to the fund-raising book *Happy - Though Wounded !*, entitled 'An Intake of Wounded', was accompanied by a reproduction of the oil of Nevinson's *Night Arrival of Wounded*.

In the article Muir describes the circumstances in which he was turned out of his bunk at 1pm, on the morning of 27 September 1915, to receive a sudden large influx of wounded from Gallipoli. The wounded arrived on a hospital train at Victoria or Charing Cross railway stations. From there they were driven by a member of the London Ambulance Service [LAS], who were known as 'bluebottles' because of their distinctive blue uniforms, to the doors of the hospitals main entrance. There stood Muir and other RAMC orderlies, rudely plucked from sleep, shivering in the cold and wondering just how bad the cases were, with which they would soon be dealing:

Four orderlies step from the ranks. One opens the back cover [of the LAS ambulance] that has hidden, from passers-by, the vision which, perhaps, it would have been better for all to see and ponder and smartly unfastens the straps that hold each stretcher on its shelf. Four pairs of muddy boot soles, projecting from beneath blankets, indicate that the ambulance is full ... The only problem is to move these helpless pieces of human wreckage as rapidly and comfortably as may be to the place where, in due course, they will be repaired ... The great machine, which has employed them, knows their names

and whereabouts; it may be that already, in some remote office, clerks are diligently entering them under 'religion', 'age', 'length of service' and 'married' or 'unmarried' in countless dossiers ... The stretcher handles click into place; each is grasped by an orderly. "Haul!" - the stretcher, with its immobile burden, slides out [of the back of the ambulance] "Lift!" - strong arms raise it, lest it bump as it emerges. "All Clear! Lower! ... the four bearers back away, with the stretcher resting on their shoulders, and mount the steps into the main Receiving Hall of the Hospital.¹⁹⁵

The Receiving Hall, in a formally schematic and highly stylised way, also served to illustrate Muir's description of the space in which the hospital's function, as an organizational machine, was most explicit. Those orderlies not directly engaged in carrying in the wounded, from the ambulances outside, gathered inside the Receiving Hall with armfuls of hospital uniforms, known as 'blues', to be worn by the wounded and with piles of pyjamas:

others are ready with string and labels and vast volumes in which the newcomers belongings may be listed before they can be taken to the pack stores ... to be washed and fumigated ... As our stretcher enters, borne by its quartets of orderlies, it is stopped at the door. A doctor bends over the patient [and a cursory examination takes place]. He asks, "What's your trouble?" The doctor decides the ward to which the patient must be entrusted ... a label is attached to the man's foot indicating his medical condition if one has not already been attached when the man reached London ... a metal ticket, from a rack on the wall, bearing the name of the ward, and the number of the vacant bed in that ward, is placed on the stretcher and it moves forward, further down into the Hall, to make way for another.

Before leaving the Hall, a wounded man, if able to communicate,

gives his particulars to a nurse of the VAD [Voluntary Aid Detachment], is interviewed by pack store officials and assigned the uniform which is now England's most honourable livery, the royal blue of the war hospital patient ... and is also given a packet of cigarettes ... before leaving the Hall the patient is usually transferred from a hand-held stretcher to one mounted on a trolley ... which is then wheeled to the bath-house and ... then to his designated ward and bed where his chart is taken by the ward sister and he will be seen by a doctor and, if able, fed ... the metal given to him in the Receiving Hall ... hangs from a nail on the wall beside his bed so long as he remains there.¹⁹⁶

Despite the numerous activities involved in 'processing' future patients, within the Receiving Hall, and the copious information which had to be extracted from them, each patient was expected to spend no more than ten to fifteen minutes in the Hall before being taken off for a bath, dressed in hospital issue clothes, and put to bed. In a slightly later article, for a fund-raising publication, Muir described the entire process, from the patient arriving at the hospital's door to his occupying a ward bed, as symptomatic of "a card-index war, a colossal business of files and classifications and ledgers and statistics and registrations."¹⁹⁷ Indeed, Muir thought the process was not dissimilar to how a great department store, such as Selfridges, had functioned before the war in channelling the comings and goings of customers. In a way, Muir believed Wandsworth's Receiving Hall was a "clearing house of the damaged human bundles which are the *raison d'être* of our great war hospital."¹⁹⁸

It is significant that when *Night Arrival of the Wounded* was first exhibited, late in March 1916, the pared-down simplicity of its composition, the bold emphasis on geometric angularity and the awkward, clockwork toy forms of the orderlies, and the wounded they carried, received little comment. Exhibited after the war the subject matter, and the formal language in which it was couched, was widely interpreted as Nevinson's sardonic commentary on the subordination of the individual during wartime to the demands of an organization and a process that was 'machine-like' because its movements were regulated, regimented, precisely sequential and repetitive. It was a process from which not even the wounded man was exempt. As one critic put it, when *Night Arrival Of The Wounded* was exhibited in Manchester in 1920 "Nevinson gives the sensations of movements repeated so often, and so automatically, that they have become a kind of abstract mechanical motion."¹⁹⁹

Nevinson had been invalided out of the RAMC, and service at Wandsworth, on health grounds by the time *The Receiving Hall* was reproduced in the *Gazette of the Third London General*. Reading his father's diaries, for the period, there can be no doubt that Nevinson had come to loathe his lowly status as a common orderly in the RAMC. He bitterly resented being under the authority of female nurses, as an affront to his standing as an artist, and was terrified at the prospect of being sent to serve abroad in a war zone despite the assurances of the Commandant at Wandsworth. While still serving at Wandsworth, Nevinson had been shocked to discover, among a batch of Australian wounded from Gallipoli, an antipodean cousin who had lost a foot and the sight in one eye.²⁰⁰ Indeed, if one is to believe his mother, Nevinson felt compelled to marry his pre-war girlfriend, Kathleen Knowlman in November 1915, because he was convinced the longer he remained in the RAMC the more chance he would be sent to serve abroad and to certain death.²⁰¹ The timing of Nevinson's marriage is important as he was to later claim that he painted one of his most celebrated war images, *La Mitrailieuse* (1915) [Plate 26], during his honeymoon leave.²⁰² It was this canvas which first brought him widespread critical acclaim and prompted a number of lurid and bloodthirsty readings from contemporaries. These readings were often infused with sado-masochistic fantasies in which, simultaneously, male bodies were imagined as merging with and being violently penetrated by modern weaponry. In addition, the infantryman of the trenches was projected as a latter-day 'primitive', akin to the atavistic idols worshipped by the South Sea Island 'savage'.

La Mitrailieuse: An Illustration was first exhibited in London, early in March 1916, at the Allied Artists Association. The work, principally, caused a huge stir because of the manner in which Nevinson chose to depict the male body and because of the timing of its display. Even those who had been most forthright in their denunciations of formal experimentation before the war, such as Walter Richard Sickert, were beguiled by

Nevinson's pictorial acknowledgment that Futurism, with its formal dissipation and fragmentation, did not allow for the realisation of a soldier as a robustly compact and reassuring figure. Sickert, for example, wrote in *The Burlington Magazine*, "*La Mitrailleuse* will probably remain the most authoritative and concentrated utterance on the war in the history of painting."²⁰³ *La Mitrailleuse* was interpreted as Nevinson's concession to wartime reality that, if it was to compete with the machine, the male body required wholeness and integrity. It was logical for Nevinson to partially recant his pre-war commitment to a modernist style, associated with fragmentation and chaos, and return to an earlier characterisation of the male body. This harked back to his earlier images of the working man as composed from a combination of chunky and virile geometric shapes.

La Mitrailleuse was exhibited six weeks before a new Military Service Act became law. This Act authorised, for the first time in British history, the introduction of conscription for all single males aged between nineteen and forty-one. This piece of legislation, perhaps more than any other, brought home to all sectors of society that Britain was now engaged in a life or death struggle with Imperial Germany that demanded the ruthless mobilization of all available resources, material and human.²⁰⁴ The horrifying nature of total war on the Western Front became all too apparent two weeks prior to *La Mitrailleuse* going on display, when the Germans launched an offensive on the French forces defending Verdun. The assault was accompanied by an artillery bombardment of unparalleled ferocity and lethality. At the same time, through photographs in popular newspapers, the British public was becoming aware of the introduction of new weapons and new items of military equipment on the Western Front. Nevinson's 'Poilu' machine-gunners, in *La Mitrailleuse*, wore the *Casque Adrian* steel helmet, first introduced into the French Army during the autumn of 1915. Such steel helmets would have appeared as something of a novelty to a British audience in the early spring of 1916.²⁰⁵ Modernity in warfare, and the adoption of 'anti-shrapnel' helmets, was generally identified as a French specialty. For example, the *Daily Mirror*, during November and December 1915 published a number of photographs of "the new Armoured Man ... French soldiers wearing their new 'shell-proof' helmets" and wondered why the British Army had been so slow to adopt similar protection for its soldiers.²⁰⁶

I wish to now examine one of the more enthusiastic and ecstatic readings of *La Mitrailleuse* offered by an art critic when the canvas was first exhibited. Before the war, Charles Lewis Hind had been a guarded supporter of Futurism, though he strongly disapproved of the non-representational Vorticist work exhibited by Wyndham Lewis and Edward Wadsworth. He had been critical of this sort of formal pictorial

experimentation, which entirely denied a role for the human form. In 1915, he bitterly lamented what he regarded as the trivial and frivolous response of Royal Academy artists to the war. One should also keep in mind that Hind, in 1916, was exempted from military service on account of his age and chronic bad health. This fact may partly account for the fervour with which Hind welcomed Nevinson's French soldiers as endowed with aggressively metallicised male bodies:

It is an illustration of a terrible implement of warfare ... The French machine gun and the picture is as ruthless and implacable as the weapon ... And the gunners ... are they men? No! They have become machines. They are as rigid and implacable as their terrible gun. The machine has retaliated by making man in its own image. The ashen angular faces of the French soldiers ... the hard grey of their helmets, their steely grey uniforms, are brothers in colour to the grey of their gun and the grey of their cartridges that are coiling themselves venomously into it. The machine gun is rigid, the men are rigid. They are machines without fears, without hopes, wound up ready to strike, prepared to the ultimate point of efficiency. The crew and the gun are as one, equipped for one end, and one end only, - destruction. Horrible! I glory in these French gunners. I glory in their gun. I salute these self-sacrificing automata in the clothes of men for they are giving their all: life, love and ideals for their country as our men are ... Man, who should be walking with God, has become one with the evil machine invented by man, here pictured and more affrighting because so more reticent and deadly than a picture of actual slaughter.²⁰⁷

It is intriguing that Lewis Hind, along with all the other critics who mentioned *La Mitrailleuse*, while reviewing the Allied Artists show, made no reference to the upturned, greenish face of the dead French soldier face picked out in the lower left-hand corner, or to the expression of horror in the features of the French soldier looking down upon his unfortunate comrade. The dead 'Poilu' suggests that Nevinson was well aware that, however machine-like, masculine, and relentless in composition, colouration and characterization, these French soldiers were all too vulnerable to shattering and dismembering by enemy bullets or shell-splinters. Though Nevinson has skilfully painted their bodies to give the impression of having been coated with a layer of steel, composing their forms from pronounced angular planes and graduated monochromatic facets, his very insistence on their steely constitutions serves to emphasise their fragility in the face of modern weaponry. From his experiences with the Friends Ambulance Unit, Nevinson would have all too aware how easily the metal sides of an ambulance or a lorry could be sliced open and rent apart by the impact of a shell-burst, shell-splinters, or by high velocity machine gun and rifle bullets. Two French soldiers faithfully continue to operate their machine gun, apparently oblivious to the squalid death of a comrade. One 'Poilu', however, has reacted to the extent that he totally ceases to contribute to the defence of his position. Raw human emotion and compassion for a comrade, Nevinson seems to be suggesting, has rendered this man temporarily useless as a combatant. As for the much-vaunted machine gun, once it runs out of ammunition, or overheats, or jams, it becomes a useless hunk of metal and

the surviving 'Poilus' will have to decide whether to run or defend their beleaguered post with rifle and bayonet.

Reassessing the painting, in the light of the popular reception given to the publication of *Modern War Paintings* by C.R.W. Nevinson, and, after the slaughter of the Battle of the Somme, a conservative critic interpreted *La Mitrailleuse* as both an unflinching acknowledgment of machine-age warfare and as Nevinson's admission that the indefinable human element still mattered:

He [Nevinson] has thrown the nightmarishness of our present existence into bold relief ... man becomes machine and machine has become master ... yet there is death and suffering, wastage and the wearing away of parts ... and behind the planes and angles of precision lies the incalculable ... behind the Machine is Man: vulnerable; soft and ignorant ... still a frail creature after all.²⁰⁸

A little earlier the Quaker magazine, *The Ploughshare*, interpreted the soldiers of *La Mitrailleuse* in the light of the carnage on the Somme and at Verdun and of the astonishing powers of endurance displayed by British and French troops during both campaigns. The French soldiers who continued to operate their machine gun were described as having shed their civilised sensibilities in order to survive and keep on fighting, despite the appalling conditions and monstrous casualty rates. While retaining a capability to wield modern weapons, they had necessarily reverted to a more brutally elemental level of existence "the soldiers are ... angular Easter Islanders hewn out of unflinching rock with a giant chisel. Even their agonizing pain resembles but the heat of mechanical friction ... their shrieks are but the noise of grinding, unlubricated cogs ... their blood ... the 'sparking' of an armature."²⁰⁹ Two interpretations of modernity seem to have been conflated here and in the unlikely arena of a pacifist, anti-war publication. On the one hand, Nevinson's hirsute 'Poilus' are imagined as incarnations of 'primitive' South Sea Island stone carving, chiselled from the oil paint on the surface of the canvas. They are imagined as timeless, in tune with nature, aggressively and barbarically masculine. [Plate 104] On the other, the men are deemed to be utterly modern, soulless mechanised automata fashioned from steel and powered by electricity.²¹⁰

Between the exhibition of *La Mitrailleuse* in March, and the opening of his first one-man show at the Leicester Galleries, on 26 September 1916, Nevinson was securely established, in the opinion of critics and journalists across the spectrum of political and artistic views, as the artist who had succeeded in truthfully depicting the spirit of modern warfare. In his exhibition catalogue note, Nevinson again displayed the compulsion to argue that the stylistic language of his war art was vital and masculine, precisely because he had taken the decision to go to the Front and experience the sights of war first-hand. He appeared to suggest that his personal risk-taking grew out of, and served as a vindication for, the artistic modernism he had espoused before the

war that had so often been interpreted as evidence for the practitioner's own pathological decadence:

In the years before the war the accusation of decadence was frequently brought against the young men and artists of the day. No charge has proven more false ... long before the war, young artists ... were seeking a wider inspiration than in the sickly worship of the nude and the over-sensual broodings of our elders ... in the literature and art of the *Yellow Book* ... and, in some of the Pre-Raphaelites.²¹¹

Reviewers praised Nevinson for demonstrating a newfound sobriety and maturity in design and use of colour, which they attributed to his front-line experience and his stint as a RAMC orderly at home. The majority of the images in his one-man show were construed as a rebuke to the tendentiously dramatic images of war, which had been exhibited up to date, by academic artists who had begun their battle painting careers in the Victorian era. Whereas such artists tended to paint from a wide-angled, panoramic perspective, packing their compositions with sweeping dramatic incident and repeatedly highlighting moments of individual intrepidity and bravery, Nevinson, often from a constrictive and claustrophobic viewpoint, stressed the mundane, banal and often squalidly unremarkable routine of the war. Much was made of the distinctly unheroic appearance of his French and British soldiers. Everything they wear or carry looks cheaply and crudely mass-produced from a worn-out mould, while the soldiers themselves resemble standardised products that have been hurriedly manufactured on an assembly line. Their faces are rudimentary and largely expressionless, reduced to schematic, geometrical shapes and often painted with broad, thick, careless brushstrokes as though Nevinson was making a positive virtue of his disdain for the facile and unblemished surface smoothness of an academic war picture. The influential art critic P.G. Konody associated Nevinson's commitment to ruthless modernity with his zealous and "ruthless elimination of all inessential detail."²¹² He also interpreted Nevinson's standardization and simplification of the male form as truthful and authentic:

Mr Nevinson ... has now emerged as, so far, the only British artist who has discovered the appropriate pictorial terms for rendering the grim character of the modern conditions of warfare ... his rhythmic use of angles and curves ... is particularly useful to accentuate the dominating part played in this war by mechanical instruments.²¹³

While partially agreeing with Konody's interpretation the art critic of *The Times*, Arthur Clutton Brock, argued that Nevinson's apparent obsession, with depicting man's subordination to the machine of 'process', neglected the importance of the individual personality struggling to escape anonymity within an organisation:

[Nevinson] is half a cubist and ... his method ... does express ... his sense that, in war, man behaves like a machine or part of a machine; that war is a process in which man is not treated as a human being but as an item in a great instrument of destruction, in which he ceases to be a person and becomes lost in the a process. The cubist method, with its repetition and sharp distinction of planes, expresses this sense of mechanical process far better than any other way of representation. Everywhere we see processes

to which we are subject ... [Nevinson] presents the war as a struggle between two machines intent on wrecking each other; and part of the machines are the bodies of men, which behave as if there were no souls in them, as if there were not even life, but merely energy.²¹⁴

Clutton Brock detected this very modern emptiness and soullessness, that stripped men of their individualising dignity, in a number of works Nevinson exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in 1916 such as *A Column on the March* (1916) [Plate 28] and *Southampton* (1916) [Plate 29]. However, the tendency to privilege the fascination with mass and the enormity of war production in war art imagery at the expense of interest in the fighting soldier, a trend Clutton Brock deplored, actually stood Nevinson in good stead when the newly created Department of Information sought suitable artists to contribute, in the spring of 1917, to a major visual propaganda project entitled *Britain's Efforts and Ideals*.²¹⁵ Indeed, so far advanced was this tendency that, out of the 66 lithographic designs commissioned and executed between March and June 1917, only one set of six, *Making Soldiers* by Eric Kennington, referred at all to the training and the front-line experiences of the combat soldier.²¹⁶ Given the frequency with which Lloyd George's new government stressed the vital contribution being made by civilian workers in the factories to the nation's war effort, it is not surprising that Nevinson's contribution to the *Efforts* section, *Making Aircraft*²¹⁷, was widely hailed as by far the most compelling within the project.²¹⁸

I will comment on the two designs, within the *Making Aircraft* series, which are the most problematic in their representation of the human body and of its relation to mechanical process: *Making The Engine* (1917) [Plate 30] and *Acetylene Welder* (1917) [Plate 31]. In both images Nevinson does not so much celebrate the partnership between worker and machine, as offer a sardonic aside on the latter's capacity to diminish and anatomically distort the former. *Making the Engine*, to my mind, constitutes one of Nevinson's most forceful constructions of how the male body is oppressed and spatially constricted by the machinery dominating its environment. The lathe, on which the worker's attention is focused, both resembles the shape of the Hotchkiss Light machine gun in *La Mitrailleuse*, and is a machine producing the machine tools that facilitate the manufacture of other machines, including weaponry. Such factory-based work is not particularly complex, or physically demanding, but it is repetitive and the operator must transcend his alienation from his surroundings, remain alert, and concentrate on how far the bit is boring into a piece of metal. Over the shoulder of the lathe-operator looms the figure of a bowler-hatted foreman whose task it is to keep this worker, and others like him, under surveillance. This authority figure will ensure that quality standards are maintained and production targets achieved. While the lathe operator appears bowed down beneath the belts whirring dangerously and deafeningly above him, the diagonal of an overhead belt has decapitated the foreman's

head, with its inquisitorial gaze, from his body. This visual conceit is suggestive of both men, although one enjoys authority over the other, being enmeshed within and subject to the demands of the industrial organisation they serve.

The lathe-operator, in *Making the Engine*, may have been derived from a detail in one of Joseph Pennell's lithographs, depicting the interiors of munitions factories and published in December 1916, which Nevinson has extracted, simplified and compressed. The majority of workers Pennell depicted, amidst whirring belts and overhead drive shafts, were women, although they are made to appear suitably 'feminine' in their sensible skirts and neat mop caps.²¹⁹ [Plate 32] In contrast the *Acetylene Welder* is only discernible as female from the headscarf she wears to stop her hair from being caught in machinery, or being set alight by sparks from by her torch. Otherwise, her limbs and body contours seem as hard, metallic and unyielding as the materials she is working on and from which her welding tank is made. The implication is that the environment of the modern industrial enterprise is antithetical to legitimate femininity. Indeed, if women are allowed to operate in such a space, reassuring gender constraints will be subverted as women are transformed into sinisterly aberrant mechanised automata.

If Nevinson's perception of mankind, within a modern industrial society, in 1917 was more problematic than before the war, when he produced such anecdotally romanticised and atmospherically affirmative images as *The Towing Path: Camden Town at Night* (1912-13) [Plate 33], his grip on a coherent public performative masculine masquerade was becoming increasingly unsure. Three weeks after the opening of Nevinson's one-man show, a reporter asked the artist whether he planned to paint more images of the war and to seek an official post as a war artist. Nevinson replied "No ... I have painted everything I saw in France and there will be no more."²²⁰ Much to the bafflement of many, who had praised his war art for its bold masculine qualities, Nevinson then appeared content to be publicly identified as a partisan of the Decorative Art Group and as a fashionable designer of non-representational patterns for home furnishings. One puzzled journalist commented:

I recently saw [in a shop on Regent Street] bags and blouses and lampshades and all the things a woman's soul yearns for designed by Nevinson, the Private stretcher-bearer ... It's rather typical of this war that the man who has been out [to France] ... whose done more than anyone else to realize the horror of hospitals and water-logged trenches; that is the man who, next month, designs us lampshades and cushions and jolly things for women to wear. No wonder the French say the English nation is not quite what it was.²²¹

Nevinson's bid for freedom from the claims of war art came at a price. His public persona was now perceived as contingent and unstable. So much so that, in the spring

of 1917, Nevinson felt compelled to reassume the mantle of daredevil war artist he had set aside in October 1916. It would appear that he sought an official war artist post less as a consequence of an instinctive desire, or of patriotic fervour, than of the threat posed to his personal freedom by the new Military Service Act of April 1917. This Act cancelled all previous exemptions from conscription granted on the basis of poor health. However, despite the commercial success of his one-man show, and the healthy sales of his book of reproductions of many of the exhibits, Nevinson still found himself confronting entrenched critical reservations about the viability of the convention he had evolved to depict the body of the soldier. Laurence Binyon (1869-1943), for example, freely acknowledged that he was the one artist, to date, who had:

immersed himself in a strange world ... of men enslaved to a terrific machine of their own making which has absorbed into itself the youth of this country ... and his formula of depicting men as so many angular planes and lines accords well with the experience of the last two years.²²²

At the same time, Binyon could not prevent himself from suspecting that Nevinson's formally qualified figurative modernism was the product of an unhealthy, subversive, and pernicious imagination. In a general evaluation of the war art exhibited up to May 1917, Binyon argued that Nevinson's 'formula' was effective for suggesting, to a civilian audience, how important machinery and industrialised methods of organisation had become to the conduct of war on the Western Front. However, he felt Nevinson's formal approach could not make the public at large understand why British civilian-volunteer soldiers endured the most vile living conditions at the Front and stubbornly kept on attacking a much more professionally trained and better equipped German opponent. Binyon believed that Eric Kennington, as a figurative traditionalist imbued with respect for early Pre-Raphaelitism, had come closest to capturing in paint "the spirit of our splendid new army" and supplying a conception of the British soldier which struck the public as suitably authentic, reassuring and 'English' in his *The Kensingtons At Laventie: Winter 1914* (1915) [Plate 34]. This work had gone on public display, towards the end of April 1916, as part of an exhibition to raise funds for crippled and paralysed enlisted men being cared for by the recently opened 'Star and Garter' hospital in Richmond. Kennington's soldiers inspired from Binyon the sort of charged rhetoric reminiscent of that applied by Charles Lewis Hind to the 'Poilus' of *La Mitrailleuse*:

Theirs is not the hallucination of the machine ... they stand for no military fanaticism or delusion ... and are ... reassuringly sane and reconstructive. The clean and masculine vigour of the design ... enforce the expressiveness of the figures themselves ... the portraiture of the civilian soldier, who is the real hero of the war, is the best record we can have of what we fight for.²²³

Evidently, Kennington's image of the British 'Tommy' responded to a deep need, keenly felt by civilians and expressed by over military age male opinion-formers, such as Arthur Clutton Brock and the poet Hilaire Belloc,²²⁴ for a solution to be found to a

conundrum that still evades explanation by military and cultural historians to this day. As Paul Fussell put it, in 1998, "the First World War is a mystery ... Why did [British] soldiers persist in fighting for no admirable end? How did ordinary soldiers find the strength to keep it up and to believe their agonies served some high purpose?"²²⁵

In the following chapter I will explore further the tensions and ambiguities that informed attempts, during 1917 and 1918, to construct a viable image of the ordinary infantryman, whether he be French 'Poilu', or Laurence Binyon's "real hero of the war", the British 'Tommy'.

CHAPTER THREE.

The Primitive 'Poilu' and Elemental 'Tommy' c. 1915-1918.

Recent research into visual and literary constructions of First World War French and British infantrymen would tend to suggest that they fell into four broadly defined categories. These could, and often were, imagined simultaneously. Firstly, the 'Tommy' was imagined as a 'gentleman', a ferocious but fair fighter in the field who did not shoot or maltreat German prisoners. This type was presented as always behaving in a professional manner and as exhibiting the best attributes of the British 'skilled working man.' This, not surprisingly, was the image of the 'Tommy', which the authorities, such as the Department then Ministry of Information, sought to propagate among the general public and civilian workforce.²²⁶

Secondly, the 'Tommy', as conceived in works painted by artists who were well over the military service age of forty-one and reproduced in popular mass-circulation illustrated newspapers and magazines, as well as in verse and in newspaper articles, could also be construed as an object for pity and sentimentality. The pathos of this type of 'Tommy' lay in his passivity and status as uncomprehending, good-natured victim. He was the man who had things done to him, but could not run away. He mitigated unimaginable degrees of pain and indignity through black humour, inoffensively scatological marching songs, and endless mugs of stewed tea.

Thirdly, by late 1916 and after the widely reported successes of Dominion forces, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and South Africans, during the latter stages of the Battle of the Somme, the 'Tommy' could be perceived as a compromised figure, one which inviting exasperation and even derision. In British and Dominion journalism the British 'Tommy' emerges as physically unimpressive, standing next to a 'Canuck' or a 'Digger'. He is also presented as decidedly inferior in resourcefulness, tactical skill and initiative compared to his colonial counterpart. Finally, throughout the war, the 'Tommy' was imagined as a disturbing hybrid of a man at ease with modern weaponry who had also rediscovered his 'primitive' and 'savage' instincts through army life and combat. He was both the product of a highly industrialized civilization, and a virile brute whose aptitude for killing inspired admiration and anxiety in equal parts on the British home front. A characteristic perception of this type was articulated early in 1916 by Patrick MacGill, a pre-war working-class novelist who had served as a front-line infantryman in France between March and September 1915, 'we, the villa-dwellers ... have become cave-dwellers and ... battle with club and knobkerrie.'²²⁷

This chapter will focus on the last category of 'Tommy' and, through selected works by Nevinson and Kennington, explore how the image of the "Tommy" evolved in competition with an initial British perception of the ordinary French infantryman, or 'Poilu', as possessing more masculine vigour and martial impetuosity. In addition, it would appear that the popular perception of the 'Tommy' was subject to the overwhelming influence of the writings of Rudyard Kipling. The key texts, in which Kipling created his "Tommy" Atkins' type, were published between 1888 and 1896. The first, *Plain Tales From the Hills*, published in 1888, introduced his three archetypal regular army privates. Terence Mulvaney came from County Kerry in southern Ireland, which what was then regarded as still firmly part of the British Empire. The resourceful but unprincipled Stanley Ortheris hailed from London. He is often assumed to be a Cockney though, in one story, Kipling mentions Ortheris dreaming of owning a shop in Hammersmith, when he left the army. The third of Kipling's 'Tommies' was the strong and silent John Learoyd. He is described as a native of Bradford and a former worker in the textile industry.²²⁸ *Plain Tales* proved to be a publishing sensation and was swiftly followed by *Soldiers Three*, published in 1889. This collection of short stories was dedicated, on its title page, to "that very strong man, Private T. Atkins"²²⁹. Kipling's colossal late Victorian literary reputation was then secured with the publication, in 1892 and 1896, of the two series of *Barrack Room Ballads*. Thus, initially, Kipling conceived his quintessential group of British professional soldiers from the ranks as an Irishman, a Londoner and a Yorkshireman.

It is intriguing that, as the First World War progressed, Ortheris was by far the most frequently mentioned of the *Soldiers Three*. Ortheris supplied the physical and behavioural model many journalists adapted for describing the exploits of British soldiers back to the civilian population and, which the combatants themselves could then read when on leave. Evidence, for the all-pervading influence of the Kipling model of 'Tommy', surfaces in H.G. Wells's 1916 novel *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*. In the novel one of the characters, Hugh Britling, describes a clerk he encountered on entering an all-volunteer Service battalion of the Essex Regiment. The clerk had read *Soldiers Three* and now, according to Britling, "imagines he is the nearest thing that has ever been to Private Ortheris ... conscientiously foul-mouthed ... a sort of mongrel and as hard as nails."²³⁰ Kipling certainly attempted to correct the existing widespread public perception of the other ranks in the regular army as brutal, licentious, drunken, given to random acts of violence and theft when out of sight of their officers, profane, amoral and as diseased, either sexually, or from some exotic tropical malady. Through his characters, Kipling suggested that the British soldier was quite capable of berserk fury in battle and could experience fear, and even moral revulsion, at having to kill other men at close quarters. His characters come to terms with the horrendous sights of the battlefield and the death of comrades through alcohol, gambling, maudlin sentimentality or, more usually, silence.

Nevinson's *A Dawn: 1914* (1916) encouraged interpretations of the French 'Poilu' as simultaneously the inheritor of the Kipling mantle and as more earthily and desirably 'primitive' than his British equivalent, when it was first exhibited at the Friday Club during the last week of March 1916. The smaller-scale drypoint version [Plate 35] is, perhaps, more impressive in Nevinson's exploitation of the medium to bestow greater individuality on certain soldiers and give definition to their beards and heavy stubble, which were interpreted as signs of masculine virility. The drypoint also highlights sunken eyes hollowed by lack of sleep and the anticipation of battle and faces that sink into great coats in search of shelter from the late autumnal chill. The drypoint version of *A Dawn: 1914* may possibly be one of the first prints Nevinson executed in this medium. Nevinson may have been prompted to take up drypoint after visiting St. Ives with his father, between 5 and 11 May 1916. During the visit they met the painter-etcher Alfred Hartley (1855-1933) who demonstrated his etching technique to them and sold some of his prints to H.W. Nevinson.²³¹ Contemporaries were struck by the crowded nature of the composition, packed as it is with compressed, marching male bodies suggestive of a relentless and unstoppable torrent of male physicality. The appearance of the 'Poilu' was interpreted as satisfactory evidence that they would know what to do with their wickedly sharp long bayonets on closing with the enemy. They were perceived as invulnerable and armoured yet, as they are so densely packed together they would have presented a tempting target for any German gunner to fire upon them. Just one shrapnel shell exploding in the confined space, through which the 'Poilus' are marching, would have caused absolute carnage. Their flesh, just like any German's, would have been equally vulnerable to a bayonet thrust. Nevinson's emphasis on this particular weapon, though striking from a compositional point of view, was misleading as to its military importance on the modern battlefield. Indeed, an absurdly small proportion of fatalities, on all fronts, were caused by the bayonet, as opposed to shell and gunfire.²³²

In the treatment of the figures in *A Dawn: 1914*, and the characterization of their faces, Nevinson may have been looking to the use made of 'primitive' sculptural sources by Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. He, for example, may have been aware of the sculptor's 1914 *Hieratic Head of Ezra Pound*, which was influenced by the example of Easter Island stone-carving. It may have struck Nevinson as only appropriate that French soldiers should be depicted as latter-day elemental primitives given that most of the pre-historic sites singled out for praise before the war were situated in France. In addition, Gauguin, whose work Nevinson admired, had pioneered another strand of primitivism in his paintings set in Tahiti. In his review of the Friday Club show P.G. Konody, a future champion of Nevinson's war art, claimed Nevinson had developed a formula which, though unnatural, was both thoroughly modern in its connotations and

suggestive of the warriors of old marching into battle "designed almost like a geometrical pattern of straight lines and sharp angles ... it is truer to the essential meaning of the subject and fuller of life, vitality and movement than any photographic snapshot could ever aspire to be."²³³ The association of angular toughness with 'primitive' Frenchness was made later in 1916 and again in relation to Nevinson's 'Poilus' who were likened by one critic to "angular Easter Islanders hewn out of unfeeling rock with a giant chisel. Even their ... pain resembles but the heat of mechanical friction ... their blood is the 'sparking' of an armature."²³⁴

Alongside *A Dawn: 1914*, and *La Mitrailleuse* (1915) [Plate 26], *Troops Resting* (1916) [Plate 36] was frequently cited as an image that presented the French soldier at his most virile and impressive. This image depicts a prosaic, deliberately unspectacular, scene of a dozen 'Poilus'. They stand, sit, or sprawl on a grass verge by the side of a wet pavé road, snatching a momentary rest from a punishing march in their full kit of steel helmets, greatcoats, rifles and packs. Within this deflated pyramid of relaxing male bodies one can pick out a variety of responses to the call of a brief halt and the likelihood of an impending resumption of the march. Some take the opportunity to draw breath and stretch aching limbs and to shift packs whose straps are chafing, or biting, into the flesh of their shoulders and backs. Evidently, this break will be but a brief respite from the marching as the men remain packed closely together so they can quickly reassemble and be on their way again once the order to begin marching is issued. One can imagine the French soldiers savouring a moment of uneasy relaxation undercut by the expectation that the march will soon resume and they will be moving steadily closer to the firing line. Only two of the soldiers actually appear to be engaged in conversation. Presumably, this is carried out in low, muffled tones as the soldier facing the viewer wears a maroon-coloured scarf wrapped tightly around his throat, obscuring his mouth. In the far right-hand background, one soldier has taken the opportunity to respond to a call of nature and, casually, relieves himself against a convenient telegraph pole. He does not seem to have been at all put off by the fact he has to urinate in full view of three other 'Poilus' who are lying, shoulder to shoulder, on a grass verge which strikes one as just as hard and unyielding in consistency as the cobbles of the pavé road.

Troops Resting demonstrates how skilfully Nevinson could imply, through a combination of body language, posture, pose, gesture and stance that these French soldiers understood that this rest was but a temporary one. At least one 'Poilu' looks up as if awaiting an imminent command to resume marching. The scene deals with a moment of transition, a break in a march between two points - though one cannot be totally sure whether these troops are marching from billets to the front-line, or the other way around. As the men seem relatively clean and tidy, their uniforms not yet mud-

caked and patched, and since they still possess a full issue of equipment, it is possible they are returning to the firing line, after a period behind the lines of rest and recuperation. Perhaps one can detect a degree of expectancy and anxiety in the glances and expressions of some of the 'Poilus', as if they are asking themselves how much further they have to go before entering the war zone proper and, more importantly, come into the range of enemy artillery. This undercurrent of anxiety is, perhaps, more palpable in the drypoint version. Apart from the suggestion of expectancy and trepidation, *Troops Resting* does not depict a scene of bustle, excitement, or drama. The image could be interpreted as Nevinson taking a characteristically down-beat and coolly detached look at how men returning to the Front, and facing the very real possibility of death or being wounded, behave differently when given a brief opportunity to relax from physical exertion. The composition implies that, even within an apparently uniform, homogenous, collective there is still space for individual variety.

In comparison, *Column on the March* (1916) [Plate 28] suggests a tension between unity and difference. On the one hand, in *Column on the March*, the façade of machine-tooled precision and unity is conveyed by a body of men marching close together and observed from some distance away by Nevinson. This contrasted with the individuality, present in *Troops Resting*, that inevitably emerges when a group is momentarily freed from the surveillance, discipline, coercion and compulsion imposed from without by the hierarchy of military command. Perhaps, Nevinson conceived *Troops Resting* as an accompanying image for *Column on the March*; the former a snapshot of one platoon from the mass of soldiers comprising the latter and an illustration of what happens when a column comes to a halt. The militarily impressive block of troops, suddenly unravels to produce small groups of men such as those in *Troops Resting*, who fall out by the roadside to unheroically scratch themselves, stretch, fidget, yawn, gossip, snatch a bite to eat and urinate.²³⁵

When it was first exhibited in London, towards the end of April 1916, Eric Henri Kennington's *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* (1915) [Plate 34] was given an extraordinarily positive public reception. It was widely interpreted as projecting an entirely convincing image of the militarised British male body and as constituting a more desirable, high-culture, counterpart to the popular 'low-brow' cartoons of Bruce Bairnsfather that featured his supposedly quintessential British footsloggers 'Old Bill', 'Bert' and 'Alf'. *The Kensingtons at Laventie* was exhibited as part of an exhibition held at the Goupil Gallery, and organized by the Committee of the British Women's Hospital, to raise funds for a 'Home for Incurably Helpless Soldiers and Sailors.'²³⁶ Therefore, one can discern an unexpectedly feminine context for an image, which seems so thoroughly masculine. Indeed, the work was actually purchased by Viscountess

Cowdry, the Committee's Treasurer. After the work had been on show for about six weeks, the *Times* published a letter from the eminent surgeon Sir Frederick Treves in which he explained the work of the Star and Garter Hospital:

Our patients are men who are wholly paralysed as a result of being shot through either the brain or the spine ... The severity of the cases may be judged by the lamentable fact that our deaths are over one in ten. We have, at the moment, 60 patients in the wards, nearly all of whom are bedridden ... At home they would simply not receive the attention they need ... It is noteworthy that the new 'Star and Garter' ... is to be built by the women of England ... The building will be a permanent memorial of the Great War, the women's memorial.²³⁷

With the text of this letter in mind, one can sketch in a subtext of male helplessness and disability to a work which depicts only one man as having collapsed, while the rest of the infantry section, including the artist, are just able to keep on their feet. Kennington published an explanatory text to accompany the exhibition of *The Kensingtons*. An examination of this text and the conditions his battalion faced at the Front, as noted in the unit's war diary, has been illuminating.²³⁸ Kennington claimed to have enlisted in the 13th Battalion (Princess Louises's Own Kensingtons), the London Regiment in the very first days of the war.²³⁹ He is listed as being part of the battalion's C Company when it left its training base, at Abbots Langley in Hertfordshire, for London and France on 3 November 1914. The battalion spent two days, 16-17 November 1914, digging reserve trenches in the vicinity of Estaires before being moved up to take its place in front-line fire trenches on 18 November 1914. Kennington did not find himself immediately in the front-line as his company was assigned to dig reserve trenches behind A and B companies, who occupied the waterlogged string of ditches of the front-line for the next three days. C Company soon came under enemy fire and, on the evening of 20 November 1914, suffered one of its first fatalities when Private H. J. Perry was shot in the head by a German sniper. This death assumed great significance for Kennington as he expressly mentions, in his explanatory text, that one of the two rifles carried by the soldier in the left foreground of *The Kensingtons* belonged to the unfortunate Perry. It is possible that Private Perry was the first man Kennington ever saw killed in action. Invalided back to Britain in February 1915, Kennington wrote to his brother William that he would never be able to forget "the first death, though [I] have forgotten all sorts of things since. It was near me, a man hit in the head by [a] dum-dum bullet or ricochet. All the back of his head went out. Bullets do the most extraordinary things!!!"²⁴⁰ The battalion war diary, for the period when C and D companies, for the first time, went into the line noted that there was "considerable sniping ... Frost and snow ... many men are suffering from frost-bite [and] rifles froze so that they were useless."²⁴¹

After three weeks at the Front the battalion had suffered a total of 6 dead and 22 wounded through a combination of snipers and shell-fire. An undisclosed number had gone sick with "many suffering from [the] affects of exposure ... and exhaustion."²⁴²

According to the battalion war diary, C and D companies went into the front-line on Christmas Day 1914 lending credence to Kennington's claim, in the catalogue text, that he had participated in the famous Christmas truce on that part of the Front "[Private W.] 'Big' Harvey, 'Tug' Wilson and Private Kennington were the first to cross "No-Man's-Land" during the Christmas Truce, 1914."²⁴³ However, in his original notes for the catalogue entry, Kennington at first wrote that he, Harvey and Wilson were "the first to cross 'No-Man's-Land' and shake hands with the German soldiers."²⁴⁴ Evidently, when the time came to publish his account in the exhibition catalogue, the artist felt it necessary to suppress the reference to his actually having shaken hands with the enemy. Yet, in the final published version of the text, the Christmas Truce is still mentioned, despite the fact it was well known in 1916 that the British High Command in December 1914 had strongly disapproved of British soldiers fraternizing with the enemy.²⁴⁵ Indeed, the following year the new Commander in Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France, General Sir Douglas Haig, insisted that there could be no repetition of the 1914 Christmas Truce.²⁴⁶ Any officers and men participating in friendly gestures towards the enemy, during the festive season and on New Years Eve, would be court-martialled and probably imprisoned.

On 26 December 1914 the battalion HQ moved closer to the front-line, from rest billets in Estaires to Laventie. In Kennington's painting Laventie is depicted as unoccupied, and as a staging post for the relieved companies to make their way back to Estaires. This, to me, suggests that the time frame of the picture roughly occupies the battalion's first six to seven weeks at the Front when conditions there would have seemed at their most novel and disturbing. Casualties within the battalion continued to mount. Another twenty-one men were wounded, during January 1915, to reach a total of seventy-four since the Kensingtons had first entered the line.²⁴⁷ Among their number was the artist, though he was wounded in an accident rather than as the consequence of enemy action. In April 1916 Kennington wrote of the incident:

Private Kennington had the ill-luck to be the victim of an accident by which he lost a toe, resulting in unfitness for further service abroad. Fortunately, it was not the right hand that suffered or this record of the 13th would not have been painted.²⁴⁸

One should be aware that Kennington's self-portrait, in the upper left-hand corner of *The Kensingtons*, wearing a balaclava and a full, scrubby, moustache, bears a close resemblance to Bruce Bairnsfather's cartoon evocation of his archetypal 'Old Contemptible' Private, from the reserve of the regular army, 'Old Bill' Busby. Bairnsfather's first cartoon to feature a recognizable 'Old Bill' figure appeared in an issue of *The Bystander* weekly magazine in September 1915. This, typically, imagined the 'Old Bill' character expressing good-humoured irritation with the monotonous diet of the private. This largely consisted of tea, bully beef stew and plum and apple jam. Bairnsfather's career did not really take off until the publication of what was later

identified as one of his most famous cartoons, *Where Did That One Go To?* [Plate 37] This was reproduced in *The Bystander* in November 1915 and featured a number of 'Tommys' whose physiognomies resemble those of Kennington and a number of his comrades depicted in *The Kensingtons*. As 1916 progressed, Bainsfather's work came to greater public prominence. Towards the end of January 1916 the first volume of *Fragments From France* was published, featuring some forty-five reproductions of Bainsfather's best cartoons that had appeared in the previous year's *The Bystander*. Between its publication, and the end of the year, it was reprinted several times and, though quite expensive to buy, it sold an estimated 300,000 copies. At the end of May 1916 Bainsfather exhibited a selection of his *Bystander* cartoons at the Graphic Gallery on the Strand. The majority featured his, by now, well-established characters 'Old Bill', the pre-war reservist and veteran of the First Battle of Ypres in October 1914, and his fellow privates the Kitchener volunteers 'Bert and 'Alf. In October 1916 a second volume of *Fragments From France* was published to great public and critical acclaim, especially in the more populist newspapers and magazines. Two months later, the editor of *The Bystander* published a potted biography of Bainsfather. This biographical account contains Bainsfather's initial intriguing initial impression of the regular soldiers he commanded in Flanders during the winter of 1914-15. He describes them as "a kind of aggravated savage conducting a troglodyte war with less than the dignity of moles."²⁴⁹

Also in December 1916, as part of a highly organized publicity machine, Bainsfather published the first volume of his light-hearted, illustrated, autobiography entitled *Bullets and Billets*. This sold out, in just two weeks, its entire initial print-run of 50,000 copies, which suggests how popular his work had become, at least to a middle-class readership. Newspapers, appealing to all social groups, reinforced the impression that Bainsfather's cartoon conception of the 'Tommy' was accurate and how ordinary British infantrymen at the Front perceived themselves. There was some resistance to the popularity of Bainsfather's work. One reviewer castigated Bainsfather's image of the 'Tommy' as a travesty, which, if given further publicity by the authorities, would actually encourage the physical and moral degeneration of the British soldier.

Nothing so quickly lowers moral as slovenliness and nothing is more difficult to check than the gradual degeneration due to trench life ... yet here we have an Army officer who invariably depicts his men ... as the very type the Army is anxious to suppress ... Why should he [Bainsfather] encourage young soldiers to ape the 'Bainsfather' type? 'Old Bill and 'Bert are ... disgusting ... Bainsfather standardizes, almost idealizes, a degraded type of face and presents a cruel caricature of the men who endured the first Winter in France ... they joked and swore, like many other gallant men, but they prided themselves on being the smartest battalion in the Brigade.²⁵⁰

Kennington was not alone among the men, depicted in *The Kensingtons*, who were invalided out of the army after their first experience of punishing active service in

the trenches. Others would be wounded during the battalion's involvement in two battles, which virtually annihilated the unit Kennington left in January 1915 to recover in a London hospital from his accidental gunshot wound. During the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, which took place between 10 and 13 March 1915, although the battalion had only been allotted to a supporting role, the Kensingtons still suffered one hundred and forty-nine casualties to heavy and prolonged German shelling.²⁵¹ Among the wounded were two men who feature prominently in *The Kensingtons At Laventie*, Private A.C. McCafferty and Private P.A.C. Guy. Two months later, on 9 May 1915, the battalion played a central role in the disastrous Battle of Aubers Ridge (9 May 1915). It went into action with twenty-one officers and six hundred and two men. It emerged, after six hours of repeatedly and vainly trying to storm the enemy's main trench line, with only one hundred and ninety-seven officers and men.²⁵² Kennington officially left the Army in June 1915. Though the nature of his disabling wound, the loss of the middle toe on his left foot, would later be interpreted as the classic self-inflicted wound, he was granted an honourable discharge from further military service.

Kennington began his text, for the *Star and Garter* charity exhibition catalogue, with a compelling account of what he was trying to communicate to the civilian public through his painting:

Platoon No.7, C. Company ... has served in the fire-trench for four days and nights, enduring the piercing cold of twenty degrees [below zero] of frost and almost continuous snow [what with the weather, hard physical toil and the activity of the enemy] sleep has been well-nigh impossible and the men are very tired [after having been relieved by another battalion of their Brigade they have] struggled through the half-mile of communication trench ... to Laventie [in that trench] there is an even greater depth of mud - from one to four feet - than in the fire-trench and ice floats on the surface ... Every man has sunk in the mud up to his thighs ... this communication trench ... terminates in a ruined farmyard [the battalion assembles] along the ruined village main street [during this brief halt] each man finds his company and the platoon falls in ... Corporal J. Kealey ... is about to give the order " Fall In, No.7 Platoon !" and will see that the men in his charge are correctly lined up in their fours. The stragglers are helped to their places. The fit men support their exhausted comrades. The strong carry the rifles of the sick [all will have to march] five miles back to a billet [at Estaires] which is out of the shelling area ... Many from exhaustion, frozen feet, rheumatism and other ailments will fall out and must wait by the road-side for the next motor-ambulance or attempt to make their way slowly back to billet [assuming the battalion has not] marched somewhere else.²⁵³

Although many of Kennington's section are absolutely exhausted, only Private Todd in the foreground has collapsed face down into the snow. The soldiers are still well within range of enemy artillery and face the prospect of another five mile march before they can secure some hot, reviving food as well as shelter from the biting wind. They do not at all strike one as hardened killers; rather they anticipate the average First World War front-line combat soldier as imagined by Ernest Hemingway. He described the ordinary combat soldier of the First World War as a man who was acted upon, who endured and proved his manhood by uncomplainingly absorbing punishment and

tribulation, and lacked any capacity to determine or influence his own fate.²⁵⁴ No man looks at his fellow, even the section commander, Corporal Kealey, seems to be in the process of rousing himself from a reverie and looks at the men under his command obliquely, with a side-ways glance. Though there is no direct eye-contact, every man senses the debilitated physical condition of his comrades. All are aware of the depth of their exhaustion but are trying very hard not to give themselves away or betray, through facial expression and gesture, how close some are to the end of their tethers.

The laboured joke Kennington makes, about it being preferable to lose a toe rather than his right hand, could be construed as his elliptical way of egotistically drawing attention to his privileged pre-war status as an artist, or 'recorder'. If he had been wounded in his painting hand he would effectively have been unable to pursue his chosen profession and his livelihood left seriously impaired. Kennington may be subtly implying that, despite being aware of such risks, he had still gone ahead and enlisted anyway. Although he was an artist, with all its negative pre-war connotations, he managed to endure, for a few weeks, the mud, snow and shell-fire of the trenches, which had broken bigger and stronger working-class men. Perhaps this oddly constructed, and phrased, short paragraph conceals the conundrum that troubled Kennington throughout the war. He admired the ordinary rank and file British soldier tremendously and wanted to empathize and identify with the skilled working man concealed beneath the khaki uniform of a non-commissioned officer [nco] or a private. However, after his brief stint in the trenches with the Kensingtons, he realised that he lacked the required physical stamina and, as an artist, possessed too much imagination to perform the role of front-line combat soldier trained to kill without hesitation.

Private A.C. McCafferty, standing with his back to the viewer, is the soldier most clearly identified as a warrior in *The Kensingtons*. Kennington describes him as:

carrying two rifles, one of which belonged to Private [H.J.] Perry who was shot beside him by a sniper [on 20 November 1914] ... Tied to the cover of his entrenching tool is a German 'Pickelhaube'. Private McCafferty ... received an injury while digging trenches at Estaires, a pick being driven through his hand and, though he was given sick leave, applied for permission to march with the battalion to the trenches and fight with one arm bound in a sling. At Neuve Chapelle he stopped some shrapnel, being wounded in the eye and leg. He is now out again in France.²⁵⁵

Private McCafferty, with his prominently bandaged head, is the only one in the painting who displays clearly visible evidence for having received a wound. In addition, a distinctively shaped German 'Pickelhaube' helmet hangs from his belt as a souvenir and is also reminiscent of a trophy carried by a head-hunter after a successful raid. The helmet-souvenir suggests that McCafferty has killed its German owner and sports it as evidence of his bravery and martial skill to both his immediate comrades and to British

soldiers from other units. In his memoirs, the machine-gunner George Coppard, recalled that, in 1916, the 'Pickelhaube' was a highly prized object "as the mere display of one of these, when you were on leave, sort of suggested that you had personally killed the owner."²⁵⁶ Kennington's description of the very short soldier, Private Guy, further indicates those qualities he admired in a man, and, that a soldier need not be physically impressive to be a morally upstanding and courageous comrade:

Private P.A. Guy was very small and earned the name of 'Good Little Guy' by his unfailing good nature and willingness ... He never 'grouched' or 'slacked' or went sick through the whole winter campaign. He is shouldering his rifle and slung from his belt is a linen bag, a ration of tea and sugar for eight. He received many dangerous wounds at Neuve Chapelle and at Aubers Ridge but is now quite recovered and training [with the battalion] in England.²⁵⁷

Dominating the centre of the narrow, stage-like, composition is the burly and rugged figure of Lance-Corporal H. "Tug" Wilson:

a giant ... His rifle is protected from mud by a scarf, which is tightly bound round the bolt and sights ... He carries his fork and spoon in his puttees ... he is back with the Kensingtons in France though he still suffers from frost-bitten feet. Thin canvas rifle-covers were easily lost in the trench mud and a substitute must be found such as ... the scarf which will prevent the bright yellow clay from fouling the working parts of the rifle and rendering it useless save for bayonet attack.

There may be an note of irony here that Wilson is not using a scarf, knitted and sent lovingly from home, to keep his neck warm but to protect the vital working parts of his rifle, the 'infantry man's friend'. Wilson has grasped the new scale of priorities that prevailed at the Front, and entailed a complete reversal of civilian priorities, in that the infantryman's weapon and its safe-keeping came well before one's bodily claims. For all the highly charged journalistic rhetoric, concerning the pre-eminence of new technology in the war, the performance of much of this vaunted machinery was seriously impaired by age old factors, such as the weather and the mud, over which humans could exercise little influence. Indeed, studies after the war revealed that the weather on the Western Front had posed a far more serious danger to the health of British soldiers than even poison gas.²⁵⁸

The Kensingtons at Laventie enjoyed an unusually favourable critical reception when it was exhibited in London in April 1916. At the core of this reception was the projection of *The Kensingtons* as a more traditionally and desirably 'English' account of the impact front-line service had on men. Kennington's evocation of the fighting man was widely described as being as valid and 'truthful' as those works Nevinson had painted, featuring French troops, such as *La Mitrailleuse*, which had been hailed as radiating the spirit of modern mechanized warfare. The influential establishment art critic of *The Times*, Arthur Clutton Brock, penned one of the longest reviews:

Mr. Kennington has painted what is, so far, the one picture of the war. It is not the picture of a battle but of some soldiers, just relieved ... who are resting, tired out, in a

ruined village street ... An account of the picture is given by the artist in simple language almost as good as that picture itself. He is one of the soldiers in the picture; to look at it is to see that it was painted by one who had been a part of it ... Without any sentimentality or forcing of expression Mr. Kennington makes visible to us what all these men are feeling. They are ordinary men, very tired and dirty; there is none of the romance of war as commonly painted. No one is enjoying the thought that his is a hero or making history; yet all these soldiers are at one in their common sense of duty and determination to endure; and it is this sense, made visible, that imparts beauty to the picture ... It is also like the best English Pre-Raphaelite pictures, and here, we may say, English art has become itself again. It is a picture of Englishmen and of the manner and spirit in which they fight ... These men, if they were not too tired, would make jokes and not speeches. One of them has fallen on the ground, exhausted by sickness; one knows that only sickness could have overcome him. Others can only just keep on their feet; yet there is nothing merely animal in their weariness. Mr. Kennington is not a realist who denies the spirit; but he paints it in the flesh and makes it the more real and moving to us ... He has the power necessary to deal with his great subject, the power and humility; ... he has painted the war for us so that we know what it is in all its squalor and glory.²⁵⁹

Kennington probably benefited from the low regard in which the work of long established Royal Academy painters of battle scenes were held by the critics. William Barnes Wollen's (1857-1936) *The Canadians At Ypres* (1915) [Plate 38], exhibited at the Royal Academy in May 1916, was widely dismissed as predictably conventional and entirely unconvincing. Wollen deployed a compositional format he had employed many times previously to depict dramatic episodes from the 'small wars' of the Victorian era in which a 'thin red line', or square, of embattled British infantry repulses wave-upon-wave of assorted Zulus, Ashanti, Afghans or Sudanese. In *The Canadians at Ypres*, Wollen supplies a reassuringly coherent and comprehensible 'wide-screen' panoramic treatment of a specific engagement in which the protagonists, and the outcome of the fighting, are clearly decipherable. Attacking from right to left the Germans stand out in their 'feld grau' uniforms and their distinctive 'Pickelhaube' helmets. The Canadian dead lie in the left foreground in various tasteful, graceful, and ennobling attitudes. There is scant evidence here that Canadians, without gas masks, had died writhing in agony from the effects of poison gas. Nor is there any indication that the German superiority in artillery was so great that their shells hit Canadian positions so often that the dead and dying were repeatedly blown up and dismembered. Those Canadians still on their feet strike energetic and self-consciously heroic poses such as single-handedly manning a machine gun, when the rest of its crew have been killed, standing up to throw a hand grenade without cover and exposed to enemy fire, or shouting for ammunition resupply and offering encouragement to the, as yet, unwounded to fight on even though they are heavily outnumbered and outgunned. The image is essentially reassuring, the story of a 'success.' Though the Canadians are battered and bloodied, they are certainly unbowed and the intimation is that their gunfire will break up the German assault and will retain control of their trenches. The incident has a clear-cut moral; despite their use of poison gas, a massive superiority in artillery and outnumbering the defenders, the Germans had proved to be morally and physically inferior to the Canadians. Perhaps,

C.H. Collins-Baker, in October 1916, had such an image in mind when he poured scorn on the "puppet soldiers of Burlington House."²⁶⁰

When the London Group opened its June 1916 exhibition, at the Goupil Gallery, reviewers were quick to draw unfavourable comparisons between how Nevinson had characterised the 'Tommy' in, for example *When Harry Tate Came Down* (1916), also known as *At The Concert* [Plate 39], and the very different approach evident in *The Kensingtons At Laventie*, which was hanging on the floor below in the same gallery. One critic wrote, testily, "Mr. Kennington's remarkable war-picture, on view in the lower room of the Goupil Gallery, is to be much preferred to ... Mr. Nevinson's nightmarish marionettes and ... grimacing khaki in the upper room."²⁶¹ Later in 1916, Charles Lewis Hind described Nevinson's *La Mitrailleuse* [Plate 26] and *The Kensingtons at Laventie* as 'Vital War Pictures'. His reasoning for the comparison is intriguing:

In technique and vision they are as different as a restful Queen Anne cannon and a bustling German machine-gun ... Mr. Kennington ... takes his inspiration from the ... patient labour and bright, pure colour of the English Pre-Raphaelites ... on the other hand, in Mr. Nevinson's head, drums always the buzz, drone and clash of modern machinery ... Nevinson is all action and dynamic while ... Kennington is all peace and static. His *Kensingtons At Laventie* is precise and yet rhythmic, an illustration of an episode yet as decorative as a Benozzo Gozzoli ... They are two vital war pictures ... *The Kensingtons* ... expressing war's high heroism and *La Mitrailleuse* ... the hard, unyielding pitilessness of war.²⁶²

A far more conservative critic, C.H. Collins Baker, believed Kennington offered a more 'wholesome' and positive vision of life at the Front:

With the camera taking care of the superficial aspect of the war it is left to the artists to take care of the psychology. What we all want revealed is the humanity, the simple and astounding truth of that ... hallowed and splendid place ... the Front ... How men gathered in the trench await the destined moment for 'going over the top'; how they manifest, each in his strange and personal way, something wonderful and selfless ... In *La Mitrailleuse* ... the men are mere hulking dolls ... whereas Mr. Kennington's *Kensingtons* offer a more adequate conception of the war ... He has shunned false heroics ... and ideal picturesqueness; aiming to express the unconsciousness of observation and the aloofness of men absorbed by their own thoughts or numbed by fatigue and strain.²⁶³

The poet Lawrence Binyon argued that, although Nevinson and Kennington offered very different views of the war, both were equally valid. He suspected, however, that Kennington's approach would be of more long-term comfort to relatives of men at the Front and more likely to stimulate patriotic ardour within the heart of the civilian spectator:

one man has painted a picture that does make that spirit [of Kitchener's volunteer army] a reality. I mean Eric Kennington, the painter of *The Kensingtons At Laventie* ... It is one of the finest things in contemporary English painting ... with a certain brilliant independence ... this group of young Englishmen ... tired but masters of the day, reveal by their simple aspect and attitude, without any emphasis, rhetoric or symbolism, what manner of army ... is fighting our battle; they stand for no military fanaticism or delusion,

but for what a correspondent called the other day something 'reassuringly sane and reconstructive' in the midst of havoc and chaos. Theirs is not the hallucination of the machine. The clean and masculine vigour of the design and colouring enforce the expressiveness of the figures themselves. Mr. Kennington's strength and vitality are perhaps even more visible in his charcoal studies of soldiers ... the portraiture of the civilian soldier, who is the real hero of the war, is the best record we can have of what we fight for.²⁶⁴

Binyon was equally impressed by six drawings Kennington produced on the subject of *Making Soldiers*. These drawings had been commissioned, as part of the *Britain's Efforts and Ideals* series of propaganda lithographs, by the Department of Information. Indeed, it was Binyon's superior at the British Museum, the Keeper of Prints and Drawings, Campbell Dodgson (1867-1948), who, early in April 1917, first brought Kennington's name to the attention of the Department of Information.²⁶⁵ Binyon appreciated the clear influence in Kennington's drawings of Japanese wood block prints. He had only recently, early in May 1917, published a book devoted to the Chinese and Japanese prints in the collection of the British Museum. The 'Japanese' element is, perhaps, most prominent in *The Bayonet Instructor*, a particularly disturbing and disconcerting image. The instructor, wearing a fencers mask and chest-padding, grasps the rifle held by some bashful recruit and is, no doubt, urging him to direct the point of his bayonet into the protective cladding covering his stomach with more ferocity and conviction. In the background, arrayed in sinister ranks, are line upon line of straw-stuffed sacks, hanging from horizontal poles, simulating the torsos of the enemy to be stabbed hundreds of times a day by recruits. This image calls to mind the blood-curdling patter of a bayonet instructor Siegfried Sassoon heard in France, in April 1916, and then distilled into his memorably chilling poem *The Kiss*, published the following month in *The Cambridge Magazine*:

The bullet and the bayonet are brother and sister ... Stick him between the eyes, in the throat, in the chest, or round the thighs. If he's on the run, there's only one place, get your bayonet into his kidneys; it'll go in as easy as butter ... Quickness, anger, strength, good fury, accuracy of aim. Don't waste good steel. Six inches are enough ... Three inches will do him and when he coughs, go and find another.²⁶⁶

Civilian observers, in particular, seemed to find watching recruits engaged in bayonet instruction both repellent and peculiarly fascinating. Philip Gibbs, of *The Times*, later recalled the extraordinary effect bayonet training appeared to have on, hitherto, undemonstrative recruits:

It was as though the primitive nature in man, which had been sleeping through the centuries, was suddenly awakened in the souls of these Cockney soldier boys. They made sudden jabs at each other, fiercely and with savage grimaces ... Then they lunged at the hanging sacks, stabbing them where the red circles were painted. These inanimate things ... became revoltingly life-like, as they jerked to and fro and the bayonet men seemed enraged with them. One fell from the rope and a boy sprang on it, dug his bayonet in, put his foot on the prostrate thing to get a better purchase for the bayonet ... and then kicked the sack.²⁶⁷

It may be of significance that, in five of the six designs, Kennington deliberately denies the viewer sight of the soldier's faces. In the case of *The Bayonet Instructor* the soldier is wearing a mask. In *Gas Practice* he is in the process of putting on a mask, while pronounced *contre-jour* lighting casts his features into deep shadow. The soldier is depicted in profile, as is the case with *Over the Top* (1917) [Plate 41], or from behind in *Bringing in Prisoners* (1917) [Plate 42]. *Over the Top* is one of the few images of official war art to supply an unsparing insight into the physical effort usually required by attacking, heavily laden, British infantryman just about to clamber out of his front-line trenches up rickety ladders. The soldier then has to make his awkward way across a shell-holed and debris strewn 'No-Man's-Land', negotiate around the bodies of dead comrades, and through belts of partially cut wire, to finally close with the enemy. In the upper left-hand corner of the image one can just make out a British soldier, with rifle and fixed bayonet raised high above his head, about to comprehensively finish off an opponent lying prone at his feet. *Bringing in Prisoners* realizes the German enemy more distinctly, as prisoners carrying a wounded British soldier on a stretcher to an advanced dressing station. The victorious British soldier guarding them in the foreground stands in deep shadow. He is perhaps smoking in relief at surviving the assault, while a gleam of light catches his fixed bayonet, attached to his rifle slung over his shoulder, and explores the cavity in one side of his steel helmet. A piece of the helmet has, presumably, been carried away by a shell-fragment from a 'near miss.' Only a few more inches to the right, and the fragment, or splinter, would have been sufficient to take most of the soldier's head off. In that eventuality, he could have very well taken the place of the wounded soldier carried by German prisoners to a dressing station. The image also served to refute the frequent German accusation that, during the Battle of the Somme, British infantrymen routinely bayoneted men trying to surrender. There has been much heated debate as to the accuracy of these accusations. It would appear that, if anything, Germans trying to surrender were more likely to be machine-gunned than bayoneted in the heat of the moment.²⁶⁸ The evidence of a guardsman, who fought in France as a private in 1918, gives an added dimension to the self-confident expression bordering on arrogance worn by Kennington's simultaneously professional, yet cherubic, *Yorkshire Lewis-Gunner* (1917) [Plate 43] "The idea of taking prisoners had become very unpopular ... If called on to escort prisoners to the cage it could always be justifiable to kill them on the way and say they tried to escape ... the man with the Lewis gun forgets to take his finger off the trigger."²⁶⁹

The verdict of one front-line veteran, who spent nearly three and a half years in the front-line, perhaps comes closest to the truth of the matter "Inevitably, nasty things

happen ... for frenzy and fear may lead to anything on either side. Atkins treats his prisoners decently and, as far as I can learn, Fritz treats our fellows decently.²⁷⁰

The 66 lithographs, comprising "*Britain's Efforts and Ideals*", went on show at the Fine Art Society on 6 July 1917. The *Efforts* section consisted of 54 images by 9 artists while 12 artists contributed to the *Ideals*. By far the most critical positive response was directed at the two sets of 6 *Efforts* submitted by Nevinson and Kennington, the two youngest artists. In addition, Nevinson and Kennington were the only artists, amongst the 17 involved, aged under thirty. While general dissatisfaction and disappointment was expressed about the allegorical and symbolic designs, Kennington was singled out for commendation "As for Mr. Kennington ... no artist of the day has presented, with greater intensity or a more unaffected pathos, the British soldier in all his sturdiness, in his martial ardour and free from all taint of sentimentality."²⁷¹ The exhibition prompted a very interesting exchange of letters, from ordinary readers, in the *Manchester Guardian*. Kennington appeared to construct an absolute antithesis because in the majority of his prints:

the soldier looms big in the foreground, like a young giant, cleanly and strongly drawn, dominating the episodic incidents of the war which are going on in the background ... The face [of each soldier] is sane and sensitive ... there is no rhetoric, no delusion here; it is that of the civilian soldier seeing through and beyond everything that is going on around him.

After a fortnight, the exchange of letters was closed with a concluding note from one who felt "Mr. Kennington has achieved something of lasting fineness and beauty out of all the hideous clamour, dirt, and slaughter ... of this war."²⁷²

Though Nevinson told a newspaper, in October 1916, that he would not paint any more images of war, he returned to the war as subject matter in the spring of 1917. Perhaps, he wanted to ingratiate himself with the Department of Information and display his talents as a war artist and ability to depict the ordinary soldier. The man in the ranks, the conscript and his attitude towards the war, assumed added significance in the wake of the February Revolution in Russia and the overthrow of the Tsar. News of the Russian upheaval had reached Britain around 15-16 March 1917 and, initially, caused the authorities much alarm.²⁷³ One pertinent image Nevinson drew in April 1917 was *The Sniper*, also known as *The Trench Periscope*, [Plate 44] reproduced in *The Graphic* magazine early in May 1917.²⁷⁴ This striking pastel drawing anticipates the style of work he would later produce for the Department of Information, in the autumn of 1917, after his first formal trip to France as an official war artist. This first visit to the Front, in an official capacity, lasted from 6 July to 5 August 1917. A lone British sniper, without a clearly visible facial expression and seen as though the viewer was positioned close alongside him in the trench, checks his aim as, perhaps, an unfortunate German

wanders into his sights. The subject matter is very much concerned with the nature of perception and the problematics of seeing at the Front. The sniper can only observe 'No-Man's-Land' through a periscope from the safety of a British trench. He has only to pull a string, attached to the trigger of the rifle, and the weapon will fire to possibly claim a life. No great physical skill or exertion is required, as would have been the case with bayonet fighting, apart from a calculating, cold-blooded, patience. This 'Tommy' just has to wait for the right moment and then pull a string. He does not have to crawl out into "No-Man's-Land" and expose himself while firing at his prey. He does not even have to experience the rifle's recoil once fired. Nevinson has chosen to depict a moment of intense concentration, suspense and anticipation. The viewer is left in suspense. Has the sniper spotted a target, will he pull the trigger-cord, and is another life about to be taken on the Western Front?

The observer of such an image is placed in a morally ambiguous position. Does one hope that the soldier has sighted a target or not? Once the rifle has been fired, from such a steady vantage point, it is unlikely that the bullet will miss its intended target, as human fallibility has largely been eliminated. This soldier has been removed that one degree more from the visceral act of killing. The rifle is not settled into his shoulder but is part of a Heath Robinson, rough and ready, rifle and trench-periscope, contraption. One no longer pulls the trigger and feels the force of the recoil channelled into the shoulder. The soldier merely has to pull a cord to distance himself from any physical sensations associated with killing.

Nevinson takes a far more detached and less anecdotal view of a sniper at work than the older, and more artistically conservative, Alfred Priest (1874-1929), whose *Got 'Im* (1918) [Plate 45] was a popular exhibit at the Royal Academy in May 1918. This can be read as a decidedly unpleasant, bloodthirsty, even vicious image. However, it may have seemed more truthful to the sort of men depicted, two privates and a lance-corporal, than Nevinson's more matter of fact and low key treatment of similar subject matter. *Got 'Im* communicates a very different emotional charge to that of *The Sniper* dealing far less with the moral ambiguities of anticipation than with the pleasures of closure, of resolution, and of the recent killing of an enemy. The broadly grinning sniper has just popped above the parapet of his rudimentary trench and bagged a German. Consequently, he wreathed in a smile of savage and atavistic exultation. He is still visibly possessed with the exhilaration of his act, the element of risk, his display of professional ability and competence, and the satisfaction of an unambiguous kill. He is so possessed, with his achievement that he cannot, momentarily, respond to the urgent question of one comrade: where did the bullet go in? The other soldier, sardonically, taps the side of his forehead, just above the eye, as if to indicate the exact spot where the bullet struck home.

What strikes one as deeply disturbing and offensive by the standards of today, is the palpable relish with which the three soldiers greet the death of an enemy. They are unashamed in expressing a fierce sense of pleasure, which the spectator in 1918 was required to appreciate, condone, and even celebrate. The 'Tommy' in this case does not look quite the lovable, or hapless, figure so often presented by Bainsfather. Though not a combatant himself, he was well over service age in 1918, Priest has touched on one of the unpalatable truths revealed during the war, that there were no shortage of hitherto peaceful men who discovered a talent for killing with a rifle. The subject matter and even the composition, for *Got 'Im*, may have been derived directly from a poem, entitled *The Sniper*, by Geoffrey Antekell Studdert-Kennedy (1883-1929), an army chaplain with extensive front-line service, known by the pseudonym of 'Woodbine Willie'. The penultimate line of *The Sniper* reads, "What's that? Got 'im through the 'ead."²⁷⁵

According to 'Sapper', the popular author of war stories, those at home did not want to dwell on the fact that their loved ones had been trained to kill and, once they had killed, the act left its ineradicable mark on the personality of the killer:

the man who comes back on short leave hardly grasps how the thing [life at the Front] has changed him; hardly realizes that the madness is still in his soul ... [a successful sniper] is ... transformed from a dreadful being who cut up silks and things and discoursed on the merits of what is known as lingerie [into] a man ... a man who had met one of his own kind in fair fight and killed him ... excelling at killing as a trade ... a trade practiced by ... our brothers and sons and partners and clerks ... the civilians of Britain must be fitted for ... the business of killing in the most efficient manner.²⁷⁶

Kennington was prepared to acknowledge, during the time he spent as an official war artist, that the 'Tommy' could regard the business of killing as a prosaic, everyday task. A good example of a pastel from this period that presents the 'Tommy' as professional killer is his 1918 pastel *The Raider with a Cosh* [Plate 47]. Such a work can be interpreted as evidence for Kennington's formulation of an alternative iconic image of the 'Tommy.' This was perceived as a visual counterweight to that stereotype conceived by Nevinson and William Roberts, that imagined the 'Tommy' as a faceless, anguished, angularly metallic, automaton. A work such as Roberts's *Signallers* (1918) [Plate 46] infuriated ex-servicemen when it was exhibited, between December 1919 and February 1920, as part of the *Nations War Pictures and Other Records* exhibition at the Royal Academy. One furious letter, from an incensed 'ex-soldier', indicates a typical reaction:

our heroes are made to look like clowns ... ['Tommies'] are made to look an ill-conditioned, clownish, spiritless lot of men, some with Chaplinesque feet. There is none of that type of soldier ... who, coming back into the open from a daylight raid, on the enemy's front-line, stopped to light a cigarette ... Every good soldier has been in a funk at one time or another, but why should the artist seize on this fleeting phase of character to typify the British soldier?²⁷⁷

One imagines this man would have been far more satisfied with Kennington's *The Raider With A Cosh* [Plate 47], if it had been included in the exhibition. This striking pastel was created during Kennington's principal trip to France as an official war artist. This visit lasted from 19 August 1917 to 19 March 1918. The drawings he produced during this stay established a model of the 'Tommy' as heroic because of the skills he had acquired and because of the cool, calm, professionalism he consistently displayed in the field. The body of the *Raider With a Cosh* can easily be perceived as saturated with such sentiment, yet Kennington does not shrink from the suggestion that this 'Tommy' has become a trained, ruthless killer. Such a stark image can be set alongside other rather less problematic images Kennington produced of the 'Tommy' as hero. There is, for example, a more conventional portrait *An 8th Queen's Hero* (1917) [Plate 58], though this work could be read as a disguised portrait of in a conventionally heroic soldier. This reading will be developed further in Chapter Four. Alternatively, *The Cup Bearer* (1917) [Plate 48] presents the 'Tommy' occupying a domesticated role, as a servant sent out to bring in the cocoa for a group, including the artist, sheltering inside a dugout while forward positions are coming under German shell-fire. Alongside this element of implied cosy domesticity, when the work was reproduced in the volume of *British Artists At The Front* devoted to Kennington, the accompanying caption archly described the solicitous soldier as a "gaunt ganymede" of the trenches, thus adding an unexpected aspect of sexual ambivalence to the figure.²⁷⁸ The caption was probably penned by Campbell Dodgson, who, in 1918, was working for the Ministry of Information. Though Siegfried Sassoon displayed more innate understanding of his men than many officers, who shared his upper crust background, it should be noted that he was quite able to patronisingly describe one of his skilful platoon sergeants as possessing the composure under fire of "a well-trained footman."²⁷⁹

Soon after returning from France, Kennington wrote to his employers at the Ministry of Information, "If I am of any use, it is in depicting British soldiers in their truest and noblest aspect, of that work I shall never tire."²⁸⁰ It is clear, from his correspondence with C.F.G. Masterman and William Rothenstein, that Kennington, during the seven and a half months he spent in France, made a huge emotional investment in his contacts with the other ranks while he drew them.²⁸¹ On the one hand, he frequently expressed how overwhelmed he was by the unassuming, undemonstrative, sheer, raw physical courage displayed by the other ranks he had encountered. Their resilience and cheerfulness in the face of hardship only compounded his own feelings of guilt that he had been invalided out of the army, and was now in France with a 'cushy' job.

Much of the fascination of *Raider With A Cosh* lies in how it skirts the problematic idea of presenting a 'Tommy' as a temporarily professional killer. It is not readily

apparent whether the man is practicing for a trench raid, preparing to participate in one, or has just returned from such a mission. If he has just returned from a raid, one could interpret his gestures as the removal of all traces of any unfortunate German whose skull he may have recently crushed, during the raid, with his fearsome 'cosh' or 'knobkerrie'. When the image was initially received by the Department of Information, in the middle of January 1918, more details about it were requested from Kennington. This would suggest his employers experienced similar difficulties, in understanding the image and in determining its precise meaning. Kennington replied "the raider was a man of the Rifle Brigade ... His face is white from dried mud, while actually raiding the mud would be wet and the colour of the ground he crossed ... The weapon in his hands is called a 'cosh' ... he is twisting the thong round his wrist."²⁸²

When the work was exhibited in Kennington's June to July 1918 one-man show, Campbell Dodgson described *The Raider with a Cosh* in the exhibition catalogue, as:

A man of the Rifle Brigade. His tunic has no buttons, shoulder-badges, signs of division, regiment or rank. It is held together by safety pins. He carries no identifications whatever. The bayonet is masked. His face and hands are covered with dried grey mud, which would be put on straight from the ground before raiding. He is holding in his hand a 'cosh', the thong of which he is winding round his wrist [to gain a better purchase when wishing to strike downwards].²⁸³

It is likely that the man depicted in *The Raider with a Cosh* belonged to the Third battalion of the Rifle Brigade. Kennington spent a large part of the period November 1917 to January 1918 with the battalions comprising the 72nd and 73rd Infantry Brigades of the 24th Infantry Division. It is possible that, before Kennington left for his monthly visit to GHQ, during which his pastels would be censored by Major Lee, he spent some time with units making up that division's remaining Brigade, the 17th. These would have included the only battalion of the Rifle Brigade, the 3rd, serving in the 24th Infantry Division. Moreover, a raiding party from this battalion had been training in a rear area, behind its brigade's immediate front-line positions where Kennington, as a visitor, would normally have had a billet. Kennington may have sketched some of the men, who had volunteered for the raid that took place on 20 January 1918, making their preparations just prior to his leaving for GHQ.²⁸⁴

So, what is one to make of this figure, his particular dress, mannerisms, the actions he performs, how he holds himself and how he smokes a cigarette? It would appear, from reading the battalion's war diary that the same non-commissioned officers and men repeatedly volunteered to participate in trench raids. The majority of the other ranks involved in the raid are not named in the 'after action' report. Those, who are specifically named, had already survived their second, third or even fourth raid. It was these men who tended to receive medals for gallantry and leadership under fire, such as the Military Medal and the Distinguished Conduct Medal. It would appear that, even

by the fourth winter of the war, there was still no shortage of men from a battalion composed of Kitchener volunteers and conscripts prepared to volunteer for extremely hazardous missions. Of course, participating in a raid was a very effective way of increasing one's chances of acquiring a honourable 'Blighty' wound. This would ensure evacuation from the trenches back to England, reclassification as being fit only for home garrison duty, or might lead to one being invalided out of the army altogether.

Those who undertook trench raids would have experienced a kind of warfare that, perhaps, the majority of British infantryman in France did not, even if they had spent months in and around the front-line. The trench raider actually got to cross the mysterious and intimidating world of "No-Man's-Land" and move beyond the comforting limits of one's own defensive barbed wire. The raider once he had volunteered, or had acquired a reputation for aggressiveness and coolness under fire, was actively encouraged to practice face-to-face killing and incapacitation of the enemy during their brief periods in German trenches. Trench raiders were far more likely to confront enemy soldiers in brutal, hand-to-hand combat while many British soldiers never saw a German at close quarters during their entire time at the Front. A seasoned raider was more likely to be decorated, promoted and granted leave. On the other hand, the raider was far more likely to be killed, badly wounded, taken prisoner or simply disappear, never to be seen again, into the morass of 'No-Man's-Land.' However meticulously planned, such as the one undertaken by the forty-eight men of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, with participants spending four or five days of intensive training in a area made up to resemble the enemy position to be attacked, more raids ended in disaster with heavy casualties than successfully.

Perhaps one could interpret Kennington's image as that of a man apart; a liminal figure standing on the threshold between the acute violence required and demanded of the trench raider and the rather hum-drum, mundane and prosaic life experienced by the vast majority of front-line infantrymen when not directly engaged in a battle. The latter scored his triumph by lasting out the day, by enduring the onerous conditions of trench life; the shelling, sniping, physical demands of carrying stores, repairing barbed wire entanglements, parapets, communication trenches, trying not to fall ill with pneumonia, or lice-borne 'trench-fever', struggling to maintain a military standard of cleanliness and keeping warm and dry in winter. Unlike the average British infantryman, prior to going into action, the raider underwent a transformation in appearance. All badges, marks of identification and rank were rigorously removed so it became difficult to tell officers apart from their men, and nco's from humble privates.

Rather than taking with an unwieldy rifle with fixed bayonet, as their principal weapon trench, raiders preferred more primitive, evil-looking, studded home-made clubs as well as revolvers, grenades and customized knives. All these weapons were far better suited for fighting in very cramped and confined conditions. The memory of seeing a party of so-armed British trench raiders, departing for their jumping off positions, prompted Philip Gibbs to write of his regret at the necessity for Englishmen to engage in "the beastliness of the primitive earth-man"²⁸⁵ and "the cave-man code."²⁸⁶ As the catalogue entry indicates, before going into battle, the raider was required to literally assume a mask of murderous military anonymity. Mud was applied to faces and helmets, so as to avoid them catching any light while out in 'No-Man's-Land'. Siegfried Sassoon noticed how this process of 'blacking-up', prior to a raid, transformed his perception of the raiders from ordinary prosaic 'Tommy' into an unsettling 'other', performing in a deadly sort of pantomime:

twenty-seven men with faces blackened ... shiny Christy-minstrels, with hatchets in their belts, bombs in their pockets and knobkerries ... waiting in a dugout in the reserve line²⁸⁷ ... men with blackened faces and grim clubs and axes and bombs ... men with knocking hearts, stifling the yawns of nervousness ... wondering if our shells have cut the German wire ... knowing that the enemy are ready for them ... knowing they will probably be killed or wounded or caught like rats.²⁸⁸

Blackening the face and utilizing a range of archaic weapons, that appear to belong to the Stone Age, one could regard these men as deliberately setting aside their 'civilized' Western European cultural values and upbringing in order to feel themselves capable of performing a 'primitive' masquerade. This performance required the soldier to be brutal, pitiless, cold-blooded and physically tough. As a trench raider the likelihood of having to kill an opponent in cold blood would have set them apart from their less apparently bloodthirsty and adventurous fellows in the ranks. The majority of 'Tommies' only killed occasionally, and then at a distance, shooting at the back of a fleeing figure on the battlefield. The distinct dress of the raider/sniper/single-patrol specialist, demanded by military necessity, may have also possessed a psychic justification. In order to feel imbued, with the appropriate 'raiding' spirit, the soldier had to be seen to dress in a particular way. Their style of dress would have marked them out as men who had conspicuously crossed the threshold separating those soldiers who actively set out to kill from those who thought their duty extended only as far as defending their trench, or occupying enemy positions after they had been suitably blasted into submission by friendly artillery.

Depending on whether one interprets *The Raider with a Cosh*, either as a man preparing for a raid, or having recently returned from one, determines to a great extent how one judges the significance of his winding the thong of his cosh around his wrist and the prominence accorded to his smoking a cigarette. If preparing for a raid, the cigarette might serve to steady his nerve prior to going into action. A smoke after the

raid might provide the means for savouring and assimilating the atavistic exultation of having killed as well as the attendant adrenalin-generated exhilaration coursing through the blood stream. One can interpret the cigarette as either having a calming, reassuring pre-combat role to play, or functioning as a device to facilitate post-excitement relaxation and self-congratulation. Either way, the soldier may be taking a moment to meditate on his own survival, or reflect on a job well done, a weapon professionally wielded, on his having maintained the required standards of behaviour and deportment under fire. These standards would have been monitored both by his comrades and by the officers leading the raid, whose approval would be required for a medal recommendation or promotion. Sassoon noticed how enlisted men smoked a cigarette in the front-line as an act of bravado and of conspicuous inter-male display, describing it, in the case of one fearless 19-year old raider, Lance-Corporal Gibson, as "jaunty fag-smoking demeanour under fire."²⁸⁹ Smoking a cigarette, in a particular way, was recognized as suggesting evidence for an individual's unflappability and nonchalance, however pretended, amidst shellfire and the prospect of imminent death. This example was sure to be seen, absorbed, and appreciated by his fellow soldiers.²⁹⁰

To a certain extent, Kennington has temporised in not depicting the man full-face but looking downwards, tending to the care of his cosh. As his features are partially obscured by mud, and by the angle at which Kennington has chosen to draw him, it would have made it all the harder for any spectator to identify the man at the June-July 1918 exhibition. Kennington may have wished for the raider to remain anonymous because lack of identifying marks and a distinct regimental identity were central to what defined a raider and his specialized activities. Indeed, paradoxically, to take life for King and Country, the raider had to put some distance between himself and his usual regimental uniform. He was required to remove the very badges of rank and unit insignia, including the all-important regimental cap badge, in which the British soldier was trained to invest so much pride and loyalty. Thus, on one level, Kennington depicts this transformed 'Tommy' as a figure to be admired, valued, and emulated. Simultaneously, he is a disturbing figure who does not resemble the British soldier as conventionally depicted. The soldier is so pre-occupied with tending to his cosh and, given the connotations of that weapon, overtly linked to the grim, sordid, messy business of beating an opponents brains out, that he subverts the stereotype of the 'Tommy' peddled in the papers and constructed by Bainsfather's cartoon characters. This stereotype represented the British soldier as perpetually grinning, child-like, innocent, awkward, rather physically clumsy, and not at all intimidating. Kennington supplants one stereotype of 'Tommy' with a far more unnerving, menacing and confrontational figure. The implication is that standing before us is the embodiment of the process by which the ordinary, placid, docile, rule-obeying Englishman has been transformed into a professional killer.

The Raider with the Cosh leaves the question hanging as to whether the implied transformation of the average British citizen-soldier was for better or worse. The surviving ex-serviceman may find that his experience of soldiering has left him more self-reliant, self-confident, compassionate and open to new ideas and experiences. However, the experience of killing and seeing comrades killed, could have equally coarsened and embittered him and made him more prone to behaviour proscribed in the world of peacetime dominated by civilian rules. During the war, some writers recognized that post-war society would have to face the serious consequences of attempting to absorb thousands of young men who knew no other trade than that of killing. Writing in 1916, for example, Donald Hankey, who initially had served at the Front in the ranks of the Rifle Brigade and later as an officer with another regiment, was concerned that the impact of having to kill was eroding an ordinary soldier's sense of himself as a civilized human being. Hankey argued that civilians, for far too long, had closed their eyes to how training to take life, and actually taking life, changed a man. When the war was over, he would return home with a different attitude on the value of human life than the one he may have possessed as a pre-war civilian. Hankey foresaw that it would not be an easy process to reintegrate the citizen-soldier killer back into peacetime society. He warned that those who had known a man before the war, who was now returning home from service at the Front, would have to make the necessary corrections to their preconceptions:

Those at home do not realise what it means to be the man behind the bayonet ... they do not realise the repugnance for the first thrust, a repugnance which has got to be overcome. You don't realise the change that comes over a man when his bayonet is wet with the blood of his first enemy. The primitive "blood-lust" kept well under all his life by the laws and principles of society, surges through his being, transforming him, maddening him with the desire to kill...that letting loose of a primitive lust is not going to be without its affect on a man's character.²⁹¹

By all accounts Kennington's one-man show, held at the Leicester Galleries during June and July 1918, was a great success. He was hailed by Campbell Dodgson as "a born painter of the nameless heroes of the rank and file" who had fulfilled his ambition to "draw and paint soldiers that others who have not lived among them, as he did ... may know what manner of men they are and how they lived."²⁹² Dodgson wrote this as a civilian who had never been near the firing line. However, Kennington's portraits of ordinary soldiers were held in equally high regard by men with actual combat experience, such as Robert Graves, Robert Nichols and Siegfried Sassoon.²⁹³ Graves wrote in the exhibition catalogue that "Mr. Kennington is not the embarrassed visitor in a strange drawing room nor the bewildered old lady at her first football match; he is a soldier, and at home in trench and shell-hole, knows what is happening, what to see, where and how to see it, more important still, he has the trench point of view."²⁹⁴

Indeed, when Graves first saw a selection of images Kennington had brought back from France, he wrote to his friend the collector Edward Marsh (1872-1953): "my God Eddie, Kennington can draw; makes your pals [Paul] Nash and [C.R.W.] Nevinson look like grease-spots. I don't know why any other official artists are sent out [to France] at all."

²⁹⁵ Just prior to the opening of the exhibition Graves's friend, the war poet Robert Nichols, who had served briefly at the Front in the Royal Field Artillery, wrote to Robert Ross, then working as an advisor to the Ministry of Information's British War Memorials Committee, urging him to buy as many of Kennington's portraits for the nation as possible. Nichols asserted "this is the British soldier at his best ... Kennington is absolutely real; these are the men whom we commanded. There is a heroic truth in these studies ... Kennington's work is the real war."²⁹⁶

Meanwhile, as part of a lengthy appreciation of the official war art exhibited in public during the year prior to July 1918, Laurence Binyon wrote approvingly of Kennington's portraiture:

He has ... the power of giving expression to the latent vehemence, energy and passion that make up the controlled strength of a man ... If a foreigner wished to realise the British soldier he could do no better than see him with Mr. Kennington's eyes. He is here in his massive blunt simplicity [and] with all the qualities of his race written on him.²⁹⁷

Cheyne Walker, who had been very critical of Nevinson's conception of the 'Tommy', as "the British working man in uniform", believed Kennington's 1918 exhibition had "restored our belief in the importance of the private soldier in the trenches."²⁹⁸ Shortly after the war, C.F.G. Masterman, Kennington's former boss at the Ministry of Information, commented that his image of the ordinary private was 'formidable'. According to Masterman, Kennington had been worth every penny the Ministry had spent on him and his image of the British soldier "will stand as the model of English steadiness and cleanness."²⁹⁹ However, such fulsome praise acted to conceal two suspicions that could be highly corrosive to the reputation of British masculinity forged in the war. One source of anxiety was how the killers Kennington depicted, the masters of Lewis Gun and cosh, were to be re-integrated into the necessarily placid rhythms of civilian life. Paradoxically, this anxiety co-existed with the growing perception that the most efficient soldiers by far, to fight in the cause of British, had come from the Dominions. The Australian and Canadian male was widely identified as embodying the masculinity capable of defending the Empire in the future, as opposed to his British counter-part who was supposedly debilitated by poor physique and unhealthy living conditions. Meanwhile, a British soldier's initiative and intelligence were described as having been irrevocably retarded by a destructively hidebound class system.³⁰⁰

This assumption, that the British male had already lost out in the Darwinian struggle for primacy, is evident in the reaction of British critics to Kennington's remarkable group portrait of Canadian Highlanders, *The Conquerors* (1920) [Plate 84]. This painting was exhibited in London in October 1920 and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Six. Fears that the war had exposed widespread evidence of physical and mental degeneration in the British male, fuelled prejudice towards sufferers from what had been diagnosed as 'shell-shock'. Anxiety concerning the unstable nature of normative masculinity, exposed by the war, also imposed great difficulties on those artists who attempted to express mental anguish and exhaustion in the faces of their soldiers. This issue will be explored in the next chapter devoted to the 'pathological' face of the British infantryman.

Chapter Four.

The 'Stigmata of Hysteria' and The Pathological Face of the British 'Tommy': 1915-1918.

Just over a decade after the end of the Great War, a popular mass-circulation newspaper blithely attributed a reported increase in the number of adults receiving treatment for claustrophobia to the experience of thousands of men buried alive by shell-fire in the trenches and dugouts of the Western Front.³⁰¹ As Paul Fussell and Samuel Hynes have described, by the late 1920's, sympathetic characters abounded in numerous autobiographies and fictional texts concerned with the First World War.³⁰² Even before the Armistice, the shell-shocked officer had emerged as a stock figure within war fiction, for example in Rebecca West's *Return of the Soldier* (1918).³⁰³ Indeed, to some extent, it was perceived that an ex-officer's account of his war experiences would lack a certain authenticity if he did not admit to having been, at least, mildly shell-shocked.

Much less attention has been paid to the figure of the shell-shocked soldier from the ranks, as well as to the depiction of his pathological physiognomy by official British war artists. Part of an explanation for this may lie in an evolution, during the war, in attitudes among army psychologists towards the symptoms of shell-shock. By 1918, a consensus had formed that officers expressed their neuroses through the imagination, as nightmares, while the less well-educated enlisted men communicated their inarticulate anxieties physically in the form of distorted facial expression, or through what was termed 'conversion hysteria.' This involved the contracture and paralysis of part of the body without evident physical causation. The overwhelming application of 'hysteria', as a diagnostic term, to shell-shocked enlisted men is extremely revealing. As Elaine Showalter has recently described, prior to the First World War, the medical profession regarded hysteria as a mental condition to which women were primarily pre-disposed. The mass incidence of shell-shock, amongst ostensibly 'healthy' men, came as such an unpleasant surprise precisely because it comprehensively undermined pre-conceived orthodoxies concerning the constitution of normative masculinity. Showalter quotes the psychologist Cyril Burt, writing in 1935, that the First World War:

effectively brought home the artificiality of the distinction between the normal mind, on the one hand, and its abnormal conditions on the other ... it gradually became apparent that much of what had been considered abnormal might be discovered in the mind of the average man.³⁰⁴

Burt's hypothesis anticipates the now respectable and widely accepted argument, articulated by Showalter³⁰⁵, and more recently by Abigail Solomon-Godeau, that there never has been a normative masculinity in history which was free from the suspicion of

instability, crisis and the threat of imminent dissolution.³⁰⁶ Keeping in mind such accounts of the tensions underlying the literary and visual representation of the transgressive and problematic male, this chapter will explore how a number of British war artists, working at various stages of the war for government departments, approached the depiction of the abnormal and pathological in the physiognomy of the ordinary British infantryman in the ranks, commonly known as the 'Tommy'. Admittedly, Bruce Bairnsfather, C.R.W. Nevinson and Eric H. Kennington were all well aware that their employers would hardly welcome images of explicitly traumatized men. These men were also very conscious of a need to put considerable distance between themselves and the widespread conviction that the artistic male was pre-disposed to nervous breakdown and to behaving aberrantly. In private, nearly all the artists to be discussed told friends they found being a war artist a nerve-racking and frustrating business. I suspect that this factor had its impact on the images of problematic males they produced, in spite of being aware of the likely displeasure of their employers.

The images to be discussed in this chapter emerged from a dense nexus of interacting relationships, between the artist, his experience of the Front and what he imagined the authorities wanted him to produce for official purposes. For the sake of clarity, the imagery under consideration will be divided into three broad categories. In the first, the war artist deliberately chooses to depict a soldier whose facial expression and bodily posture unmistakably suggested that he was suffering from those physical symptoms of shell-shock supposedly exhibited by the enlisted man. Secondly, the image of a soldier not ostensibly concerned with shell-shock, but whose features are deemed sufficiently problematic that the authorities and newspaper critics read into them evidence of inner trauma and degeneracy. Finally, the artist could produce an image, though not regarded as transgressive or subversive at the time, can now be interpreted as exhibiting the markers of shell-shock or of what is now commonly known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.³⁰⁷ Before moving on to a detailed discussion of individual images, I feel it would be useful to sketch in the pre-war medical profession's gendering of pathological behaviour. 'Neurasthenia' was identified as a treatable male complaint while 'hysteria' was perceived as an essentially feminine malady that could be ameliorated, but never cured completely.

In 1912, the eminent German psychologist, Dr. Paul Hartenbug, rigorously differentiated between neurasthenia and hysteria. He defined the archetypal neurasthenic as a bourgeois male who had become physically debilitated, had lost his sexual appetite for women and whose facial expression bore the 'essential stigmata of the neurasthenic state':

[he] looks tired and drawn, the cheeks are sunken, the complexion is sallow, the eyes dull the expression sad ... [he] sits heavily ... [his] back is bent, his head is bowed ... his whole aspect reveals lassitude and depression ... while standing he experiences sensations of sinking, subsidence, bending and collapsing ... In the legs he experiences ... the same feeling of bending, of weakness ... an imperative desire to lean, to support himself.³⁰⁸

Hartenburg quoted approvingly from Freud's 1895 *Studies on Hysteria*, agreeing with his argument that hysteria was a nervous condition to which women of all ages, classes and occupations were especially susceptible.³⁰⁹ Like many specialists in his field, while Hartenburg was convinced that "A perfectly normal individual will never become neurasthenic", he further believed that the neurasthenic male could be cured and returned to occupy his proper place in society.³¹⁰ On the other hand, the recurrence of hysterical behaviour, as the product of flawed heredity, could only be temporarily reduced. In addition, Hartenburg suspected that the 'Bohemian Type', who otherwise did not behave in a neurasthenic manner, was marked by the 'classical stigmata of degeneracy' such as a malformed cranium, ears, limbs, and torso. This type was also more likely to manifest some of the hysterical side-effects of so-called 'traumatic neurasthenia' produced by a railway, automobile or tram accident.³¹¹ This perception, among many psychologists, that 'Bohemians', intellectuals and artists possessed particularly low levels of nervous stamina actually became more pronounced during, and after, the First World War. By 1918, for example, a US Army psychologist, Dr. James MacCurdy, stressed that an unusually large number of the traumatized officers he had treated had pursued artistic activities before the war. According to MacCurdy, artistically-inclined men, by nature, possessed "the rather high-strung, sensitive disposition frequently found in those who adopt this profession [which manifest itself in his being] abnormally sensitive to the sight of blood [while] the thought of killing anyone brought [them] out in a cold sweat."³¹²

After the war numerous army doctors appeared to take it for granted that males with an artistic temperament belonged to a particularly problematic category of masculinity. Such a conviction could have hardly helped improve the already low regard in which the military authorities held war artists. The artistic male was widely perceived to be unsuitable material for soldiering either in a leadership role, as an officer, or, in the ranks amidst the sturdier souls confidently expected to kill in hand-to-hand combat. In 1921, a witness to the War Office Inquiry into shell-shock, felt able to state confidently "the type of man most liable to break down is the man ... probably called 'neurotic' ... who has the 'artistic temperament [and] is more emotional than the average type of man."³¹³

This low opinion of the fighting ability of the artistic male, and his supposed predilection to hysterical behaviour, was bound up with the common suspicion that such men were likely to be sexually abnormal in some manner. He might be classed as an 'invert' or 'uranian', the polite euphemism of the day for the great unmentionable of homosexuality. Intriguingly, while many wartime British Army psychologists deplored Freud's supposedly 'unhealthy' theoretical pre-occupation with a patient's sexual orientation, they did agree with his theory that the male homosexual, as a sexual deviant, was more likely to experience neurosis during his life.³¹⁴ In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) Freud broadly classed homosexuality as a perversion whose adherents were destined to become 'socially useless and unhappy'.³¹⁵ Condemned by society at large, and unable to suppress their 'perverse instincts', Freud believed it to be logical that the male homosexual would eventually succumb to nervous collapse.³¹⁶

From the medical opinions on male psychology, published mainly during the decade before the outbreak of the Great War, one can discern a reluctant consensus emerging. While enthusiastically categorizing those males most liable to pathological behaviour, psychologists increasingly acknowledged that hysterical symptoms could be induced in even the most robust of men, if they were subjected to a sufficiently intense emotional shock such as occurred after an accident in the workplace or after a car crash. There was also widespread confusion and contradiction as to the possible class basis for problematic masculinity. Perhaps their greater enthusiasm for eugenics may explain why more British psychologists and social commentators, as opposed to their European counterparts, expressed doubts as to the physical and mental stamina of the British working-class male. General Sir Ian Hamilton, in 1905, was depressed by how superior in physique and martial demeanour the Japanese troops he had seen in Manchuria were to their British equivalents. Hamilton had not seen a single Japanese soldier, or recruit, who had been "flat-footed, narrow-chested or slouching ... It is a thousand pities that the same thing cannot be said of the modern 'Tommy' Atkins ... I have seen many soldiers, in London with all these drawbacks."³¹⁷

That a question mark was present in middle-class minds, concerning the mental and physical capacity of the British urban working-class male, was indicated by the frequent expressions of relief, made after the Armistice that he had performed far better in battle than anyone could have anticipated. For example, in 1919, Nevinson's friend Ward Muir wrote "what ... has surprised all the military experts is the soldierly courage ... exhibited on every field by that comparatively frail and weedy soul - the Cockney. This once scorned genus, in all its grades from costermonger to humble clerk, has won golden opinions."³¹⁸

Still, the speed with which the term 'shell-shock' entered the popular imagination, when it first appeared in print in February 1915, suggests that educated opinion had already been primed for the manifestation of nervous collapse amongst men identified as susceptible to hysteria before the war.³¹⁹ Dr. Charles Myers tentatively coined the term 'shell-shock', for diagnostic purposes in January 1915. From October 1914 onwards, he treated British soldiers in France who had been blown into the air or buried in a trench by shell-fire. Such men manifested a series of symptoms, including retreat into a 'trance-like state', with 'terror and anxiety' etched into their faces, insomnia, nightmares, extreme spatial disorientation, persistent weeping and shivering and repetitive tremors in the head, shoulders and arms. Myers traced the cause of these symptoms to the physiological effect of a soldier being caught in the blast wave of a nearby exploding shell. At this stage Myers was careful to stress the concussive or 'commotional' cause for shell-shock. He did acknowledge that some men exhibiting 'concussive' symptoms had not actually been blown up and that their inner emotional turmoil, as revealed in waking hallucinations and nightmares, had made a significant contribution to their nervous behaviour. Myers, from the onset, displayed notable perspicacity in suspecting that 'shell-shock' could be induced in a soldier by factors other than shell fire. He was quick to draw upon an article submitted to an earlier issue of *The Lancet* by an anonymous army medical officer. The article described some of the dreams recounted to the officer by men he had treated who, though not physically wounded, were obviously in distress and unable to function as soldiers. These 'soldiers dreams' were characterised by "the horror of isolation ... the noise of exploding shells ... the discovery in one's bed of a live shell ready to burst ... and being unable to move to escape."³²⁰

The detail of being unable to move away from the proximity of a shell about to detonate rather neatly anticipates the content of Bruce Bairnsfather's *My Dream For Years To Come* [Plate 49]. This image was initially sketched, in February 1915, by Bairnsfather on the wall of the ruined farmhouse that served as his billet. Another recurring 'soldier's dream' appeared to stem from the guilt some men felt at bayoneting an enemy face-to-face, with the attendant fear of "inability to withdraw the bayonet from the enemy's body when urgently required for self-defence."³²¹ This common fear of penetration by a steel object, whether bayonet or shell-splinter, features in a Bairnsfather cartoon, from 1915, entitled *That 16-Inch Sensation* [Plate 51] that will be discussed in greater detail in due course.

In the months following the publication of Myers's February 1915 article, accounts steadily accumulated, in the specialist medical press, of British soldiers displaying the symptoms he had grouped under the label of 'shell-shock'. By the late spring of 1915 a consensus developed within the military medical establishment as to the necessity for

doctors in the field to make a clear distinction between men who were behaving pathologically, after having actually been blown up, and those exhibiting similar symptoms who had not. After observing hundreds of shell-shock cases in 1915, Dr. William Turner came to two important conclusions, which would have a corrosive effect on the continuing durability of existing orthodoxies concerning desirable male conduct in an industrialized war. Firstly, he had become convinced that even the bravest soldiers, if subject to a suitably 'severe psychological shock' such as 'witnessing a ghastly sight' with the mutilation of a friend or receiving bad news from home, such as the death of a loved one from a Zeppelin bombing raid, could succumb to nightmares, hallucinations and become 'hysterical ... unduly emotional and shaky.' He further stressed that officers and men alike, who had been blown up or subject to a 'severe psychological shock', would exhibit similar physiological symptoms such as alarming laughter, grimaces and facial expressions, tremulousness in the facial muscles and limbs, and a generally 'nervous and agitated manner' characterised by a marked inability to keep the head or neck straight, or to meet the gaze of a superior.³²²

Though Turner conceded that officers tended to be more articulate, when describing their nightmares and anxieties, he did not attempt to ascribe shell-shock symptoms to men on the basis of their rank, social class or educational backgrounds as would commonly become the case over the next three years. By 1918 an influential group of army psychologists, led by Dr. W.H.R. Rivers, were arguing that, as a consequence of their superior education, officers lived a more intense emotional life and were prone to the development of 'anxiety neuroses'. These found their expression in the imagination in the form of nightmares and through minor physiological peculiarities such as facial tics and stammering. Men from the ranks, not burdened by the responsibilities of command and not expected to adhere to the officer's code of nonchalance under fire, were perceived to manifest their shell-shock in a more blatant and incapacitating physical form. This was revealingly termed 'conversion hysteria', as though men from a lower social class were now categorised as similar to pre-war female hysterics. Examples of 'conversion hysteria' might include a man's entire limb or torso becoming paralysed and twisted and a man's physiognomy assuming a fixed expression of terror indicative of what he experienced at the moment of collapse.³²³

Turner made a passing reference to something, which would increasingly be recognised as an important indicator of normative behavioural well-being, namely, the ability to meet and hold the gaze of an observer. Later, in 1915, Dr. David Forsyth explored his observation that scrutiny from others, above and below one in the military hierarchy, constituted both a support and a threat to continued self-confidence and psychic stability. Forsyth specifically set out how the process operated among officers because they formed the majority of the cases he had treated and had been more

forthcoming as to their need to be held in high esteem by their peers. Apparently, the critical moment, signalling the onset of neurosis, occurred when an officer suddenly realized that he could no longer prevent himself from instinctively ducking or physically reacting to the sound of a shell exploding or a bullet passing near him:

He ... goes in constant anxiety of betraying his feelings to those around him ... He envies their calm demeanour [that of other officers] without ever suspecting that it may be as deliberately assumed as his own ... Before long he cannot resist the conviction that those around him have begun to notice what is only too evident to himself ... they are watching him, covertly, for signs of nervousness ... [in reaction] he begins to deliberately expose himself to unnecessary risks ... smoking in full view of the enemy, going on patrol or on trench raids. This risk-taking exhausts what reserves of self-control he still possesses and any small strain or shock will be sufficient to complete his undoing.³²⁴

This analysis is of particular relevance to what Baimsfather felt was happening to him during his first tour as an infantry officer on the Western Front between November 1914 and April 1915. As he later recalled his "long days in the trenches [were] more harrowing and devitalising than any great offensive ... they were the limitless limit, like an endless succession of funerals where you are both corpse and mourner."³²⁵ After nearly five months of continuous service in the Flanders front-line, his commanding officer noticed he was beginning to show signs of strain and was becoming 'jumpy'. Early in April 1915, he ordered Baimsfather to take ten days leave in London. While in London, Baimsfather did consult a nerve specialist although he felt ashamed to do so. He ignored the doctor's recommendation that he extend his sick leave and returned to his unit before the term of his leave had properly expired. Baimsfather later described how he basked in the praise of other officers who admired his zeal to return to the Front. Simultaneously, he became aware of how difficult it was becoming to maintain his composure under fire before his men and his fellow officers:

As time wore on ... I felt myself getting into a state where it took more and more out of me to keep up my vigour and suppress my imagination. There were times when I experienced an almost irresistible desire to lie down and sleep ... I looked forward to sleep to drown out the worries of ... daily and nightly life.³²⁶

My Dream For Years To Come was, in March 1915, one of the first of many of Baimsfather's cartoons to be published in the weekly high society magazine *The Bystander*. The cartoon suggests that, despite the claims made in his autobiography, his dreams were far from free of the graphic nightmares that focussed on the many real threats to his safety. Indeed, if he was regularly experiencing the nightmare he depicts, it is highly unlikely he could have evaded murderous reality through sleep. Baimsfather may well have been conscious of this as the title he selected, for the cartoon, implies that he expected this nightmare to remain with him not just for a brief period, but also for a long time into the future. It logically follows, from the title, that this recurrent

nightmare must be frustrating Baimsfather's ability to obtain any restorative rest while in the front-line. Without proper sleep Baimsfather could not continue to perform effectively as an officer and would not only jeopardize his own life, but also the lives of the men under his command. In the event, Baimsfather was saved from cracking up when, towards the end of April 1915, he was wounded by a shell-splinter and evacuated to a military hospital in London.

After leaving hospital, in May 1915, Baimsfather was granted a period of convalescent leave. He spent this time at home where he produced a number of cartoons that indicate he was continuing to turn his anxieties, about the Front, over in his mind. *What It Really Feels Like: To Be On Patrol Duty At Night Time* [Plate 50] was published in *The Bystander* on 2 June 1915 and vividly illustrates Baimsfather's later admission that one eventuality he had particularly dreaded, while in the front-line, was the prospect of being surprised and taken prisoner by a German raiding party while he occupied an isolated observation post at night. Significantly, perhaps, he does not feature a terrified officer but a diminutive and weedy-looking enlisted man who comically communicates his terror through inability to control his physical reactions. His hair literally stands on end at the thought of the monstrously brutish Germans he imagines are crouched in the nearby darkness waiting to pounce on him. By the autumn of 1915, this soldier had evolved into the cartoon character of 'Bert', the archetypal Kitchener volunteer of 1914 permanently baffled by the intricacies of Army regulations.

That 16-Inch Sensation, first published in *The Bystander* of 16 June 1915, evokes in humorous form a scene Baimsfather had perhaps taken from one of the nightmares he experienced while in hospital. On this occasion he does depict an officer, recognisable from the riding breeches he is wearing and the 'pips' of rank on the cuff of his tunic, succumbing to utter panic. However, since the man has his back to the viewer, Baimsfather neatly avoids having to suggest this terror in an officer's face. Indeed, depicting this man from the rear may hint at a more disturbing, underlying psychological flaw that Baimsfather detected within himself. A huge oncoming German shell menaces the pronounced posterior of the officer, attempting to flee. However, he cannot escape as his shapely legs are firmly fettered to the earth. It may be significant that the calibre of the artillery piece referred to in the title was the same as the mighty Krupp 420 mm siege howitzer. This had been deployed in 1914 to batter the fortresses of Liège and Namur into submission and was derisively gendered as female by British troops who nicknamed the weapon 'Big Bertha'.³²⁷ Even to a psychologist of the day, with only a superficial understanding of Freud, the image's references to the fear of anal penetration and homosexual rape would have been hard to ignore. However, when the cartoon first appeared in *The Bystander*, and then was reproduced in the hugely

successful first volume of *Fragments From France*, published in January 1916, no complaint was made as to the image's possible homoerotic content. Perhaps the lack of reaction to the richly sexually transgressive potential of this image suggests that those who saw it in 1915 and 1916 looked with more innocent eyes than would be the case today.

It is noticeable that, after *What It Really Feels Like* and *That 16-Inch Sensation* were reproduced in June 1915, Baimsfather never hinted that any of his cartoon characters, for which he became famous, might be at all 'shell-shocked.' However, even though the War Office appointed him, in 1916, to the post of 'officer-cartoonist', he did occasionally feel it necessary to depict either 'Old Bill', or his companion 'Bert', as unambiguously 'fed-up'. A good example of Baimsfather's visualization of the 'fed-up' physiognomy in 'Bert' can be seen in *The Communication Trench* [Plate 52], published in the autumn of 1916. This cartoon may have influenced Eric Kennington's *Via Crucis* of 1918 [Plate 57] to which I shall refer later in this chapter. However, even such a relatively mild acknowledgment, that the British soldier in the front-line could be less than ecstatic about his lot, earned Baimsfather some surprisingly acerbic criticism. It reached a point when Vivian Carter, editor of *The Bystander*, felt it necessary to argue that there was nothing pathological, or subversive, in depicting British 'Tommyes' as 'fed-up'. In 1916 he wrote "The 'fed-up' spirit you see on the faces of Baimsfather's pictures is a sham; a mask beneath which there lies something that is essentially British ... If the enemy should read into the ... 'fed-up' ... Baimsfather expression of countenance ... a sign that our tenacity is giving out he reads it wrong."³²⁸

Carter further claimed that it was only to be expected that British servicemen should occasionally appear a little downcast, given the 'unpleasantness' of the tasks they had to perform. Giving one of his characters a 'fed-up' expression did not mean that Baimsfather was suggesting that the soldier had become disillusioned with the course of the war, was becoming mutinous and about to disobey his officers, or was displaying signs of shell-shock.³²⁹ Perhaps, Baimsfather was especially keen to keep his name clear from any mention of shell-shock because, in July 1916, he experienced some sort of nervous breakdown while working at a desk job well behind the Front in France. After this episode a medical board passed him as fit only for garrison service at home. It was then he was approached by the Intelligence Department of the War Office, anxious to make use of his popularity. The War Office seemed to sense the fragility of Baimsfather's mental state. The Intelligence Department was careful to prevent him from staying too long near the front-line and sent him to draw a succession of French, Italian and American troops.³³⁰ This would also suggest that, to official minds, there was still something slightly suspect about Baimsfather's conception of the British soldier. Baimsfather was later to express frustration that the authorities preferred him to

continue imagining the 'Tommy' in the guise of cartoon characters he had created in 1915. On the other hand, he did not seem to regret that the War Office had kept him away from Flanders and the area in which he had been wounded. Just the thought of the ruined farmhouse, on one of whose walls he had first sketched *My Dreams For Years to Come*, evoked too many painful memories of comrades killed and wounded in the vicinity. In the 1930's he was to write, "To me ... the horrible reality of that terrible, elementary and brutal war was burning a hole in my mind and system which time can never heal."³³¹

As Baimsfather's career began to take off, early in 1916, moves were afoot within the medical profession to achieve unanimity on the vexed question of shell-shock. Was it really an entirely new nervous complaint? How were its warning signs to be recognized? How was it to be treated and could an affected soldier be cured and successfully returned to combat? These moves were accompanied by a general appreciation that traditionally accepted standards of masculine courage required fundamental reconsideration and that masculinity in general was not the unproblematic behavioural pattern it had previously been assumed. Towards the end of January 1916 the first conference devoted entirely to shell-shock took place within the prestigious precincts of the Royal Society of Medicine. Meanwhile, throughout February and March 1916, the eminent pre-war psychologist Dr. Frederick W. Mott gave a series of widely reported lectures at the Medical Society on 'The Effect of High Explosives on the Central Nervous System'.³³² He began his first lecture with the announcement that the War Office had recently informed him it now regarded 'shell-shock' as a legitimate diagnostic term. Given such an admission, Mott argued, the medical profession could no longer question the existence of shell-shock, nor simply class its various symptoms as the product of 'funk'. Mott's lectures were to have a distinct influence on the wider understanding within society as to the ways in which shell-shock manifest itself physically in facial expression and bodily movement. They also foregrounded the importance of dreams as expressions of anxiety in the unconscious imagination.

A later editorial in *The Lancet* endorsed Mott's comments on the grounds that:

Frontiers in medicine are artificial boundaries, established in more or less arbitrary fashion ... In medicine there is a neutral zone; a 'no-man's land' ... which really defies definition. This nebulous zone shelters many among the sad examples of nervous trouble sent home from the Front ... the sudden appearance of all, or some, of [the] symptoms [of shell-shock] in healthy young males [has given] an impetus to fresh research and to the introduction of a new term, 'shell-shock', which indicated the immediate exciting cause ... as Dr. Mott suggests ... we shall want a brand new dictionary.³³³

This editorial was unusually candid in its admission that if medical terms and concepts were open to invention and redefinition, then other categories within social

life, such as what it meant to be a man, were just as contingent and unstable. One also senses a growing belief that the medical profession, as a whole, will have to keep 'healthy young males' under much closer scrutiny than before in order to detect hidden pathological tendencies. In one of his 1916 Medical Society lectures, 'Psychic Trauma and the Effects Produced by Terrifying Dreams', Mott described the case of a young private who was in the habit of suddenly awaking at night "with a startled terrified look, became flushed in the face, sweated profusely and salivated from an open mouth ... He was with difficulty restrained. He remained in this excited state, eyes darting rapidly from side to side, giving one the impression that he was suffering from terrifying hallucinations of sight and hearing."³³⁴

It is possible that if C.R.W. Nevinson did not actually see for himself the traumatized soldier of his *In The Observation Ward* [Plate 53], he could have utilized Mott's graphic description as a basis for the oil he first exhibited in September 1916. This image had a distinctly mixed reception when it was first seen in public. The hostility it generated was connected to the shell-shock patient being perceived as possessing a plebeian and 'primitive' physiognomy as well as to his distressing inability to compose an appropriate facial expression for the spectator. It is indicative of the prejudices a self-proclaimed modernist had to face in wartime Britain that when Nevinson returned to London, on sick leave from the Friends Ambulance Unit, he immediately had to fend off accusations that he had been forced to return home after suffering a nervous breakdown. The logic appeared to be that modernist artists painted outrageous images because they were perverse, effeminate, and degenerate. Therefore, they were more likely to suffer nervous breakdowns when confronted by the stern realities of war that tested even the most respectable male to his limits. The day after the accusation had been made, as to the parlous state of his nerves, Nevinson protested vehemently to the newspaper that had printed the story "I am in no absolutely in no way suffering from any form of nerve trouble."³³⁵

Though the majority of the war pictures Nevinson exhibited in his first one-man show, held between September and November 1916, were not painted in an overtly Futurist style, one critic still confidently described them as the products of "a nightmare of insistent unreality ... [and] ... documents of a strange delusion."³³⁶ Though Nevinson repeatedly sought to distance himself from this sort of analysis, there is a considerable amount of evidence that the time he spent with the Friends Ambulance Unit, and then as an ordinary private in the RAMC, undermined his nervous stamina and led him to question the code of dynamic Futurist masculinity with which he had identified before the war. In June 1915 he volunteered to serve as a private in the RAMC at the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth. After a month at the Third London General, Nevinson's father found him 'working in a small Detention Ward', with about thirty

patients, where all soldiers thought to be suffering from shell-shock, or were under suspicion of malingering by pretending to be traumatized, were being treated.³³⁷ Nevinson later described how a vindictive RAMC sergeant-major put him:

in charge of the balmy ones ... in the observation ward and [of] the detention cases. This is the worst job I have ever tackled in my life. Lots of the 'balmy ones' were indeed balmy and needed every attention, while the detention cases were made up of malingerers ... Some were mad, some were ed ... completely in a world of hallucination and persecution, especially the latter. There would be strange grievances against the man in the next bed and particularly against their wives ... I began to have an uneasy feeling that I was catching their complaint and, had it not been for the observation of one of the doctors, I believe I should have become one of the 'balmy ones' myself ... Scientific or not, I am convinced that mental instability is infectious.³³⁸

Though Nevinson wrote this long after the war, at the time he had not been alone among the orderlies at Wandsworth in suspecting that, if he remained too long in contact with shell-shock patients he would eventually develop their symptoms. In 1915, a RAMC orderly who worked alongside Nevinson at Wandsworth, the pre-war artist Stephen Baghot de la Bère, drew a cartoon referring to this anxiety. *To The Padded Room [Plate 54]* was reproduced in the hospital's house magazine in December 1915 and depicts a man being assisted by two orderlies to the Detention Ward. Despite the man's protestations that he is fine, his inner neurosis is all too evident in his comically distorted physiognomy. The man's contorted deportment is reminiscent of the so-called 'Dancing Tremor', a term for a form of 'conversion hysteria', which was widely believed by army doctors to mainly afflict men from the ranks.³³⁹ At first glance one might have assumed that this traumatized, convulsive man was a patient at Wandsworth. However, the text accompanying the cartoon clearly indicates that he is in fact a RAMC private who has cracked under the strain, perhaps after having spent too long in the company of the 'mental cases' referred to by the sign hanging on the wall.³⁴⁰

It is likely that, when he painted *In The Observation Ward* sometime between February and September 1916, Nevinson drew upon the experience of looking after the supposedly shell-shocked men he later described as so upsetting. This image was one of the first to be painted during the First World War, by a British artist, that directly addresses the physiognomy of shell-shock and one form disablement through nervous collapse could assume. It is possible that, in addition to his own recollections of what he witnessed in Wandsworth, Nevinson also based the image on a variety of sources positioned within a wider discourse concerning degeneration. The man's beetle-browed physiognomy is reminiscent of many of the photographs to be found in Cesare Lombroso's *L'Umomo Delinquente* (1889) and Eugene Talbot's *Degeneracy: Its Signs, Causes and Results* (1898). Both authors sought to offer a wide selection of 'faces of criminality', of the insane, and of those bearing facial deformities or bodily

abnormalities, in an effort to conclusively demonstrate that the aberrant external physiology of a subject indicated their inner mental and moral degeneracy.³⁴¹ When deciding on the shape of the Observation Ward patient's stricken face, Nevinson may have, perhaps, thought back to a visit he made in January 1914 to the Natural History Museum to see a skeleton purported to be that of a Darwinian 'missing-link.' In actual fact, it was the fraudulent 'Piltdown Man'.³⁴²

It is also possible Nevinson could have been influenced by a Vincent Van Gogh self-portrait, included in the *Post-Impressionists and Futurists* exhibition of October 1913 at which he exhibited his first works executed in a Futurist manner. He may have been aware of the connection established by a number of critics, at the time the *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* exhibition was running in London (November 1910-January 1911), between Van Gogh's physiognomy and style of painting and an innate tendency towards violently irrational behaviour, sexual depravity, self-destructive alcoholism, and insanity.³⁴³ Robert Ross, for example, described van Gogh's style of painting as "the visualized ravings of an adult maniac [typical of] ... the mastoid and degenerate of the modern sociologist [and] of no interest except to the student of pathology and the specialist in abnormality."³⁴⁴ Nevinson may have thought that his patient from the Observation Ward would appear all the more demented if he appeared to physically resemble an artist whose name was now ineradicably associated with alarming pathological behaviour. Nevinson's Observation Ward patient evidently possessed all the required indicators of derangement and catastrophic loss of self-control inscribed on to his physiognomy such as the low, simian brow, the heavy chin, the wide, staring eyes, dishevelled hair and clothes and, most repellent of all, drool falling from the slack lips of an open mouth.

When the painting was first exhibited, late in September 1916, the subject was almost immediately identified in the press as a soldier unmistakably in the grip of shell-shock. To some extent such swift recognition of the man as a shell-shock sufferer was facilitated by events during the Battle of the Somme that took place from 1 July to 22 November 1916. This four and a half month campaign proved to be a watershed in altering the High Command's, hitherto, dismissive attitude towards mental illness induced by prolonged front-line service. For the first time in the war British battalion medical officers found themselves swamped by men trying to be evacuated from the fighting on the grounds that they were suffering from shell-shock. Army doctors were at a loss what to do with such men, how to treat them, and where to send them for treatment as they could not all be invalided back to Britain. By the late summer of 1916, newspapers were full of articles about shell-shock, as to what caused it, who was most likely to develop it and how it could be recognized in a man's face and gait. Around the same time, British military and civilian authorities reluctantly acknowledged that shell-

shock was a real problem and prodded the medical profession to devise new methods of treatment before the phenomenon got completely out of hand.³⁴⁵

Only the day after Nevinson's show opened to the public, a newspaper identified *In The Observation Ward* as "a disquieting study of a soldier whose mind has given way under the horror and strain of war."³⁴⁶ The politically liberal weekly, *The Nation*, described the work as a compelling depiction of the "ghastly dehumanised face of a soldier maddened by shell-shock." Although the image was undoubtedly ugly, and unpleasant to look at, the magazine commended the artist for presenting an aspect of the war that should not be kept from the eyes of the public. It only served to increase the civilian's estimation of the mental strain modern warfare imposed upon the combat soldier, as well as their admiration for the men who came home on leave and made light of what they had seen at the Front in order not to further distress their loved ones.³⁴⁷

Slightly later in 1916, collaborating with Nevinson on a book of his war art images, the art critic P.G. Konody stoutly defended the artist against accusations that the drooling patient of *In The Observation Ward* was a meretricious case of gratuitous sensationalism, deliberately painted to generate publicity. Konody claimed that Nevinson had, in fact, adopted a commendable and suitably professional medical detachment in his:

terribly realistic study of a man suffering from shell-shock ... It is like a page from a medical textbook describing the symptoms of an illness ... the disturbed features, the frightened, half-imbecile look, the saliva dribbling from the opened lips ... everything spells ... shell-shock! ... his [insistence] on the structural planes of the head reveals more of the professional hospital worker's intellectual curiosity than of pity or sympathy.³⁴⁸

Konody argued that Nevinson approached this distressing subject matter not as a vulgar voyeur but as an artist whose six months experience as a RAMC hospital orderly had allowed him access to specialized professional medical knowledge. That Konody felt the need to defend Nevinson's reputation on such lofty grounds indicates that the critical reception to *In the Observation Ward* had by no means been uniformly favourable. One should again be cognoscent of the state of debate concerning shell-shock. By the autumn of 1916 a plethora of articles, concerning the characteristics of shell-shock, had appeared in various medical journals. Medical opinion was equally divided between those who believed shell-shock was a totally new phenomenon, requiring a sympathetic approach, and those who regarded it as a new face-saving euphemism for hysteria and urged the use of punitive measures to return the afflicted to stringent military discipline. Prominent in the latter camp was Dr. Thomas Lumsden who was convinced of the existence of a distinct 'stigmata of hysteria', awareness of which

should alert a battalion medical officer that a soldier was probably a degenerate and likely to become a liability to his comrades. The 'stigmata' Lumsden listed included "stammering, twitching, tremors, convulsive movements and ... a loss of identity."³⁴⁹

Hostility to *In The Observation Ward* broadly seemed to be located within the Lumsden school of thought. Nevinson should not contribute to making shell-shock somehow 'fashionable', a source of public entertainment, or invite civilians to pity the soldier-neurotic. One strand from this viewpoint argued that it was sheer bad taste and opportunism on Nevinson's part to exhibit such a work in public. He was also censured for wanting to record in the first place the sad plight of a man whose war service has reduced him to child-like incapacity. The critic of *The Athenaeum* thought Nevinson had robbed his image of any worth, it might have possessed, by recourse to a debased and discredited form of overblown nineteenth-century northern European 'realism'. He described *In the Observation Ward* as radiating a "cheap sensationalism which may recall to some the atmosphere of the Wiertz Museum ... in Brussels ... his head of a lunatic ... is cheapened by the undue emphasis accorded to the dribble of saliva from the hanging mouth ... quite in accord with the doubtful taste of the Belgian painter whose name we have just cited."³⁵⁰

This critic was not alone in expressing repugnance at that 'dribble of saliva'. Another thought that, while undeniably 'painful', Nevinson had displayed too much obvious 'force and cunning' in the work, which might give "too much [of a] thrill to the ordinary viewer." It was as if the work was so shocking and novel, that it might attract attention from those seeking a purely regrettable titillation.³⁵¹ *Drawing* magazine later suspected that, in this particular image, Nevinson was pandering to the basest of observers, who sought faddish thrills and prurient diversion, and plaintively asked, "Who wants to see such scenes? Those who have seen them are trying to erase them from the memory. What is the object of such pictures? ... are they simply done to satisfy the unhealthy appetites of the artist?"³⁵²

While Nevinson never depicted a Wandsworth RAMC orderly exhibiting pathological physical symptoms, as Baghot de la Bère had in 1915, he did paint a group of RAMC privates, in 1916, as distinctly 'fed-up' in the Baimsfather manner. *Sprucers* [Plate 55] presents a group of British soldiers in a clearly unheroic light. They loll in torpor on bales of supplies just unloaded at Wandsworth. The reason for the slack and spiritless body language of these men only becomes clear if one is able to decode the title, which is derived from the slang of enlisted men and the verb 'to spruce'. The title is the interpretative key to understanding why these men are so conspicuously depicted doing nothing when British soldiers were invariably shown engaged on some

necessary military task, however prosaic and mundane. According to Nevinson's friend at Wandsworth, Ward Muir, until he arrived at Wandsworth in May 1915, he had never encountered the verb 'to spruce'. Muir defined the term as "almost, if not quite, a blend of 'swinging the lead' [feigning illness to avoid duty] and 'doing a mike' [going absent without leave] ... to 'spruce' is to dodge duty or deceive. A man who contrived to slip out of the ranks of a squad, when they had been ordered to perform some distasteful task, would be said to 'spruce-off.'³⁵³

Any officer, nco, or authority figure looking at this image could not have approved of ordinary soldiers sitting around unsupervised and doing nothing. These privates have temporarily managed to evade the controlling gaze of a superior who could be expected to enforce one of the Army's core beliefs; that men in the ranks should always be conspicuously doing something, however pointless, even when supposedly 'resting'. Intriguingly, when *Sprucers* first went on public display in September 1916, Nevinson was not taken to task for painting a group of 'Tommyes' whose flight from military duty, and willingness to 'down tools', has gone unpunished. Just over a year later, however, Nevinson, by now an official war artist, got into considerable trouble with the authorities for painting the seemingly innocuous and inoffensive *A Group of Soldiers* [Plate 56]. This also depicts British soldiers not conspicuously engaged in any obvious, estimable, military activity. The censors, at the War Office in London and at General Headquarters in France, objected strongly to the canvas, partially, because front-line combat troops were shown standing about gossiping but, mainly, on the grounds that Nevinson had given them 'degenerate' bodies and physiognomies. Their sensitivity on this point may be traced to the military situation at the time and to another change in official policy concerning the status of shell-shock. *A Group of Soldiers* was completed as the Third Battle of Ypres or 'Passchendaele', fought between 31 July and 10 November 1917, was painfully grinding towards what would be yet another bloody and inconclusive stalemate on the Western Front. Meanwhile, just before Nevinson arrived in France in July 1917 to spend a month there as an official war artist, each of the five British armies in France were instructed to set up a Neurological Centre devoted to the treatment of segregated shell-shock sufferers. The medical military authorities were seeking to damp down the heated debate over shell-shock, aired the previous year, by some judicious alterations in diagnostic nomenclature. The Director-General of the RAMC instructed battalion medical officers in the field to no longer diagnose men exhibiting signs of 'functional nerve disorder' as suffering from 'shell-shock'. Instead, such men were to be categorized as Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous (NYDN). Describing a soldier as NYDN rather neatly evaded the fact that thousands of men were exhibiting behaviour, which, before the war, had been identified as hysterical and therefore feminine. In a way this re-labelling was trying to restore and repair a conception of normative

masculinity seriously endangered by the emergence of shell-shock during the first two years of the war.³⁵⁴

It is possible that Nevinson's conception of British militarised masculinity, in *A Group of Soldiers*, came into conflict with this reparative process. When the War Office censor, at MI7 (A), a Captain A.W. Foster, and his counterpart at GHQ, Major Lee, first saw photographs of *A Group of Soldiers* they were equally horrified. Both believed it would be a grave mistake to allow the work either to be exhibited, or reproduced in any publication. Early in December 1917, Captain Foster explained the reason for his decision to the Department of Information "it was thought that the types of men represented were not typical ... of the British Army ... it was feared that the Germans will seize upon this picture as evidence of British degeneration." Foster took particular exception to the over-large hands and feet of the men, and to their "slovenly" appearance.³⁵⁵ The War Office may also have entertained initial reservations about this work because it is not clear what these men are doing amidst such an ill-defined space, why the nco present, a corporal, appears on such familiar terms with the men in his section, and why there is no officer present to keep watch on their behaviour and supervise them. Foster further warned that, if Nevinson chose to ignore the War Office ruling, he would be prosecuted under the regulation of the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) that made it an offence, punishable by a fine or two years in prison, to produce and/or distribute any printed material "likely to cause disaffection ... or prejudice recruitment and training ... within His Majesty's Armed Forces."³⁵⁶ Meanwhile, an irate Major Lee wrote to Masterman "I am quite sure that the publication of such a picture would be detrimental to the reputation of the British soldier."³⁵⁷

Learning of Lee's criticism, Nevinson wrote Lee a vituperative letter, filled with some extraordinarily vivid imagery concerning the contested appearance of the British 'Tommy'. In the event, as Nevinson was to put it, 'wiser counsels prevailed' and he passed the tirade on to Masterman instead. In all probability, Nevinson never really intended to post the letter to Lee. He regarded Lee as a philistine and a cultural ignoramus who would not be able to register the many subtle and sarcastic barbs directed at him within the letter. With mock humility, Nevinson began by inquiring after Lee's criteria for a 'good-looking man' and suggested Lee might want him to adopt the eminent Edwardian actor-manager George Alexander, pseudonym of George Alexander Samson (1858-1918), as the model for any official war artist wishing to paint the 'acceptable' face of the 'Tommy':

I am writing to ask you if you would be kind enough to let me have an idea of your ideal type of manly beauty as I have just heard that you censored one of my best pictures as 'too ugly' ... if you would just let me know what you consider a pretty man I will, in

future, paint all my soldiers up to your ideal, only I must know what it is! I believe George Alexander is considered 'good-looking'. Shall I make all my men look like George Alexander? Perhaps, you do not admire that type? On the other hand, I will not paint 'Castrated Lancelot's', though I know this is how 'Tommys' are usually painted in illustrated papers etc ... high-souled eunuchs looking mild-eyed, unable to melt butter on their tongues and mentally and physically unable of killing a German ... I refuse to insult the British Army with such sentimental bilge ... I will be quite contented if you will just allow the London art public to see these 'monstrosities' at my forthcoming exhibition ... I ... assume the Public will stand them even if you feel convinced that 'foreigners' and neutrals cannot. Might I be allowed to remind you that these foreigners, in any case, think the Englishman's face dull and hairless and so, you see, there is no accounting for taste ... That is why I write to you, to hear your particular type; to see whether it is possible for me, as an artist, not to offend in the future your particular aesthetic code of manly beauty.³⁵⁸

Nevinson's selection of Alexander, as Lee's supposedly ideal masculine model for the rugged fighting man, was a deliberately provocative one. It is likely he chose Alexander in the belief that Lee, the provincial, middle-class, suburban solicitor in civilian life, would not know who he was. He could be confident, however, that Masterman would be familiar with Alexander's career and reputation, and appreciate the fun Nevinson was having at Lee's expense. Essentially, Nevinson was suggesting that the utterly staid and conventional Lee wanted the Department of Information's martial masculine ideal to be a thespian who wore make-up and had been a faithful friend to the notorious Oscar Wilde. Even though over twenty years had passed since the infamous libel trials of 1895 had precipitated his disgrace, Wilde's name was still synonymous with unnatural vice and sexual depravity. Moreover, in his capacity as manager of the St. James's Theatre in London, Alexander had persuaded Wilde to write *The Importance of Being Ernest* for him. The play was first performed, in February 1895, at his theatre with Alexander playing the title role of the duplicitous Ernest/John Worthing. Alexander remained a champion of the disgraced playwright's work and ensured that his wife and children received their fair share of the receipts from revivals of *The Importance of Being Ernest*.³⁵⁹ On closer inspection Alexander was very far from being the sort of man Lee would have respected at all. During the Edwardian Era, Alexander became typecast for his portrayal of the English male as always stylishly, if soberly, dressed, emotionally repressed, rather diffident in his dealings with women and who was most at home in the all-male atmosphere of his Pall Mall club. If the male characters Alexander played had to marry, the courtship would be characterized by painfully glacial formality while matrimony was approached strictly as the respectable means for producing children to perpetuate the family name. Writing in 1909, an authority on the theatre stated:

if you desire to see what other nations conceive to be the typical Englishman, you must study George Alexander ... The whole Englishman is there, immaculate in body, soul, mind, clothes, taste, trousers and waistcoat ... He is the apostle of the good taste ... There is no blemish of rude humanity on him. He is exquisitely colourless and delicately drab.³⁶⁰

The choice Nevinson seemed to be offering Lee in his letter, between Alexander, or the 'Tommy' as 'castrated Lancelot', was in fact illusionary. Anyone who knew anything about the sort of roles in which Alexander specialized would have quickly concluded that he was just as much a 'castrated Lancelot', or 'high-souled eunuch', as the idealized 'Tommy' invented by the low-brow, jingo-populist journalist. In his defence of *A Group of Soldiers*, Nevinson appears to suggest that, though physically unimpressive, they typified the ordinary conscript who constituted the bulk of the British Army by 1917. During that year, despite the fact that a man in the ranks faced the prospect of a fifty-fifty chance of being killed or seriously wounded, they kept on attacking.³⁶¹ Whereas mutinies had occurred in the armies of Britain's allies, within the French Army during April and May 1917 and within the Imperial Russian Army, which had almost completely disintegrated by year's end, the British soldier continued to obey orders. Nevinson, presumably, thought it was very unhealthy for the British public not to be exposed to images of the British soldier as grumpy, reflective, withdrawn, or understandably pre-occupied with calculating their future prospects for survival. Indeed, two years later, when the drypoint version of *A Group of Soldiers* was exhibited in New York, Nevinson described it in the catalogue as "Soldiers discussing the latest casualties."³⁶²

After representations from Nevinson's father, Masterman and John Buchan, the Director of the Department of Information, the War Office reluctantly agreed to allow both the exhibition and reproduction of *A Group of Soldiers*. At GHQ Major Lee was incensed by this climb-down and wrote to Masterman "I do not alter my opinion of the picture and, if it ever gets into German hands, I will lay ... odds that the Germans will use it against us."³⁶³ He was particularly irritated with Nevinson's claim that "all these four men ... were portraits; men chosen quite haphazard from the tubes, as they came home from France on leave."³⁶⁴ Lee protested to Yockney, who had never cared for *A Group of Soldiers* either, that "The facial expression of the man in the trenches, or in rest billets, is nothing like that of the same man when at home or on leave; nor is it anything like the 'Group of Brutes.'³⁶⁵

When *A Group of Soldiers* went on display, early in March 1918, it did create a stir, but nothing on the scale generated by the censored *Paths of Glory*. A surprising number of critics thought that Nevinson had produced a truthful, if not especially uplifting, rendition of the average British soldier in the field, care-worn but certainly not ed or degenerate. *The Nation* praised *A Group of Soldiers* for being "modern and harshly critical because [the men] are precisely depicted as war-sodden soldiers ... with their rude faces and shabby accoutrements."³⁶⁶ *The Weekly Dispatch* approvingly

described Nevinson's 'Tommy' as "working soldiers ... plain, war-worn and ... sturdy"³⁶⁷, while the *Glasgow Herald* interpreted them as "strong figures, not drawn according to the conventional Adonis type, but charged with a sort of uncouth virility."³⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the popular pundit, Sidney Dark, thought Nevinson should be commended for not trying to:

soften the ugliness of trench-life [as] there is a danger that the men who are fighting in the trenches will be forgotten because they are average, commonplace citizens' as well as dauntless warriors ... His soldiers are real, unidealised and uncaricatured men and will, alone, dispel Bairnsfather's illusions ... It's awful to imagine our children's children cherishing the belief that the Germans were defeated by legions of 'Old Bills.'³⁶⁹

Certain terms of abuse tended to recur when Nevinson, in 1918, was taken to task for having painted *A Group of Soldiers*. The men in it were variously accused of being sinister gargoyles, neurotic, and of looking diseased. They were even criticised for possessing "Mongolian faces."³⁷⁰ Elsewhere, the Ministry of Information was pilloried for wasting public money in purchasing this 'libel', on British manhood, for its art collection:

[this] group either is, or it is not, synthetically interpretative of the type of men that represent our armies, our friends, our sons and brothers. And what does it show us and what will it show posterity? A crew of hooligans or rather dummy hooligans ... they have no inner life [and] are curiously reminiscent of those semi-idiotic puppets that ventriloquists employ ... Are these brutalized, half-witted studio properties any more faithful or less academic than the bastard-classic type of pink-faced hero preferred at Burlington House? ... Mr. Nevinson has rendered a stupid piece of blague ... a crude example of so-called 'intellectual' egotism ... the best of British manhood [has been] lyingly represented and typified by a gang of loutish cretins ... A pretty specimen of ... Democracy ... his rendering of the British 'Tommy'!³⁷¹

Perhaps, the perception that Nevinson had projected the 'Tommy' as cannon fodder, showroom, dummies was especially disturbing because soldiers, in the field, had actually viewed the dead in that unnerving light. A number of contemporaneous accounts mention nightmares in which dead men are compared to dummies used to distract enemy snipers.³⁷² Recovering from wounds, in a London hospital in 1917, Siegfried Sassoon began to experience nightmares along such lines:

when the lights are out, and the ward is [in] half-shadow, then the horrors come creeping across the floor ... the floor is littered with parcels of dead flesh and bones ... These corpses are silent; they do not moan or bleat in the war-zone manner approved of by the War Office. They are like the dummy figures made to deceive snipers ... one feels that there is no stuffing inside them.³⁷³

Writing about *A Group of Soldiers* later in 1918, J.E. Crawford Fitch, a friend of Nevinson's and fellow enthusiast for the work of Goya, conceded that Nevinson had presented the average 'Tommy' as singularly unattractive. However, he argued

Nevinson deserved praise for accurately depicting him as the British working man in uniform very conscious that he was playing a part that he did not entirely understand:

Mr. Nevinson has chosen to depict him [the British soldier] as simply the British working man in khaki ... doing a job for which he has no liking and only makeshift training ... ill at ease in his uniform ... to himself he is still the skilled workman ... Khaki, for him, is not so much a uniform as a disguise ... [the men of *A Group of Soldiers*] stand in the mud with their ... shabby convict-like garb ... with a certain sense of ... taking an unwitting part in a dull masquerade, a stupid game of which they know the rules but not the purpose. Their heart is not in the job ... Such feeling they have, which passes as patriotism, is undeveloped ... in their faces an expression of indifference ... a new stoicism, whimsical, puzzled, half-amused, formulating itself in that refrain 'We're 'ere because we're 'ere because we're 'ere.'³⁷⁴

Even after the war, Nevinson felt the need to justify the appearance of the men in *A Group of Soldiers*. In 1919 he told an American interviewer that he had tried to faithfully express in the face of his British 'Tommy' "the loathsomeness of his life in the trenches. The men were so unutterably wretched [and] their misery was so intense that the result of it was mad laughter."³⁷⁵ He insinuated he could not help the fact that middle-class critics found the ordinary working man a distasteful object to look upon. On this occasion, he appears to be implying that even the soldiers who looked unaffected were probably shell-shocked and, therefore, acting a little 'mad' or 'hysterical' was one way of coping with their appalling living conditions.

During the time he spent working for the Department, and then Ministry, of Information, between August 1917 and March 1918, Eric Kennington generally attempted to produce the sort of war art he thought his employers expected from him. As he later wrote to his daughter, while working for the authorities during the Second World War, he regarded the task of being an official war artist as a privilege. He maintained he had reached this conclusion as early as 1917, when he first realised he could "do something that people want pathetically – that is I can make a record of what Jack, Charles or Jim looks like, feels like [and] thinks of and parents who bravely send off their Jack's and Charles's want to be left with something, instead of just an emptiness – a vacuum."³⁷⁶ Kennington saw his contribution to the war effort as a dual one. His presence would remind the men at the Front they had not been forgotten by those back home. He would also portraits that presented them in a favourable light and to which they could not object, if they were displayed in London or reproduced in the British press. It would appear that he willingly subjected himself to a considerable degree of self-censorship concerning the presentation of the front-line soldiers he encountered. As he admitted to A.N. Yockney, after returning to London in 1918, he had deliberately made no attempt "to depict any of the horror and tragedy, realising that it was too vast."³⁷⁷

Given such feelings one can understand his intense indignation when, just prior to the opening of his June 1918 official war art exhibition, the Ministry suddenly suggested he either change the title of his pastel *Via Crucis* [Plate 57], or exclude it entirely from the exhibition. The Ministry received the work in January 1918, with the provisional title of 'Soldier in a Flooded Trench', and at that stage was not perceived as at all controversial.³⁷⁸ However, Ministry officials began to look at the work differently when Kennington expressed his intention to exhibit it as *Via Crucis*. This raised the uncomfortable and, potentially, blasphemous implication that the travails of this 'Tommy', floundering in the mud beneath the burden of a weighty rations bag, were comparable to the passion and crucifixion of Christ on the cross. There is also a hint, in the correspondence between Kennington and the Ministry, that the authorities thought that the pastel was too generic and cartoon-like to merit a title with such powerful religious connotations. The Ministry may have been regarded *Via Crucis* as too reminiscent of Bainsfather's earlier *The Communication Trench* [Plate 52], from 1916, and as an evidence of Kennington moving away from his habitually detached manner to more overtly emotive commentary that was not to be encouraged. For his part, Kennington was extremely upset at this attempt, as he later put it, to 'noble' *Via Crucis*. He believed he had always bent over backwards to accommodate the wishes of his employers.³⁷⁹ Kennington complained that the Ministry was displaying an offensively patronizing attitude towards both the average British soldier at the Front and to the civilian population at home. Had not the 'Tommy' done enough in the war so far, ran Kennington's argument, for him to merit comparison to Christ on the road to Calvary? He wrote to A.N.Yockney "Via Crucis ... Must the soldiers endure hideous agony and the civilian not be permitted to think of it second hand? You will encourage civilian slackness!"³⁸⁰

Via Crucis constitutes one of the few works from Kennington's output, as an official war artist, in which he drew explicit attention to the wretched daily lives being led by infantrymen in the winter frost and frozen mud of the Western Front. Everyday hundreds of men, on 'carrying parties', found themselves in a similar situation to that of the man in *Via Crucis*. They staggered lost amidst a maze of muddy communication trenches and bowed down beneath the weight of supplies they were required to haul up to the front-line from depots miles in the rear. Perhaps, it is not so surprising that it took Kennington's employers some time to realize that *Via Crucis* might be unsuitable for exhibition. As noted earlier, much of the work he produced on the Western Front depicted the British enlisted man in a positive and idealized light. In an officially sponsored publication, Campbell Dodgson, then working as an art advisor to the Ministry of Information, enthusiastically describes Kennington as "a born painter of the nameless heroes of the rank and file ... one who would ... draw types which no other could choose so wisely ... men, gallant, unselfish, true to death whom he knew and

loved.³⁸¹ However, one should be aware that Kennington drew *Via Crucis* while suffering from a debilitating bout of 'trench fever' and while increasingly frustrated with obstructive military red-tape and GHQ's unhelpful attitude towards him. He later, plaintively, wrote to A.N. Yockney of how, early in 1918 "I felt danger acutely, [was] in much shell-fire [and] had Trench-Fever ... I had the unique troubles of a soldier who has no rank, no badge or buttons, no unit, no pay, no batman, no billet and an unmilitary dress and no regular rations. What this means is danger and misery a civilian cannot comprehend."³⁸²

Indeed, it is possible that, after nearly six months spent in France, Kennington was beginning to feel the emotional strain. He felt burdened by the attempt to maintain a balance in his working practices. If he operated too far behind the Front, he could not truthfully draw men as they actually appeared in the immediate vicinity of the firing-line. Alternatively, if he got too close to the action, the problems of securing a subject for sufficient time to draw became insurmountable. In June 1918, he wrote to A.N. Yockney, a Ministry of Information official, "The difficulty is that if an artist remains back he is safe and comfortable and does not really see the war and if he goes really 'forward' he sees the war and life is so disturbed and full of apprehensions ... and sudden changes that he cannot really apply himself to his work."³⁸³

Perhaps it is not too fanciful to suggest that, reading between the lines, Kennington was acutely conscious of the anxieties and 'apprehensions' he had experienced in the front-line. He was also very aware of his own uncertain status in the eyes of his soldier-sitters, since he was neither a combatant, nor an officer. Indeed, he possessed no proper, recognizable uniform of his own. He felt the necessity to expose himself to a modicum of danger, of which he made light to William Rothenstein, not only to improve the quality of his war art, but also because he had to be seen to share some of the dangers of the fighting soldier. Kennington was always very keen to draw, and talk with, men who had displayed particular courage such as snipers, men who patrolled alone in 'No-Man's-Land', or who repeatedly volunteered for hazardous trench raids. By 1917, a number of army psychologists had come to recognize that consistently courageous deeds, of the sort Kennington admired, could have distinctly damaging psychological ramifications for the soldier who performed them. The first book in English devoted exclusively to the discussion of shell-shock, published in June 1917, drew attention to plentiful evidence that a consistently brave and resourceful soldier was just as susceptible to the development of a neurosis as the more obviously 'neuropathic' type displaying all the classic 'stigmata of hysteria':

they [brave soldiers] will not necessarily display ... any obvious outward signs of ... trouble. There may be no tremor, no twitchings, no loss of control of the facial ...

muscles which would indicate his state ... to his neighbour ... ³⁸⁴ The war has shown us one indisputable fact, that a psychoneurosis may be produced in almost anyone ... some sane men might be unhesitatingly regarded as neurasthenic by one class of society, normal by another ... Indeed ... those exhibiting the most severe and distressing symptoms ... were men ... noted for their dare-devilry and ... [had] been specially chosen as dispatch-riders, snipers and stretcher-bearers. ³⁸⁵

If this hypothesis was correct, it effectively undermined all existing pre-conceptions as to the constitution of the orthodox martial masculinity to be visually commemorated and presented for emulation by men entering the army. In other words, ferocity in battle, and lack of concern for one's own personal safety in the face of danger, could now be considered as but one more category of pathological behaviour. The existence of such cases were confirmed in numerous submissions to the 1920-22 War Office Shell-Shock inquiry ³⁸⁶ and allows one to read additional meaning into Kennington's November 1917 portrait of an intrepid trench-raider, *Man Chosen for Dangerous Work* (also known as *8th Queens Hero*) [Plate 58]. It is evident, from his correspondence with the Department of Information that the catalogue of brave deeds performed by the Sergeant depicted, which had earned the man the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal, mesmerized Kennington. ³⁸⁷ The Sergeant's heroic acts included rescuing a box of hand grenades from a bomb-store on fire, stalking and killing German snipers, and participation in several successful trench raids. ³⁸⁸ However impressive his military record, this Sergeant, from the Royal West Surrey's - known colloquially as 'The Queens', hardly appears imbued with aggressive purpose, as conventionally heroic or self-confident. If anything, he looks exhausted and rapidly approaching the end of his tether. It is debatable whether Kennington realized that this man's physiognomy betrayed some of the marks associated with shell-shock such as the inability to meet another man's gaze, the lowered eyes and partially open mouth.

A Man Chosen for Dangerous Work is a portrait of a 'hero' by any contemporary definition. However, it is far removed from the more conventional and ennobling image of the dauntless warrior prevalent in popular culture, such as on cigarette cards, or in works produced at the other end of the cultural spectrum and exhibited at the Royal Academy. To a home audience, the soldier appeared reassuringly bashful about the 'heroic' status conferred upon him by all the decorations he has been awarded. On the other hand, a front-line soldier would have looked upon the image from a very different perspective, more attuned to the cumulative impact of all those daring exploits on the man's mental and physical well-being. The consequences of undertaking 'dangerous work', Kennington may be suggesting, do not necessarily end when the mission is formally over. For long after the soldier mulls over past raids, calculating what his future chances of survival may be, after emerging intact from yet another close shave.

Approximately, 80,000 cases categorized as 'shell-shock', or as Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous, passed through military hospitals between 1915-1918.³⁸⁹ The 1920-22 War Office Inquiry into shell-shock revealed that, as of 1920, 65,000 former soldiers were receiving disability pensions for 'neurasthenia'.³⁹⁰ During the War Office inquiry more than one witness stated that their experience of the war suggested it was no longer obvious which sort of men could be relied upon in a crisis. In the opinion of one ex-RAMC doctor "You can never tell how a man is going to do in action until you have seen him there. Some gay and sporting types, whom one imagines should do well, are useless; other foppish, idiotic, frivolous types do splendidly."³⁹¹

Intriguingly, Kennington and Bairnsfather appear not to have agreed at all with this viewpoint. Bairnsfather, for example, wrote that he had been greatly comforted by the resilience in the face of adversity displayed by so many of the men he had commanded in the Royal Warwicks. His 'old sweats' had been equal to the worst the Germans could devise to throw at them.³⁹² As for Kennington, shortly after the Armistice, he wrote to William Rothenstein that the time he had spent as an official war artist had only confirmed his pre-war assumption that external appearance and posture was a reliable guide to internal character "To me externals are the expression of the internal."³⁹³ A soldier who cared about his personal appearance and kept his weapons clean, despite the omnipresent grime of the trenches, was: "a man to keep by your side ... when the shooting starts." One such man had been the platoon Sergeant in the 9th Royal Sussex who had acted as Kennington's bodyguard for a fortnight towards the end of 1917 when he had been attached to that battalion as an official war artist.³⁹⁴ In 1922 he used the former sergeant as a model for one of the three figures on his first major sculptural project; the memorial to the 24th Infantry Division [Plates 97-98] After the war, Kennington also expressed private doubts as to how prevalent shell-shock had been among men in the British Army serving on the Western Front.³⁹⁵ Kennington was not much given to expressing in public his opinions about the First World War, and its effects on the men who had fought in it. However, early in the Second World War and referring back to his prior experience, Kennington acknowledged in an officially approved publication that all men in the firing-line felt fear and stress. The men whom he admired, and wanted to draw, were those who possessed "the great dignity [which] comes from their continual living on the edge of death."³⁹⁶

Nevinson evidently found that witnessing death at first hand, while serving with the Friends Ambulance Unit and the RAMC, left its psychological scars. Indeed he was consulting a 'nerve specialist'³⁹⁷ even as he succeeded in persuading C.F.G. Masterman, at the Department of Information, that he was a "desperate fellow and without fear" and, therefore, a perfect candidate for the post of official war artist.³⁹⁸ In 1918, after the furore caused by his decision to ignore official instructions and exhibit

Glory [Plate 68], the details of which will be discussed in the next chapter, Nevinson confessed to Masterman that he had been "ill lately with nerves and acute insomnia."³⁹⁹ In his autobiography, published in 1937, Nevinson was candid about the nightmares he had experienced as a consequence of his wartime experiences.⁴⁰⁰ Immediately after the Armistice, however, he was a great deal more circumspect. In a May 1919 interview, with a New York newspaper, he referred to how "upsetting" and "unnerving" he had found the sight of the dead, or of men who had been "horribly wounded".⁴⁰¹ It would appear that, for all his scepticism concerning shell-shock, Kennington also found these very same sights deeply disturbing to the extent he preferred not to draw them at all.⁴⁰² Given such reactions, the next chapter will explore the physiognomy of the physically wounded soldier as well as the deeply sensitive conventions governing the depiction of those who had been killed or, in the elevated parlance of the time, made the 'supreme sacrifice' on the battlefield.

Chapter Five.

'Broken Warriors': The Depiction of Dead and Wounded Males in Official and Unofficial British War Art c.1914-1918.

The principal aim of this chapter will be to discuss the relatively unexplored issue of the extent to which their individual experiences of being wounded, falling sick and being hospitalised may have influenced the manner in which C.R.W. Nevinson, E.H. Kennington and C.S. Jagger depicted soldiers who were wounded, dying or dead in their unofficial and official war art c.1915-18. The chapter will also attempt to examine the conventions and protocols that emerged to governing the presentation of the male in pain, or lifeless, through comparisons with more academic and orthodox constructions of the dead or wounded British soldier, reproduced in the popular media or exhibited at the Royal Academy, and assess whether they were observed, or ignored, by the three artists in question. For example, it became commonplace for newspapers, drawing upon the lyrics of popular music-hall songs, to refer to the wounded British soldiers as 'broken warriors'.⁴⁰³ In addition, there is the question of how, in the form of art criticism, the imagery of the dead and wounded were interpreted for public consumption as well as the extent of limitations imposed on the minority of official war artists, who attempted to depict the horrifying nature of physical wounds and death on the battlefield.

This chapter will draw upon the revealing work, produced over the last twenty years, which explores how men responded to the prospect of being killed or badly wounded.⁴⁰⁴ Informative, and persuasive, studies have recently been published discussing the British government attempts to help disabled Great War servicemen re-integrate back into civilian life,⁴⁰⁵ what female nurses thought of their male patients,⁴⁰⁶ and the extent to which the death of a close comrade could produce, either a psychic collapse⁴⁰⁷, or stimulate a desire to shed the blood of the enemy.⁴⁰⁸ However, within art historical accounts of the First World War, there has been relatively little discussion concerning the imagery of dead and wounded soldiers produced by both unofficial and official war artists as well as the ways in which a male artist, who himself had been under fire and wounded, related to the dead and wounded he felt drawn to depict. The aforementioned gap, in the study of First World War art, is somewhat surprising if one considers that appallingly high casualty rates created an abundance of wounded and dead. Britain alone suffered 722,785 dead and an estimated 1.6 million wounded.⁴⁰⁹ The bill of butchery was even higher for the French, who suffered 1,385,000 dead and over 5 million wounded.⁴¹⁰ It is also intriguing that, given such omnipresent carnage, official artists produced surprisingly few images of the dead and wounded. It would appear that the reason for this was only partially the consequence of official prohibitions

concerning such imagery. Indeed, one can neither underestimate the tendency for official artists to willingly adopt a high degree of self-censorship nor assume that an explicitly detailed image of death or wounds should automatically be interpreted as conclusive evidence for the artist having become profoundly disillusioned with the war.⁴¹¹

By the close of 1915, the British public was slowly coming to terms with the novel idea that many of its men folk at the Front actually looked forward to sustaining a certain type of wound. This was known as a 'Blighty one', and the man with such a wound was much envied by his comrades. At the time, the novelist Patrick MacGill explained "a 'Blighty' ... is a much desired wound ... that sends a soldier back to England."⁴¹² It constituted one of the few ways in which an ordinary enlisted man could remove himself from the Front and obtain weeks, or even months, honourable convalescence in the home country without any taint of cowardice. MacGill was quite candid that, after a couple of months in France, he only wanted "to be wounded in the easiest possible way."⁴¹³ Jagger, while serving as an infantry officer at Gallipoli in November 1915, was shot through the right shoulder by a Turkish sniper. Later that month, while convalescing in hospital, he wrote to his girlfriend admitting that, although it was painful, he felt his wound was "probably a Godsend."⁴¹⁴ Soldiers quickly became adept at devising procedures for acquiring an effective 'Blighty' wound, though the area of the body in which a man did not want to be hit varied considerably. MacGill, for example, particularly dreaded a wound to his face.⁴¹⁵ Men feared losing their arms or legs, or dreamt of their dead bodies being dismembered by shell-fire as they lay exposed and unburied on the battlefield.⁴¹⁶ Other widespread terrors included being buried alive in a trench by a bombardment⁴¹⁷, or of being gassed while trapped in an enclosed space.⁴¹⁸

There was one category of wound, however, which the military authorities could neither indulge nor tolerate. This was the self-inflicted wound, which was swiftly criminalized on detection. As the war progressed, the incidence of self-inflicted wounds rapidly increased. Prior to the beginning, in July 1917, of the Third Battle of Ypres the British High Command ordered that an entire Casualty Clearing Station, with 1,500 beds, be reserved to deal with an anticipated influx of such cases.⁴¹⁹ Meanwhile, the subject became a frequent one for the younger war poets.⁴²⁰ Understandably, both army and civilian authorities were loath to give any publicity to the fact that many men were adopting such extreme measures to escape the Front. For example, in June 1918, Eric Kennington was not allowed to exhibit a portrait of a wounded man, which he had entitled *S/W*, the acronym for 'Self-Inflicted Wound' used by the RAMC. He was also accused, by the official censor at GHQ, of unpatriotic sentiments for wanting to draw such a man in the first place.⁴²¹ Other official war artists, however, needed no

encouragement to regard men with self-inflicted wounds as entirely inappropriate subject matter. William Orpen, for example, in 1917, wrote to a friend in 1917 that he would never consider drawing the portraits of such men. The sight of them filled him with revulsion, for they had sought the coward's way out.⁴²²

Broadly speaking, during the first 18 months of the war, it would never have crossed a civilian's mind that British soldiers were shooting themselves in the foot, or the hand, to ensure discharge from the army. During the same period, soldiers comforted themselves with the belief that on being evacuated back to Britain, with a visible physical wound, they would be treated as heroes by civilians and fussed over with gifts of cigarettes and chocolates. As the war ground on, however, some civilians experienced feelings of resentment when repeatedly confronted by the sight of wounded men hobbling around the streets. Caroline Playne, a Voluntary Aid Detachment Nurse during the war, later commented on the subtle change in civilian attitudes towards wounded men who were highly visible in public spaces. From being hailed as 'heroes', the wounded had become commonplace. They made civilians feel uncomfortable as they reminded them all too painfully of the carnage overseas and that a loved one might suffer a similar fate. Playne recalled a visit she made, in June 1917, to Brighton that had left a forceful impression on her "the sight of hundreds of men on crutches going about in groups, many having lost one leg, many others both legs, caused sickening horror ... and not pity. The maiming of masses of strong young men, thus brought home, was appalling."⁴²³

Alongside this shift in public attitudes, certain categories of wounds, such as men who had been facially mutilated, came to be regarded as so disturbing that it was widely assumed that the depiction of them would seriously damage civilian morale and undermine the will of the home population to support the war effort.⁴²⁴ A consensus also emerged, in both unofficial and official war art, that if dead soldiers had to be depicted at all they must be represented as having died whole, without any intimation of bodily dismemberment. Early in the war it became acceptable to depict the dead British 'Tommy' in close proximity to Christ on the Cross.⁴²⁵ Implicitly, such images patriotically elevated the soldier's sacrifice on the battlefield as comparable to that of Christ's Passion and crucifixion. James Clarke's *The Great Sacrifice* [Plate 59], first published in *The Graphic* on Christmas Day 1914, was probably the image of the dead or stricken 'Tommy' with which the British public was most familiar during the Great War, owing to its sheer ubiquitousness. As it was reproduced in large quantities in a wide variety of formats, including as a colour lithograph, a Christmas card, a greetings card, a postcard, a poster, even a jigsaw and a knitting pattern, *The Great Sacrifice* became the most disseminated and accessible example of unofficial war art to appear during the war. The image proved highly influential in determining the boundaries for the

depiction of the seriously wounded and dead.⁴²⁶ Couched in the elevated pictorial rhetoric of late nineteenth-century British religious art, with its unsophisticated symbolism and saccharine sentimentality, the image was deliberately aimed at a mass audience and quickly became a commercial success.

The Graphic reproduced the design again in February 1915, this time as a poster, advertising it as "the most inspired picture of the War." Beneath the image a quotation from the New Testament was inserted 'Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.'⁴²⁷ Clarke's large-scale oil painting of *The Great Sacrifice* received the official stamp of approval when, in December 1915, it was exhibited at a Royal Academy benefit exhibition and purchased by Edward VII's widow, Queen Alexandra. Thereafter, both Princess Alexandra, and her daughter-in-law Queen Mary, frequently distributed impressions of the colour lithograph to women's organizations, factories, religious organizations helping with the war effort and to military hospitals and convalescent homes. Thousands of copies must have been circulating in Britain during the first year of the war alone.⁴²⁸ Clark's image of the dead 'Tommy' might strike one as offensively trite, facile and ridiculous but it, and its accompanying biblical quotation, appear to have infiltrated into the consciousness of Army chaplains. In September 1916, for example, the chaplain of a Scottish battalion wrote the following to the widow of a private recently killed on the Somme "You will console yourself with our Lord's words - words repeated by me over your husbands grave: 'Greater Love hath No Man than This, That a Man lay Down His Life For His Friends.'⁴²⁹

Even as the slaughter of the Third Battle of Ypres unfolded in 1917, while Nevinson was painting *Paths of Glory* [Plate 68], his rather more unsparing and accurate rendition of squalid death on the battlefield, recipients of copies of *The Supreme Sacrifice* by no means regarded it as offensive, redundant or inappropriate. In October 1917 an impression of the colour lithograph was donated to St. Mary's Alsager, Cheshire, by its churchwarden. Letters to that month's parish magazine indicate this gesture was greatly appreciated and suggests that, even after three years of war, many civilians still preferred to imagine death on the battlefield in this guise. The donation received particular praise from the vicar who had, however, one mild criticism to make of the image. While acknowledging that the self-sacrifice of the troops should be remembered with the deepest reverence "the Sacrifice made by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ upon the Cross must ever remain by itself infinitely above and beyond any sacrifice that could ever be made by man."⁴³⁰ In the same year an army chaplain, Gordon Pym, criticized the popularity of the lithograph from a different perspective. He could understand the artist's desire to spare the feelings of those who had men folk at the Front. However, he could not condone its offering a flagrantly misleading picture of

what wounded and dead British soldiers looked like lying on the battlefield and lamented that the lithograph was still "to be seen in every shop window ... Like the young lad in the picture, the men whom I saw die [in France] had a bullet wound in the temple, but there the likeness ceased. Here was no calm death, but a ghastly mess of blood and brains and mud on his face ... and in the stark horror of the moment, I could not see the Crucified at all."⁴³¹

Alongside Gordon Pym's deep dissatisfaction with *The Great Sacrifice*, Charles Sims felt compelled to produce his own indignant and sarcastic visual criticism of the lithograph and its mendacious use of biblical quotation. Early in May 1917 his watercolour *Greater Love Hath No Man* was exhibited at the Royal Academy. [Plate 60] On one level the work may be a comment on the heartless deception implicit in comparing the death of a British soldier, cut to pieces by machine gun bullets or shell-splinters, to the archaic sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Sims deliberately leaves it ambiguous as to whether the wounded 'Tommy' is wearily resuming his place on the cross, or is he experiencing pronounced second thoughts as he is about to assume the posture of sacrifice. There is more cynicism than resolution in the man's physiognomy and he looks less than convinced as to why he should once again jeopardize his life for his parents, wife, and children. In his pose there is also more than a touch of blasphemous absurdity for, unlike Christ who gave His life to save the sins of the world, it appears that this already wounded soldier is being required to sacrifice himself in the defence of cosy suburban domestic bliss.

C.R.W. Nevinson was probably the war artist with most direct experience of caring for wounded soldiers within a structured medical environment. The sort of duties he performed, first as an orderly with the Friends Ambulance Unit and then as a private in the RAMC at Wandsworth, are briefly touched upon in Chapter Two. It is worth noting that during the first month Nevinson spent with the Friends Ambulance Unit, between 13 November and 13 December 1914, it treated nearly 3,500 casualties including French, Belgian and German military personnel as well as French and Belgian civilians.⁴³² In addition, during the period Nevinson was a nursing orderly at the Unit's St. Pierre Hospital, on the outskirts of Dunkirk, the hospital treated over 215 wounded.⁴³³ He spent a more extended period, of some six and half months, between June 1915 and early January 1916, in close proximity to wounded British and Dominion soldiers as a Private in the RAMC at the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth. In his autobiography, Nevinson does not describe in any great detail the variety of wounds he encountered at Wandsworth, though he does mention the great satisfaction he derived from assisting in operating theatres and caring for a ward containing some forty deaf and blind patients.⁴³⁴ Nevinson's friend and fellow orderly, Ward Muir, wrote later in the war that he had witnessed a multitude of 'horrors' at Wandsworth such as

when "the bandages are unwrapped from a hopelessly septic wound or from the stump of an amputated leg." Muir describes how he quickly learnt to cope by developing a "practical callousness." In addition, there were what he termed "the abominations ... displayed only in the privacy of the wards." Muir judged it would be vulgar and prurient to discuss such cases, nor did he believe that the unfortunate victims would wish to be paraded before a morbidly sensationalist public craving vicarious stimulation. Muir could not see what purpose would be served by discussing "the abominations" at length and expressed satisfaction that any attempt to do so would be quite rightly prevented by the censors.⁴³⁶ As for Nevinson, he would only hint at some of the 'abominations' Muir referred to in the handful of works he drew, which can be related to his time at Wandsworth. The longer he remained at the hospital, the more his health, never robust, deteriorated. It appears Nevinson was falling seriously ill even as he prepared to get married on 1 November 1915. His mother later recalled "soon after the honeymoon he collapsed with rheumatic fever. He was just expecting to be sent abroad but missed his draft and lay for weeks dangerously ill in Wandsworth ... Later, he got his discharge [from the RAMC] on account of heart weakness."⁴³⁶

In the spring of 1916 Nevinson sought to distil his painful and harrowing memories of his service with the Friends Ambulance Unit, and at the Third London General, into *La Patrie* [Plate 61]. As was usual in Nevinson's working practices, the final image, exhibited with the London Group in June 1916, evolved from a process combining the magnification of some details and the omission of others. For example he excluded from the finished canvas both the wounded German prisoners and the non-white French colonial troops his father had described, in a letter published in November 1914, as being present in the 'Shambles' dressing station at Dunkirk.⁴³⁷ Instead, Nevinson has chosen to concentrate on wounded white 'Poilus', from Metropolitan France, lying in the straw in various postures of distress and anguish. Nevinson's excision of the wounded Germans may be linked to contemporary events in the war. The Battle of Verdun had been raging since 21 February 1916 and the French had suffered horrendous casualties. A German drive to take the city reached its climax early in June and it is conceivable that Nevinson deliberately sought to highlight the suffering of French soldiers as a tribute to the grim determination with which they had defended Verdun and to their having so far shouldered the main burden of fighting the war on the Western Front. The British did not really emerge as an attacking force, to be taken seriously by the Germans, until the Battle of the Somme began on 1 July 1916.⁴³⁸

Critical reaction to *La Patrie* was uniformly favourable. In many respects, the work, even more than *La Mitrailleuse* exhibited three months earlier, secured Nevinson's reputation as the young artist whose style and subject matter encapsulated the harsh realities of modern industrialized warfare dominated by mass-produced

technology. Nevinson was only taken to task for a few aspects of the composition such as his perfunctory and angular treatment of the human body, the reduction of the faces of the wounded men to hideously twisted and distorted masks, the limited use of low key colour and the eccentric and awkward perspective that made the composition feel claustrophobic, airless and unstable, as if the floor threatened at any moment to rise up and cause the wounded to roll sharply downwards into the lap of the spectator. At the time, and for the remainder of the war, critics seemed curiously reluctant to wonder whether Nevinson's choice of *La Patrie*, for the title, could be interpreted as at all ironic. It could be read as implying that all the death, mutilation, and suffering present in the painting would not be redeemed by the quasi-mystical nationalistic fervour Frenchmen were widely perceived as feeling for their homeland. Writing about *La Patrie*, in November 1916, P.G. Konody interpreted it as a ringing vindication of patriotism and self-sacrifice. He argued that the choice of title, with its precise literary associations, actually raised the "tragic ... from its realistic bareness to a loftier region. The war machine and its working are banished to the second plane and a noble idea ... sacrifice of life and limb and all for home and country ... tones down the crudeness of the theme."⁴³⁹

Generally, *La Patrie* was welcomed, even by those who had not thought much of his work in the past, and Nevinson was commended for his willingness to show the public how ugly, dirty and unheroic the wounded can appear in their pain. The element many claimed to detect in the image, compensating for his simplicity of style, was Nevinson's 'pity' for men having to suffer in such squalid conditions. Frank Rutter, previously an enthusiast for Nevinson's work, wrote, "The pitiable horror of war has never been more powerfully emphasized in paint than in *La Patrie*."⁴⁴⁰ It is possible that Wilfred Owen was aware of this painting and the recurrent references linking to it of the concept of 'pity' in war. In May 1918 Owen wrote, as part of an introduction for a collection of poetry that would never be published, "My subject is War, and the pity of War. The poetry is in the pity."⁴⁴¹ It was this quality of pity that appealed to the quintessential Edwardian novelist Arnold Bennett and prompted him to purchase the canvas in 1916. When *La Patrie* was exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, in September 1916, Charles Lewis Hind went so far to write,

When war is no more this picture will stand, to the astonishment and shame of our descendants, as an example of what civilized man did to civilized man in the first quarter of the Twentieth-century ... Quite half of these men are in a dying condition; their distorted faces are ghastly in the green dawn light that steals into the deathly atmosphere.⁴⁴²

Later in 1916, as the tragedy of the Somme became all too painfully apparent, *La Patrie* was sharply criticized for its unflattering characterization of the human body. One critic protested:

The mechanical puppets, with angular forms, which represent our poor suffering humanity in Nevinson's paintings, present us with an image of stark, unmitigated horror and we may fairly ask, what is the end gained by such portrayals? Do we want a more brutal record of it all? Are we not better served by pictures that illuminate for us the fine spirit of endurance and nobility of action that has cast some halo over all?⁴⁴³

John Salis, however, was attracted precisely by Nevinson's very unwillingness to compromise and insinuate conventional sentimental touches into his images of the wounded. Salis thought *La Patrie* benefited from the deliberate exclusion of any distracting and frivolous feminine element. Nevinson's "wounded men are not soothed by the delicate hand of some romantic pretty nurse; they lie on bloodstained stretchers in dark and depressing barns."⁴⁴⁴ It is possible that, when he wrote this, Salis had in mind a painting that depicted wounded convalescent British officers in the company of a conventionally demure and attractive nurse/ 'ministering angel'. In J.C. Dollman's *The Creditors* [Plate 64], exhibited at the Royal Academy in May 1916, each officer has been wounded in a socially acceptable and unembarrassing part of the body. One soldier has a spotlessly white bandage on his right foot, another a neatly bandaged face, the third man has his arm in a sling while the fourth man props himself up with a walking cane. It is essentially a Victorian genre work with its didactic purpose clearly evident from its content and the literary connotations of the title. The nurse has to perform no more strenuous tasks beyond lighting cigarettes and pipes, and soothing her patients with innocuous conversation.

If Dollman's was the preferred way of depicting the wounded British officer, it is not surprising that Nevinson was widely taken to task for his supposedly 'cruel and heartless' depiction of the wounded ordinary 'Tommy' wearing his picturesque blue hospital uniforms in *When Harry Tate Came Down* (also known as *At the Concert*) [Plate 39]. This canvas was exhibited alongside *La Patrie* at the London Group in June 1916. His characterisation of wounded enlisted men would have struck a contemporary as all the more outlandish and provocative after comparison with J.H. Dowd's *Forgetting Their Pains*. [Plate 65] This drawing depicts wounded men from the Third London General attending a concert and was reproduced in the hospital's in-house *Gazette* in May 1916. Unlike Dowd, Nevinson hints that some of his men have lost arms, legs and eyes. Indeed, a few appear to have lost normal facial characteristics altogether. It is possible that Nevinson was making a reference to work taking place within the Masks for Facial Disfigurements Department at Wandsworth. This Department had been established, in the autumn of 1915, by the academic sculptor Francis Derwent Wood. Nevinson may also have been aware of the pastels produced by his old *bête noire* Henry Tonks, during the spring of 1916, as memory aids for the pioneering plastic surgeon Harold Gillies at the Royal Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot. [Plate 66] At the time Tonks thought they were too honest and shocking for

the general public and was anxious for them not to be exhibited.⁴⁴⁵ The *Gazette of the Third London General* did not reproduce a few relatively mild drawings of men, who were being treated for facial injuries at Wandsworth, until December 1916 [Plate 67]. These were the work of Corporal Tom Roberts, a RAMC orderly at Wandsworth and a commercial artist prior to his enlistment. His sketches tended to play down the extent of damage to the face and to accentuate the success of plastic surgery in returning a man's physiognomy to a semblance of normality.

Even though the work of plastic surgeons was becoming better known, by the middle of 1916, the authorities were still very wary of it receiving too much publicity. It was thought that the display of 'before and after' surgery photographs of patients with facial disfigurements might have a seriously detrimental effect on public morale. As a consequence, artists, when depicting the wounded, would have to be even more careful in their treatment of the male face. This general sensitivity, concerning the subject of soldiers with facial wounds, might explain why the *Glasgow Herald*, which had acclaimed *La Patrie*, expressed loathing for *When Harry Tate Came Down*. Nevinson was accused of having committed a "grotesque libel" at the expense of the wounded by reducing them to the level of "ugly" caricatures populating the sort of vulgar music-hall audience who could be expected to enjoy a performance by the comedian referred to in the title.⁴⁴⁶ Sir Claude Phillips (1846-1924), who had also responded positively to *La Patrie*, dismissed *When Harry Tate Came Down* as a "gratuitously unkind caricature of our wounded heroes."⁴⁴⁷

When *The Doctor* [Plate 62], Nevinson's other major oil derived from his experience of the 'Shambles', was exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in September 1916 the canvas generated as much debate and comment as had *La Patrie*. It is regrettable that Nevinson never produced a drypoint version of *La Patrie* as his prints tend to be more arresting, and possess greater visual immediacy, than the initial version of a subject painted in oils with laboured brushstrokes. Indeed, his work is generally more impressive the closer it approaches execution entirely in monochrome. The drypoint of *The Doctor* [Plate 63] is a particularly good example of this tendency, which becomes more evident in Nevinson's war art from the autumn of 1916 onwards. Working in drypoint tended to give Nevinson's draughtsmanship greater clarity, sharpness, and incisiveness. In the drypoint of *The Doctor* certain important details, present in the oil painting, have been accentuated or slightly magnified and thereby achieve a greater impact. For example, the lines of blood running down the neck and on to the chest of the man with the head wound in the foreground have been brought into sharper focus. This man's facial features have been defined with greater precision, making his expression more reminiscent of Edvard Munch's tortured figure, in *The Scream* (1893), protesting futilely at the relentless cruelty of existence. The scalpel with

which the doctor is operating has become larger, the profile of the dead man under the sheet on the stretcher, in the left foreground, is more pronounced, the wound in the upper right thigh of the man exposing his buttocks has become larger and more gruesome while the figures of French soldiers in the background, who have already received treatment and are looking on with intense interest, are more substantial. The velvety tones created by the characteristic burr of drypoint, when set aside the untouched areas of the plate, are used to excellent effect to further reinforce the sense of enclosure and compression, of the spectator being pitched right into the heart of the action, as if one was standing at the feet of the poor devil in the foreground whose head is the object of a crude operation. The dead man, his hands beneath the sheet clasped tightly together on his chest in the grip of rigor mortis, provides salutary reminder that, for all the professional skill, dexterity with a scalpel and perseverance of the doctor, without the proper equipment and facilities many of the men he will treat will probably not survive. The man with the head wound forms part of an apparently endless procession of wounded who will have to endure further pain in the hope they will recover. The odds are, however, that the majority of them will die anyway.

When the oil of *The Doctor* was first exhibited, in September 1916, Nevinson was variously accused of revelling in gratuitous sensationalism, cynical vulgarity and of rubbing the noses of a civilian audience into the filth and squalor of war with all too obvious relish and glee. It is possible Nevinson thought he could avoid censure for depicting a wounded soldier with his naked backside pointing into the air, and another giving full-throated expression to his pain, because they were French and not British soldiers. The former were widely assumed to be far more uninhibited, unashamed and emotional in the expression of their feelings. Nevinson's detractors repeatedly inquired as to what purpose served such an image served. They were prepared to accept the validity of Nevinson's general theme, that war was an abomination. However, they did question whether such an image could have a desirable effect on civilian opinion and, therefore, on the war effort on the home front. If the public became too disillusioned from seeing images, such as *The Doctor*, and morale on the home front collapsed, the war would have been lost. All the British and French soldiers killed to date would have died for nothing and the pain obviously been endured by the man in the foreground of the painting would have been rendered meaningless. So ran their argument.

One critic suspected that Nevinson wanted the fearsome scalpel, wielded by the white-coated medic, to prod the viewer in real life and in some tender spot as a stinging reminder of the men who were dying at the Front to keep civilian spectators in the sort of comfort and safety that allowed them the leisure to attend art exhibitions "Mr. Nevinson ... celebrates individual torture from time to time ... perhaps for our own good ... *The Doctor* produces upon the nerves the effect of a sharp stab of pain repeated

eternally in the same place; exasperating at first but decreasingly effective."⁴⁴⁸ On the other hand, Henry Tomlinson, a veteran war correspondent, was rather impressed by the stance Nevinson adopted in the work "The soldier's agony is faithfully portrayed but only in the same way as the wet weather in the trenches. Mr. Nevinson only supplies the picture, you bring your own emotions."⁴⁴⁹

Some intriguing evidence exists of what Nevinson thought he was trying to achieve in *The Doctor* in a letter he wrote in 1918 to Robert Ross, working then as an art advisor to the British War Memorials Committee of the Ministry of Information. It is possible that Nevinson may have tailored his claims, and the manner in which he expressed them, to suit the tastes of the recipient. Ross was known, in the circles Nevinson frequented, as a homosexual, as Oscar Wilde's first male lover, and for the close friendships he cultivated with handsome young officers who wrote poetry. In June 1918 Ross bought *The Doctor* for the Imperial War Museum and Nevinson wrote the following to thank him for making the purchase:

I regard this picture, quite apart from how it is painted, as expressing an absolutely NEW outlook on the so-called 'sacrifice of war' which, up to present, is only felt by privates and a few officers who are, to all purposes, inarticulate and whose outlook I could only divine through my constant and intimate experiences with them as an orderly for two years ... that queer insight that I found I got through nursing them just fresh from the lines and mostly quite helpless ... if no hitch occurs, and this picture does get into the collection ... I shall feel I have had the last word on the 'horrors of war' for the generations to come and, in future, the warmongers of the world will not have the entire platform to themselves, as they have had in the past.⁴⁵⁰

After he was invalided out of the RAMC, in January 1916, Nevinson thought he had left the war behind him. However, by April 1917, it looked probable that he would be conscripted into the Army as a result of the passage of the Review of Exemptions Act. At the time, Nevinson wrote several letters to Edward Marsh stating his conviction that he was not sufficiently healthy to undertake any military work. In one letter he plaintively claimed, "I cannot, even now, walk any distance without pain."⁴⁵¹ In May 1917, however, he did succeed in persuading the Department of Information that he was physically strong enough to be sent out to France as an official war artist. During the middle of July 1917 he spent some time with a front-line infantry division, the 4th, in the vicinity of Arras, St. Nicholas, and Fampoux.⁴⁵² This area had been the scene of intense fighting during the Battle of Arras, which had raged from 9 April 1917 until the end of May. As Nevinson was in the area only a couple of months after the battle, there would not have been time to clear away and bury many of the dead, British and German, who littered what had formerly been 'No-Man's-Land' and the old German front-line.⁴⁵³ It is more than likely that, during this tour of the Arras front, he saw dead

British soldiers similar to those present in his *Paths of Glory* [Plate 68], the painting that caused a huge rumpus when it was exhibited in March 1918.

While attached to the 4th Infantry Division, Nevinson wrote to his immediate employer, C.F.G. Masterman that he had ventured into 'No-Man's-Land' at least once "I nearly got done in a few days ago, at my Observation Post, with some Lovat Scouts [dismounted Yeomanry]... we were spotted and shelled. I had to stick glued against a bank for an hour wondering whether Fritz would leave off ... I have been shelled every time but once when I have gone up the line."⁴⁵⁴ Two years later, Nevinson claimed, in a newspaper interview, that he had gone twice into 'No-Man's-Land' after receiving what he colourfully referred to as "invitations to commit suicide." On the first occasion he accompanied a patrol that quickly came under German machine gun fire. The soldier standing next to Nevinson was killed and he helped to carry the body back to British lines and manhandle it over a barbed wire entanglement into a front-line trench. The second time he went out, sketch book in hand, with one other soldier who was an experienced single-patroller and who usually preferred to work alone. They were, again, observed, promptly came under rifle fire from German sharpshooters and then high explosive shells began to fall around them "For an hour and a half the entire fearfulness of the German army and the most expensive ammunition were turned on us two ... After that I could paint just exactly what it feels like to lie in a shell-hole."⁴⁵⁵

It is likely that, while working on *Paths of Glory* in October 1917, the recollection of the dead he had seen during his brief forays into 'No-Man's-Land' would still have been fresh in Nevinson's memory. Though the subject matter of the work was still bleakly provocative by the standards of 1917, Nevinson was probably well aware he could have depicted the dead bodies of the two British soldiers in a far more horrific manner and still remain faithful to the reality all too visible across the shattered terrain of the Western Front. Apart from decomposing out in the open, dead bodies in 'No-Man's-Land' tended to become even more mutilated and dismembered as bullets and shell-blasts repeatedly struck them. Siegfried Sassoon calmly noted, during the early stages of the Battle of Arras "everywhere one sees the British 'Tommy' in various stages of dismemberment - most of them shot through the head; so not as fearful as the shell-twisted Germans."⁴⁵⁶ Indeed, while the plumpness and bulkiness of the bodies of Nevinson's soldiers suggests that they are beginning to inflate as the putrefaction process took hold, he could have depicted them in the sort of horrendous state graphically described by Sassoon in a poem published in his June 1918 collection *Counter-Attack* "The place was rotten with dead; green clumsy legs High-booted, sprawled and grovelled along the saps And trunks, face downward in the sucking mud, Wallowed like trodden sandbags loosely filled; And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair, Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering slime."⁴⁵⁷

The reality of what high explosives and shrapnel could do to a dead body could be even worse, as is indicated by a remarkable series of photographs taken by Captain Frank Hurley, one of the official Australian photographers on the Western Front. Despite the cumbersome nature of his primitive apparatus, Hurley managed to take them in October 1917 at the tip of the Australian advance during the battle of Broodseinde, an attack that formed part of the Third Ypres campaign. In a diary entry, made soon after he took the photograph illustrated [Plate 70], Hurley noted at Broodseinde "Every twenty paces or less lay a body. Some frightfully mutilated, with legs, arms and heads missing and half-covered in mud and slime ... The battlefield was littered with bits of men, our own and [the] Boche and, literally, drenched with blood." One body of a German soldier, in the right hand foreground of the photograph, stood out in his mind in stark and gory clarity since repeated near misses from shell bursts had reduced it to a limbless, and virtually unrecognisable, trunk. Not surprisingly, the censors at GHQ in France, and at MI7 (a) in London, were appalled when they first caught sight of Hurley's Broodseinde photographs and strictly prohibited their reproduction in any British or Australian publication.⁴⁵⁸

It is possible that, when conceiving *Paths of Glory*,⁴⁵⁹ Nevinson initially contemplated presenting the bodies in a less intact state. However, he may have already suspected that his employers would never have sanctioned the exhibition of such an image produced under official auspices. Too much candour as to what he had seen at the Front would have been construed as damaging to civilian morale and, above all, Nevinson wanted to retain his status as an official war artist. Even so, however much he qualified and toned down the final version of *Paths of Glory*, it was still perceived by the War Office censors as far too disturbing and controversial. After showing a photograph of *Paths of Glory* to the War Office late in November 1917, A.N. Yockney reported back to C.F.G. Masterman that it could neither be exhibited in public nor reproduced in any publication "on the grounds that representations of the dead have an ill-effect at home. Photographs of this kind are now rigidly suppressed."⁴⁶⁰ As has been discussed elsewhere, GHQ and the War Office eventually allowed Nevinson to exhibit his *A Group of Soldiers*. They were, however, adamant in their objections to *Paths of Glory*. Yockney informed Masterman that MI7 (a) "cannot depart from a principle laid down for military reasons ... [and] Mr. Nevinson should be asked not to exhibit it."⁴⁶¹ Nevinson was to be reminded that, if he disobeyed, he would be prosecuted under a January 1916 amendment to the Defence of the Realm Act, first passed on 8 August 1914. A Conviction under this amendment resulted in either a large fine or two years hard labour in prison, or a combination of both.⁴⁶²

The reaction of Major Lee, the GHQ censor, and of the War Office censors, at MI7 (a), to the painting may have been so hostile because, as Samuel Hynes has put it *Paths of Glory ... is the first war painting by an English painter ... that is a realistic picture of dead men: not war, but what dead men really look like.*⁴⁶³ Lee and the War Office in London were also probably concerned by how the image might be read in relation to the less than encouraging military situation for the British on the Western Front. The authorities first saw *Paths of Glory* barely a fortnight after the Third Battle of Ypres had finally ground to a blood-drenched halt early in November 1917. The battle had begun, encouragingly enough on 31 July 1917. However, the summer weather unexpectedly broke and six days of torrential rain, between 1 and 6 August 1917, transformed the battlefield into a pulverized quagmire, dotted with waterlogged shell holes in which the wounded drowned in their thousands.⁴⁶⁴ Nevinson later claimed that, much to the exasperation of his GHQ 'minders', he had, early in August 1917, contrived to be in the vicinity of Ypres and had witnessed the opening moves of the battle.⁴⁶⁵ By the time the campaign was officially halted, around November 10 1917, British and Dominion casualties had risen to at least 250,000 with possibly as many as 70,000 of this number left dead or missing in the muddy morass of the battlefield.⁴⁶⁶ It was obvious to the authorities that, apart from a major military disappointment, they had a public relations disaster on their hands. Initially, expectations of a breakthrough had been high, but, as in the past, the campaign ended with the British and their Dominion allies having again suffered huge casualties for little tangible or strategic territorial gain. It is not surprising that, amidst his row with the War Office over *Paths of Glory*, Nevinson provocatively considered re-titling the painting *Shall the Sacrifices Be In Vain?*⁴⁶⁷ This proposed change in title would have made it blatantly obvious that the image constituted an artistic protest at the futile and seemingly endless slaughter taking place in Flanders.

In the end Nevinson did not change the title, as it is likely he had selected it with the intention of sardonically subverting the very British tendency to sanitize the sights of war by emphasizing its pastorally Arcadian aspects. This tradition, reinforced by the pre-war vogue for Georgian nature poetry, stressed that however ghastly the conditions were for the man in the trenches, he could always console himself with soothing visions of bucolic English rusticity. The mortality of man was reassuringly conceived as part of a timeless natural cycle, which would ultimately ensure that verdant greenery returned to rejuvenate the scarred landscape of the trenches.⁴⁶⁸ Such pastoralism acted as literary device to underplay the death and squalor of the war and found quintessential expression in one of the war's most popular poems, John McCrae's *In Flanders Fields*, first published in the 6 December 1915 issue of *Punch*.⁴⁶⁹ Nevinson was no doubt aware of the popularity of this literary tradition and that the previous year had been the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Thomas Gray. A line from his 1751 *Elegy*

Written In a Country Churchyard supplied Nevinson with his title "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave Awaits alike the inevitable law: The paths of glory lead but to the grave."⁴⁷⁰ Nevinson's ironic juxtaposition of title and subject matter implies that all the emphasis on the beauty and fecundity of nature will not console the loved ones of the dead men he depicts. By the autumn of 1917 glory, as a laudable value, had been debased and thoroughly discredited by the sheer scale and magnitude of the conveyor belt slaughter on the Western Front.

Nevinson presumably assumed his more educated spectators would swiftly detect the biting irony underpinning his choice of title, further compounded by the fact that these two unfortunate 'Tommyes' have yet to find a proper grave. Brought down before the enemy wire, they sprawl as stark evidence that human flesh alone cannot prevail against mass-produced and barbed coils of steel. In all probability these bodies will remain where they are for days for it would have been too hazardous for any of their surviving comrades to attempt their retrieval. Exposed, out in 'No-Man's-Land', their bodies will be further disfigured and mutilated by bullets and shell splinters from both sides. Far from having found a fixed resting place, a grave of their own, it is likely these men will be denied the dignity of a proper burial with military honours and a religious service for a long time to come. It is also possible that Nevinson chose the line from Gray's poem as a visual rebuke to the sort of the fatuously distasteful descriptions of British dead on the battlefield penned by some of his father's more jingoistic journalist colleagues. William Beach Thomas, for example, was all too typical in the account he supplied of the British dead he had seen on the Somme in November 1916 "Even as he lies on the field he looks more quietly faithful, more simply steadfast than others, as if he had taken care, while he died, that there should be no bearing, no heroics in his posture."⁴⁷¹

Nevinson protested vociferously at the decision to prevent the exhibition and reproduction of *Paths of Glory* writing to Masterman:

it is natural that photographs of dead men should not be published, as it would possibly give offence to their relatives ... though, with customary lack of logic, Canadians are allowed to exhibit, to a London public, photographs of actual corpses for propaganda. My picture happened to be a work of Art ... but unlike the other work [*A Group of Soldiers*] not actual portraits ... civilians, at any rate, know that war causes casualties, even if soldiers do not. Perhaps they [civilians] obtained this information from the official Somme film, which showed dead and dying men. Or was it the picture *Mother! Mother!* at the Academy?⁴⁷²

Regarding Nevinson's claim that the British public had already been exposed to images of dead and dying 'Tommyes', the actual evidence is rather more intriguingly

ambiguous. The 'Somme film', to which Nevinson refers, went on general release in August 1916. Out of its total running time of seventy seven minutes, about ten minutes featured images of some British wounded and then moved to concentrate on the British treatment of German wounded. This segment culminated with an image of German dead neatly laid out in rows prior to being given a proper military burial by the British.⁴⁷³ Among the one hundred and fifty-eight official photographs exhibited by the Canadian War Memorial Fund, in London during December 1916, a handful purported to show the bodies of German soldiers lying in a recently captured front-line trench. However, it transpired that things were not as they seemed and a mini-scandal broke that made the public understandably sceptical about all future images purporting to depict the dead of either side. In a contemporary article, on 'Art and the Camera', John Salis revealed how the camera had been used by the Canadians to distort and falsify for the purposes of propaganda "There is a picture of a trench with Germans lying in the abandon of death; we are moved ... we wonder who is waiting at home ... but three days later we were told that these men had merely been posed in some artificial dugout in Hampstead Heath!"⁴⁷⁴

Prior to Nevinson beginning work on *Paths of Glory*, photographs featuring German dead, taken by one of the official British photographers, were occasionally reproduced in some of the mass-circulation newspapers. An issue of the *Daily Mirror*, for example, in August 1917, prominently displayed on its front cover a photograph of two German prisoners standing over the dead body of a comrade.⁴⁷⁵ Alfred Priest's *Mother! Mother!*, to which Nevinson referred in his letter to Masterman, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in May 1917 [Plate 71]. The work was hailed by a number of popular newspapers as by far "the most harrowing picture" about the war that had appeared in an Academy exhibition. Admittedly, *Mother! Mother!* had not faced much competition for this accolade.⁴⁷⁶ In the painting the emphasis is only partly on the 'Tommies', packed into the foreground, whom appear to have died remarkably peaceful deaths with hardly any evidence of fatal wounds. The main focus for attention is the youthful, rather effeminate, subaltern who gestures ineffectually in horror at the sight of the soldiers in front of him who, presumably, he has helped to get killed through his own incompetence. It is possible that awareness of works such as *Mother! Mother!*, while working on *Paths of Glory*, would have made Nevinson all the more inclined to avoid depicting his dead 'Tommies' as fashion plates playing to the gallery with their handsome, well-scrubbed faces, conspicuously turned upwards to extract a sympathetic response from the credulous civilian spectator.

Despite repeated reminders from the Department of Information, that the War Office and GHQ in France would not tolerate the public display of *Paths of Glory*, Nevinson went ahead and exhibited the canvas anyway in March 1918.⁴⁷⁷ [Plate 69]

The question remains as to why he embarked on this flagrant act of disobedience when he must have realized that it would jeopardize his status as an official war artist, which protected him from being conscripted. Presumably, he was convinced that the image contained some profound truth about the war that was scandalously being kept from the public by those in authority. His resolution to exhibit the contentious work may have been stiffened by the recollection that, while he had been in France, his GHQ 'conducting officer' had refused him "all permission not only to represent but even to approach any casualty or dressing station."⁴⁷⁸ He had been sent to France with repeated assurances, from his employers, that he was free to select his subject matter only to encounter interference and meddling from the military hierarchy at every step. A year after *Paths of Glory* was exhibited, Nevinson told an American journalist "I hung my picture with a slip of paper pasted over the heap of corpses and", said Mr. Nevinson with a delighted smile, "it was a GREAT sensation!"⁴⁷⁹ Nevinson later recalled the episode somewhat differently in his autobiography "Under the belief that the censors would pass it [*Paths of Glory*] at the last moment I had it hung and when permission was finally refused I pasted brown paper over it, rather than leave a hole on the wall, and wrote 'Censored' across it."⁴⁸⁰ He had not just used a forbidden word but had provocatively written it in blue chalk. This was universally recognized as the censor's favourite colour and medium for crossing out and covering up.⁴⁸¹

The War Office, GHQ and the Department of Information were all understandably infuriated by Nevinson's defiant behaviour. He further compounded his misdemeanour by encouraging the false impression that the placing of the strip of brown paper across *Paths of Glory* had not been the work of the artist, but was the consequence of a typically crass intervention by the authorities. Not one newspaper covering the story reported the truth that Nevinson himself had determined the manner in which *Paths of Glory* was displayed to the public. Indeed, when he had an opportunity to set the record straight, in a letter to *The Nation*, which had taken a lead in lambasting the War Office for its clumsy censorship, Nevinson took care to evade it. He stated, baldly, that the censorship of his 'war picture' had been "carried out at GHQ in France ... under a new regulation [that] no representation of the dead, whether British or German, is permitted." He explained he had exhibited the "frame and brown paper only because the original painting underneath had been purchased by the Committee of the Imperial War Museum."⁴⁸² In other words, it was a shame not to exhibit a canvas already been paid for from the public purse. Disingenuous protestations, that he had never intended *Paths of Glory* to create such a furore, did not prevent Nevinson from being hauled over the coals by MI7 (a).⁴⁸³ Nevinson later recalled of this fraught meeting "I was summoned to the War Office and severely reprimanded for using the word 'Censored' which appeared to be a word forbidden by the Defence of the Realm Act."⁴⁸⁴

On the basis of *Paths of Glory*, and the other works he exhibited in March 1918, Nevinson was hailed for having the courage to bring to the public "the truth from the trenches."⁴⁸⁵ While Robert Ross thought he could detect signs of exhaustion and failing inspiration in some of Nevinson's official war art, he conceded that "his work, which appears fantastic to older people, is declared by soldiers ... who know nothing of art (and are therefore the best judges) to represent the spirit of the war better than anyone else."⁴⁸⁶

One soldier poet with whom Ross was friendly was Robert Nichols who, while he held Nevinson's work in high regard, admired Eric Kennington's portraits even more. Nichols, and his friend Robert Graves, were particularly impressed by the sensitivity Kennington displayed in his depiction of the wounded man from the other ranks.⁴⁸⁷ What was it, therefore, about Kennington's depiction of the wounded, as an official war artist, that so captivated two of the most celebrated younger war poets of the day? Far more than Nevinson, Kennington was concerned with the lonely struggle of an individual patient with their wounds or their illness. He was fascinated by the minutiae of symptoms, the equipment used to treat the men, the medical paraphernalia around their beds [Plate 72] and the exact particulars of their condition such as the precise colour of a man's skin who had been exposed to mustard gas [Plate 74]. Close inspection of his drawings of the wounded reveal that the majority are covered with minute notes in pencil describing the exact flesh tones of the complexion of a man suffering from gas gangrene, as opposed to pneumonia, influenza, or trench fever, as well as the colour of his irises, and even of his fingernails.

Portraits of wounded men account for about 14%, or 23, of the total of 165 works on paper Kennington submitted to the Ministry of Information in March 1918 at the end of his seven and a half month long tour as an official war artist. A large proportion of the images of the wounded feature men suffering from the deeply disturbing effects of Mustard Gas [Plate 74]. Kennington probably wanted to draw attention to such men because the gas was a relatively new scourge introduced by the Germans early in July 1917 or, approximately, some six weeks before his arrived in France as an official artist. The gas was designed to incapacitate rather than to kill, cruelly inflaming exposed areas of skin, such as the face and arms, and inducing major swelling of the eyelids that effectively caused blindness for three to five days. In some extreme cases, a man's eyesight could be permanently damaged.⁴⁸⁸ Kennington produced the majority of his pastels, featuring wounded soldiers and especially those suffering from the effect of gas, between January and March 1918 while he was working in the vicinity of the Main Dressing Station of the Infantry Division to which he was attached, the 24th, about three miles behind the front-line. He also spent long periods at Number 55 Casualty Clearing Station [C.C.S.] at Tincourt, which served the wounded from the Army Corps to which

the 24th Division belonged. As chance would have it, Tincourt was not a particularly safe spot in which to work; Number 55 C.C.S. was "the farthest forward Casualty Clearing Station ... [in the BEF] ... in a dangerously advanced position only ten miles behind the front-line."⁴⁸⁹

Kennington had direct experience of being a patient at Number 55 C.C.S. as he spent some three weeks there suffering, "rather badly", from what was known as 'trench fever'.⁴⁹⁰ Any soldier who spent a long period of time on the Western Front, officer and men from the ranks alike, usually succumbed to this malady. Kennington, even though he was not a combatant, spent much of his seven months as an official war artist in France living the life of a front-line soldier, poorly clothed and undemourished, in unhygienic conditions. Even war artists and war correspondents that lived rather more luxuriously, such as William Orpen and Philip Gibbs, also suffered from bouts of trench fever. The malady was caused by the scratching of inflamed lice bites that had become infected by the parasites own excreta and the sufferer experienced a variety of debilitating fever and arthritic-like symptoms including aching joints, hot flushes, high temperatures, diarrhoea, and a feeling of weakness and lassitude. Even four months after his spell in Number 55 C.C.S., for trench fever, Kennington still found himself suffering from its symptoms. On the very day of the Private View of his exhibition as an official war artist he wrote to his friend William Rothenstein "I am laid out with a recurrence of trench fever for four days and have been unable to eat or blink an eyelid without a rise in temperature and my! the aches and pains."⁴⁹¹

The majority of the wounded 'Tommy's' Kennington chose to draw are characterised by their distinctly blank and neutral expressions. One could argue that stillness, inexpressiveness, immobility of the facial features and impassivity can, in themselves, be highly revealing and eloquent. None of Kennington's subjects are depicted behaving in the ways Philip Gibbs observed while he was recovering in a C.C.S, from trench fever, in 1916, such as gesticulating wildly, screaming, thrashing about in their beds or making a nuisance of themselves by wrestling with orderlies or nurses as they are about to be moved to an operating theatre for the amputation of a limb.⁴⁹² By not displaying emotion, in reaction to physical pain, the subject indicates that he was capable of the self-control, reticence and self-discipline that were widely interpreted as essential components of the type of ideal masculine behaviour deemed desirable by society at large. The ability to maintain composure before a spectator, despite pronounced personal discomfort, was taken to be indicative of a man's capacity to conduct himself as a 'real' man would in adversity. Such conspicuous role-playing among soldiers was universally accepted as essential for the future success of the race and for the functioning of a healthy society.

The overwhelming impression left by Kennington's images of the wounded was that they endured their wounds, pain and discomfort according to approved normative standards of masculine behaviour. They suffered their wounds or illness stoically, passively, good-naturedly and, above all, with the minimum of fuss. When he saw these images, in 1918, Campbell Dodgson perceived them as portraying Englishmen reacting to their unhappy lot with characteristically stolid restraint and steely self-control. For an official publication Dodgson laid particular emphasis on the "resolute, weather-beaten faces" of Kennington's soldiers who had been "hardened by endurance ... or pathetically altered by suffering as they lie in hospital, gassed or blinded, unconscious or bearing acute pain with stoicism ... Many of [these] drawings are unspeakably sad, how could they be otherwise, being manly and serious portraits of men who act or suffer in this most terrible of wars?"⁴⁹³ [Plate 75]

Among the 105 works Kennington exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in June and July 1918, only 19, including the oil *Gassed and Wounded* [Plate 73] he specially painted for the exhibition, depict wounded men he encountered at either Tincourt, or at the 24th Division's Main Dressing Station. Although they formed a small proportion of the work exhibited, the critics chose to single out these images for discussion and praise. P.G. Konody, Nevinson's champion, thought Kennington's

pictures of the suffering soldier, the wounded, the gassed, the fever-stricken, are among the most thrilling things of the show. They range from the tragedy of his magnificent oil painting, of men suffering from the effects of mustard gas - a picture which suggests to a certain degree the influence of Mr. Nevinson [Konody presumably had in mind Nevinson's *The Doctor*, which also features the head of a man screaming with pain in the centre foreground] to the superb drawing of *The C.C.S Ward* [Plate 76]⁴⁹⁴

Some critics, however, thought Kennington took his love for the detail, and for the texture of inanimate objects, to excessive lengths and at the expense of the wounded men who ought to be the centre of attention:

When he [Kennington] is in a merely curious mood he has a mad love of the material. He smacks his lips over the seam of a coat in the folds of a sleeve... in *C.C.S Ward* ... where there is no pain or horror to move him from his artistic detachment he has plunged into such an orgy of materials, that at a few paces distant, the picture has no significance whatsoever, but falls into an unmeaning jumble of lines and smudged tones ... However, in *Trench Fever* [Plate 75] ... he seems to have stepped out of his intensely materialistic attitude, here he has centralized the fact of illness, neglecting ... to try and let us know exactly what quality blanket covered the sufferer or how long he had worn his khaki overcoat before he was wounded. In these sketches he seems to have veritably caught the slow painful respiration, the drawn hot flesh.⁴⁹⁵

The only occasion, in Kennington's official war of 1917-1918, when the mask of impassiveness worn by his wounded 'Tommies' slips occurs in *Gassed and Wounded*

[Plate 73]. This may be the case because it was painted during April and May 1918, or about six weeks after his recall to London, rather than being executed on the spot as was the case with all his pastels and charcoal drawings featuring wounded soldiers. The choice of subject matter was no doubt rooted in what he had seen in France. It could also have been influenced by his burgeoning friendship with Robert Graves, which occurred during the period Kennington was working on *Gassed and Wounded*. At some point in May 1918 Kennington went to stay with Graves, who was stationed with a Cadet Training battalion in North Wales. It is likely that, while he was there, Kennington learnt of Graves's own profound terror at the prospect of being caught in a gas attack. Indeed, only a couple of months after Kennington's visit, one finds Graves writing to a mutual friend, Siegfried Sassoon, that he is still unable to escape from his "waking terror of poison gas, which is my most awful nightmare whenever I feel ill and think about the [front] line." He added that Kennington agreed with him that gas was the most "devilish, infernal weapon" yet produced by man and should be outlawed after the war.⁴⁹⁶ The few critics who chose to comment on it correctly identified *Gassed and Wounded* as the image in which Kennington came closest to revealing his own uninhibited, emotional response to what he had seen inside Number 55 C.C.S. This reaction combined horror at the symptoms of Mustard Gas, compassion for the plight of the men suffering from those symptoms, and anger that human beings should be subject to such indignities and agony. He seems to have distilled all the pain he had noted, but only indirectly acknowledged in the majority of his pastels drawn in situ, into the facial expression of the Mustard Gas sufferer being carried into a tent on a stretcher who dominates the centre foreground.⁴⁹⁷

Gassed and Wounded indicates that, while Kennington exercised a high degree of self-censorship in his pastels of the wounded, he could on occasion express a deeply felt revulsion at the carnage he had witnessed at the Front. However, one should not immediately interpret the image, as Richard Cork has, as evidence that Kennington had become disillusioned with why the war was being fought. Cork has offered an eloquent interpretation of the image that is, perhaps, more successful as an imaginative projection than an accurate assessment of Kennington's actual attitude towards the war at the time. Cork has described the image as "mournful" and sunk in "penumbral gloom" with the foreground stretcher-bearers embodying "the most melancholy emotions." Indeed, the foremost bearer is imagined as "bowed down with a sense of resignation bordering on hopelessness. He has seen too many terminal cases, too much agony." A sense of "dejection ... pervades Kennington's ... stygian picture."⁴⁹⁸ Yet, the image could just as equally be read as evidence of the ability of RAMC stretcher-bearers to keep on performing their duties despite the daily grind of having to lift, carry, and lower numerous wounded men. In *Gassed and Wounded*, however tired the bearers may feel, they still appear to be taking care to carry the gassed men as gently as possible so

that their tortured skin does not rub against the canvas sides of the stretcher or against the wooden handles. The pose of one bearer suggests that, after helping to lower a patient on to the floor, he is taking the time to make sure that the man is secure on the stretcher and is saying a few encouraging words to him as he gasps for air. It is true that both the wounded and the RAMC bearers appear as anonymous as each other and the gassed men will probably have to endure the pain of their blistered skin for some hours before they can expect to receive any attention from a doctor. However, the vivid colouration of their skin indicates that the wounded men are suffering from Mustard Gas. Their plight is not as hopeless and as life threatening as Cork implies.

Kennington's work was appreciated by men with combat experience and was described by art critics as 'popular'. However, even towards the end of the war, more traditional representations of the wounded 'Tommy' were still able to stimulate extensive press coverage and public interest. The reaction to Fortunio Matania's *Battered but Victorious*, first reproduced in September 1918 in the popular illustrated magazine *The Sphere*, is a case in point. [Plate 77]. Matania had come to prominence as a popular illustrator of battlefield scenes during the Second Boer War, fought between October 1899 and May 1902. Despite his non-English background, he quickly became one of the highest paid and most highly regarded newspaper artists of his day. Even though, in the decade after the Boer War, newspapers made greater use of photographs Matania's work remained in demand throughout the First World War. The popularity of Matania's *Battered but Victorious* suggests that, even in 1918, it was still possible to depict wounded British soldiers in an elevated and romanticized light. Matania was able to show British soldiers in emotional distress and assuming undignified and distinctly unheroic poses, such as the wounded private sprawled in a wheelbarrow in the left background, because he makes it clear that they have recently been successful in battle.

Two months after the publication of *Battered But Victorious* the war came to an end. In France an artillery officer wryly noted having received a copy of Matania's lithograph from his parents who thought he might like to hang it in his dugout. A few days later he wrote to a friend, convalescing in Britain, to express his intense relief that there would be "no more slaughter, no more maiming, no more mud and blood and no more ... disembowelling of horses and mules ... No more shovelling up bits of men's bodies and dumping them into sandbags."⁴⁹⁹ He announced his intention to put all thought of such things behind him and to look to the future. Many ex-combatants did not find this at all easy. Indeed, some did not wish to forget at all. However, horrible or appalling their memories, many veterans experienced a compulsion to describe them in prose, poetry or in art. Such men were partly motivated by the desire to make the public, delighted the war had been won and now wishing heartily for life to return to

normal, realise just how ghastly had been the conditions in which men lived, fought and died by the hundreds of thousands on the Western Front. This desire can be interpreted as the product of an inner need to work out what had happened to the individual and to process memories of sights they would have found incredible and unwatchable before the war.⁵⁰⁰

Given this context, one can understand why Charles Sargeant Jagger, on his appointment as an official war artist in September 1918, immediately started work on the bas-relief that has come to be known as *'No-Man's-Land'* [Plate 79]. In December 1918 he wrote to A.N. Yockney that he had recently finished a sketch "the subject is a 'listening post' in 'No-Man's-Land' and shows the sentry on his post, which, for obvious reasons, is often chosen amongst a group of dead. I should like the opportunity to work it out on an enlarged scale some time, if you could find any use for it."⁵⁰¹ So, from his first mention of his work, Jagger put as much emphasis on the image depicting a listening post as a portion of *'No-Man's-Land'*. The initial 1918 sketch model [Plate 78], and the 1919 version with an added inscription [Plate 79], must rank as one of the most chilling and forthright evocations of slaughter on a First World War battlefield ever created. The bodies of dead British soldiers are everywhere, buried alive, enmeshed in barbed wire, lying full-length, or slumped awkwardly in the last pose of death. That Jagger did not exaggerate is indicated by the recollections of the appearance of *'No-Man's-Land'* supplied by infantrymen during and after the war. For example, Patrick MacGill, writing of the appearance of the dead during the battle of Loos in September 1915, noted how "Many were spread out at full-length, their legs close together, their arms extended, crucifixes fashioned from decaying flesh wrapped in khaki, some head-down in shell-holes, others sitting upright as they were caught by a fatal bullet when dressing their wounds."⁵⁰²

Much of the illusion-stripping power of *'No-Man's-Land'* is derived from acute observation built upon personal experience. While serving as an infantry officer at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, between October and November 1915 and in the vicinity of Ypres, between October 1917 and April 1918, Jagger had participated in numerous listening patrols. These patrols were often combined with attempts, under the cover of darkness, to repair and improve barbed wire defences in front of a position. Interviewed after the war, a British veteran of Gallipoli recalled being assigned to a "listening post out in 'No-Man's-Land.'" He found this to be among those front-line duties that were most trying on the nerves. On the other hand, he took pride in the fact that, to be selected for that task, his platoon officer must have been regarded as sufficiently steady for it was widely regarded as a job for men who were "trusted not to sleep and not to get nervous." A man usually spent one hour on and one hour off in the post "armed only with a knife and a piece of string which you pulled if there was any sign of movement."⁵⁰³

During his wartime service Jagger personally witnessed a number of men being killed in close proximity to him. Not long after his arrival at Suvla Bay, in October 1915, a private in his platoon was shot through the head by a Turkish sniper. This man was quickly followed by one of his nco's "I had no sooner bandaged the first ... than my Platoon Sergeant, to whom I was talking, got one through the head. He died in my arms, in two or three minutes."⁵⁰⁴ In April 1918 Jagger was involved in some desperate close quarters fighting during the Battle of Neuve Eglise. By the time he was wounded, late on the afternoon of 13 April 1918, two-thirds of the company he commanded had been killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Jagger succeeded in defending a fortified farmhouse, and adjacent trenches, from repeated attacks by a far larger force of German stormtroops until reinforcements arrived to stabilize the situation. As he was withdrawing from this position, which was still coming under heavy fire, once help had arrived, Jagger was hit in the back by a machine gun bullet. This created another, and larger, wound as it exited beneath his left shoulder, narrowly missing the lung.⁵⁰⁵ In September 1918, Jagger was awarded the Military Cross for the leadership, as well as the physical bravery, he had displayed at Neuve Eglise.

It is evident from Jagger's initial sketch model, of *'No-Man's-Land'*, that he never considered depicting any dead soldiers who had been dismembered or decapitated [Plate 78]. Perhaps, because of his usual working processes, which began with him first determining the anatomy of a figure, then adding muscles, flesh and then clothes, the dead soldiers appear more skeletal, as though they had reached an advanced stage of decomposition [Plate 80]. As a result they appear less like recognizable human beings with whom one can identify and feel compassion for their grisly fate. In this initial sketch model, many of the poses adopted by the dead are more distorted, twisted and awkward than in the 1919 version, as if to suggest that they died writhing in agony or thrashing about, caught in the wire. In the 1918-19 panel, decomposition amongst the dead 'Tommies' has yet to commence and there is more flesh on their bones implying they have only recently been killed [Plate 79]. If this is the case, they would have appeared all the more life-like and, therefore, even more unnerving for the solitary living soldier who has to remain in close proximity to them while occupying his listening post.

Furthermore, from the inception of the relief, Jagger intended to stress the symbolism of the British soldier offering his body as a shield to protect his comrades in arms, his country and loved ones at home. A bronze cast of the original 1918 sketch model has recently come to light bearing the inscription that was thought to have appeared for the first time on the 1919 plaster cast. The inscription was derived from

Beatrix Brice-Miller's poem *To The Vanguard* "Oh little mighty band that stood for England that with your bodies for a living shield guarded her slow awakening." The poem was first published in *The Times*, on 2 November 1916, and proved to be immensely popular with its verses being printed in greetings cards and on postcards and set to music.⁵⁰⁶

There is strong evidence to suggest that Jagger never regretted his choice of an inscription from Brice-Miller's poem for the initial sketch model. The inscription was retained on a second, slightly altered, version from which a plaster cast was taken in the spring of 1919. It was this cast that John Singer Sargent so admired when he saw it in 1919.⁵⁰⁷ Some recent commentators on British First World War art have been too quick to interpret the fact that the inscription was not retained on the bronze cast of the second version, now in the Tate Gallery, as evidence that Jagger had become disillusioned with Brice-Miller's romanticized view of war and with her unrepentantly patriotic rhetoric. Richard Cork, for example, has written that "before casting the bronze version Jagger removed Brice-Miller's trite verses as ... inappropriate in a sculpture remarkable for its refusal to soften the bleak finality of death."⁵⁰⁸ However, it would appear Jagger did not consider the cast in the Tate to be the definitive state of the image, precisely because the inscription had been excluded.⁵⁰⁹ It is true that, between versions one and two, the sole living British soldier emerges as a less active and aggressive figure in the second. In the first version, his prone form quivers with expectancy as he reaches for the rifle at his side to snipe at a target he has glimpsed deeper into 'No-Man's-Land'. The soldier in the 1919 version adopts a more passive stance with his arms folded across his chest and his rifle positioned further away, though it is still close to hand. However, it is rarely noted that this soldier has a mess tin and ration boxes positioned immediately behind him in a recess set into the side of his post. Evidently, he has no qualms about eating in such close proximity to death and putrefaction. Far from this man being as "paralysed as the frieze of corpses", as Richard Cork has described, this 'Tommy' is probably awaiting the opportunity for a surreptitious brew-up and meal. Surely, the implication is that this man has developed the necessary toughness, and even callousness, to take sustenance regardless of the noisome unpleasantness of his surroundings.⁵¹⁰ Given Jagger's character, and the pride he took in his war record, it would be more accurate to interpret both versions of the relief, with or without the inscription, as his heartfelt tribute to the patience of the ordinary British soldier and his capacity to endure as exemplified by the figure of the alert 'Tommy' manning the listening post. Such qualities had already been singled out for special praise by Rudyard Kipling, in his *Three Soldiers* stories, and it can be no coincidence that Kipling was one of Jagger's favourite authors. After his death his second wife recalled that, for as long as she had known him, since before the First

World War, her future husband always had a copy of one of Kipling's books in his pocket.⁵¹¹

One cannot automatically assume that the anguished detail lavished on the dead in *'No-Man's-Land'*, constitutes irrefutable evidence for Jagger having become disenchanted with the war and with the justification for British participation. Jagger was very much the product of a late Victorian upbringing. Though he would have never applied the terminology to himself, Jagger had been brought up to look at the world from a Social Darwinist perspective. He believed, as did his favourite authors Kipling and Jack London, that a Nietzschean style process of struggle and conflict would greatly facilitate the development of a robust and self-sufficient character in a man. As he later stated, in newspaper interviews, he regarded the progress he had made in sculpture as a struggle against tremendous odds and, by extension, war and conflict were natural aspects of existence. In 1927 he described his rise to prominence as a sculptor to a magazine in the following terms:

I was filled with an inflexible determination to get to the top somehow or I might have shared the fate of a number of ... contemporaries of mine, who showed infinitely more promise than I did at this time, yet who have dropped out of the race. I had no exceptional ability. I was no more than one of the crowd and art is one of the hardest careers a boy can choose; but that hateful childhood of mine had accustomed me to taking knock-out blows without remaining down and so I struggled on, refusing to acknowledge myself beaten.⁵¹²

Indeed, after the war Jagger was quite prepared to use the fact that he had been decorated for bravery, and had once sported three wound stripes on his uniform, to impress war memorial committees largely composed of men who were too old to have fought in the war. It appears that these committees looked upon Jagger's designs with more sympathy and admiration precisely because of his war service and record of wounds.⁵¹³ Though, from the perspective of the twenty-first century, one may find Jagger's perception of the Great War, as a terrible but necessary price to be paid for maintaining the British Empire and the pre-eminence of the British Race, a distasteful and unpalatable one, it was a conviction he shared with thousands of other ex-servicemen.⁵¹⁴

In the final chapter I will examine how Jagger, Eric Kennington, and other like-minded sculptors, developed their image of the 'Tommy' in the war memorial figurative sculpture they executed after the end of the Great War. This analysis will draw upon Paul Fussell's influential study of First World War literature in charting how the sculpted body of the 'Tommy', in all its various poses and guises, came to occupy a central place in the 'mythic memory' of the war. I am also keen to explore to what extent, if at all,

statues of the First World War British soldier suggest any contemporary awareness, or acknowledgment, of a 'crisis of masculinity' generated by the carnage, the grotesque conditions in which men had to fight and the mass incidence of psychological breakdown. Finally, I wish to assess the efficacy of certain recent accounts of mourning and masculinity, with regard to First World War memorials, and question a tendency to underplay the role of the sculptor in determining the ideological content and public meaning of war memorial statuary.⁵¹⁵

Chapter Six.

'The Real Thing In The Rough': The Post-War Image of the 'Tommy' c. 1919-1925.

The end of the First World War was greeted in Britain with joyous relief and an understandable pride in the significant contribution made by British forces to the defeat of Imperial Germany on the Western Front in 1918. However, such sentiments were tempered with feelings of anxiety as to certain disturbing aspects of the British male exposed by the war. There had been, for example, the extremely unsettling revelation of men succumbing to 'shell-shock'. This condition manifest itself in symptoms that, before the war, had been universally identified as 'hysterical' and, therefore, feminine. The novelist Patrick MacGill came from a working-class Irish background and had served in the ranks of a London Irish territorial battalion in France between March and October 1915. In his novel *Fear!*, completed in June 1920, MacGill speculated through a fictional character named Ryder whether the war would leave survivors both physically scarred and psychologically damaged. His everyman infantryman, Ryder, thinks to himself in 1918

In the days to come, if we remain alive, will not our thoughts go back to a horrible past, will not our minds recall terrible impressions which newer incidents may dim ... but never obliterate? Shall we not, in quiet beds, have terrible nightmares in which our comrades will again reappear amless, legless, their chests battered, their heads smashed ... holding their entrails in their hands?⁵¹⁶

Meanwhile, a wide variety of social commentators and pundits, across the political spectrum, accepted the assumption that the British male had not proved as formidable and effective in combat as his counterpart from the Dominions of Canada and Australia. Only four years after the Armistice, the eminent Liberal writer C.E. Montague, whose opinion carried extra weight because he had served in the Army for a short period during 1915 as a sergeant, described the British soldiers he had seen in France during the last year of the war in the most negative and unflattering terms "battalions of colourless, stunted, half-toothless lads from hot, humid Lancashire mills; battalions of slow, staring faces, gargoyles out of the tragical-comical-historical-pastoral edifice of modern English life." In stark contrast, battalions from the Dominions were composed of men who were:

startlingly taller, stronger, handsomer, prouder, firmer in nerve ... more boldly interested in life, quicker to take means to an end and to parry and counter any new blow of circumstance, men who had learned already to look at our men with the half-curious, half-pitying look of a higher, happier caste at a lower.⁵¹⁷

At the same time, Philip Gibbs, war correspondent for *The Times* and another widely read pundit, expressed his anxiety that some British males had been trained only

too successfully in the art of killing during the war' He pondered whether such men would ever be able to readjust to the conventions and behavioural norms of peacetime society. Writing in 1920, Gibbs described how millions of men in the ranks of the British Army had been brutalized and coarsened, as they were "ordered about like galley slaves, herded about like cattle ... bullied about not like human beings but like dumb beasts."⁵¹⁸ Gibbs was convinced that army training had awakened within many ordinary Englishmen:

the primitive barbarism which has been chained up by law ... Our men, living in holes in the earth like ape-men, were taught the ancient codes of the jungle law ... to kill quickly ... to bludgeon their enemy to death, or spit him on a bit of steel, to get at his throat if need be with nails and teeth ... Death, their own or other peoples, does not mean very much to some who, in the trenches, sat within a few yards of stinking corpses, knowing that the next shell might make such of them.⁵¹⁹

This chapter will attempt to integrate some of the recent work within the realm of gender theory, concerning what is presently termed the 'crisis of masculinity', with an analysis of some of the imagery of the ordinary British soldier produced soon after the end of the First World War.⁵²⁰ Works under consideration will include C.R.W. Nevinson's *The Harvest of Battle* (1919) [Plate 81] and Eric Kennington's *The Conquerors* (1920). [Plate 84] Examples of figurative sculpture, produced by Charles Sargeant Jagger MC [Plates 88, 90, 91, 98-99], Philip Lindsay Clark DSO, [Plate 92] and Eric Kennington [Plates 94-95] will also be discussed in some detail. It would appear that because Jagger, Lindsay Clark and Kennington had all served in the front-line as infantrymen gave them a special advantage or leverage in their relations with war memorial committees. The committees, with whom these three artists were in contact, were usually comprised of men who had been too old to fight. Jagger and Lindsay Clark, indeed, probably enjoyed an even greater advantage because they had been awarded medals for leadership and conspicuous courage under fire. In addition, I would contend that Jagger's, Lindsay Clark's and Kennington's personal searing experiences of combat imparted a special intensity to their war memorial sculpture that sets it apart from memorial work produced by a sculptor who had not fought in the war such as John Millard.

Indeed, the works to be discussed tend to suggest that traditional or conventional masculinity possessed an extraordinary ability to adapt, renew and reconstitute itself after the First World War. Post-war masculine stereotypes, to be found on many a war memorial, can be perceived as still shaped by and constructed from role-models of masculine appearance, conduct, deportment and behaviour created during the 1880's and 1890's by authors such as Kipling, A.E.W. Mason and Jack London. For example, both Jagger's and Kennington's assumptions, concerning the nature of ideal masculinity drew upon their shared admiration for the writings of Kipling such as *Soldiers Three* (1888) and *Barrack Room Ballads* (1892).⁵²¹ These extremely popular

and very widely read short stories and poems imagine the lives of men in the ranks of the professional, long service, Late Victorian British Army. It is arguable that the strident manner in which the refashioned, rather than completely reinvented, image of the 'Tommy' was projected from the memorials in question suggests masculinity could no longer be taken for granted. Kennington and Jagger, in particular, were preoccupied with the post-war conundrum as to what constituted the best model of masculinity to be promoted to society at large through the vehicle of public sculpture. Kennington and Jagger, one will argue, sought to create images of men for the public sphere that embodied an ideal of masculinity they hoped would remain viable and persuasive in a troubled and unsure post-war era.

C.R.W. Nevinson's *The Harvest of Battle* [Plate 81], provides an excellent example of an immediate post-war image that is considerably more complex and ambiguous, in terms of where it locates the figure of the 'Tommy' within the discourse of First World War 'disillusionment', than initial examination would suggest. On the one hand it could, and has been, interpreted as an overtly anti-war image, anticipating the message of Eric Maria Remarque's bestseller of 1929, *All Quiet on the Western Front*. This very successful novel repeatedly emphasised that there had been no real hatred between German and British soldiers in the trenches. They had regarded each other as worthy opponents equally exploited and misunderstood by their populations at home.⁵²² However, further study of the artist's first detailed description of the image, suggests it is equally valid to interpret the painting as an affirmation that the ordinary British soldier, by 1917, was more than a match for his German opponents. Indeed, it can be read as implying that the 'Tommy' could succeed in an attack despite an extremely tenacious defence amidst the most horrifying battlefield conditions.

In April 1918 Nevinson was approached by the British War Memorials Committee [BWMC] to paint a large canvas for future display within the planned Imperial War Museum. Initially, Nevinson wanted to paint a "field casualty station" because it was "the side that interests men and moves me."⁵²³ He was, however, most upset to be told that this subject had already been reserved for Henry Tonks, an older and more established artist who had been Nevinson's tutor at the Slade School of Art. Tonks also happened to be a member of the BWMC. Nevinson then indicated to Muirhead Bone, another artist advisor to the BWMC, that he wanted to paint a work on the theme of 'The Harvest of Battle'.⁵²⁴ Nevinson felt frustrated that he had not been allowed back to France as an official artist. Eventually, in September 1918, he was allowed to visit the front-line, but only for a week. Given the problems he had caused the official censors in March 1918, over the unauthorised display of *Paths of Glory* [Plate 68] mentioned in Chapter Five, it is not surprising that the War Office did not rush to send Nevinson back to France.⁵²⁵

Nevinson did not start work on *The Harvest of Battle* until towards the end of December 1918, after recovering from a bout of influenza. By early March 1919 the painting was nearing completion⁵²⁶ and Nevinson was eager to have photographs of it reproduced in the newspapers. He also hoped to exhibit the canvas in that year's Royal Academy exhibition, scheduled to take place in May.⁵²⁷ However the authorities would not allow him to either exhibit *The Harvest of Battle* at the Royal Academy, or have a photograph of it appear in a newspaper. In retaliation, towards the end of March 1919, he supplied the *Daily Express* with a description of the painting. Furthermore, he hinted to the newspaper that the exhibition of *The Harvest of Battle* had been blocked because the image it offered of the war was too grim and pessimistic. Despite protests from those who had commissioned the work, Nevinson went ahead and exhibited *The Harvest of Battle* to a specially invited audience for a fortnight in April 1919 at his studio at 9 Robert Street NW1.⁵²⁸ According to the *Daily Express*, considerably guided from behind the scenes by Nevinson, the painting represented:

the early morning of a great battle in the flat cratered country around Passchendaele and it shows, not the cheering lines of the attackers, but a procession of wounded men, British and German, coming back across the quagmire, between the innumerable pools formed by the rain in the shell-holes. The grey light, breaking through a sky loaded with layers of heavy clouds, gives an almost ghostly effect to the groups of figures which are so well done that you can feel the effort it takes to struggle along in the mud. They [the soldiers] look like shadows 'plugging' their way through purgatory.

Thus, Nevinson, via the newspaper, implies that all the soldiers are doomed to a terrible fate. The *Daily Express* continued that *The Harvest of Battle* suggested:

a combination of *The Deluge*, *The Last Day*, *Dante's Inferno* and *The Sea Giving Up Its Dead*. There are no real horrors in it, apart from one or two dead men lying around, but the desolation of mud and water, the distant tongues of flame, the stumbling, plodding figures and the general suggestion of misery and squalor make it one of the most fascinating and dreadful pictures of the battlefield ever imagined.⁵²⁹

In May 1919, while the contentious canvas was still on show in his London studio, Nevinson gave an interview to a New York newspaper in which he admitted to hoping that *The Harvest of Battle* would create a stir. With barely concealed glee he told the reporter "The censor will not let my picture *The Harvest of Battle* be shown ... It is a gruesome work, showing dead and wounded ... much the most realistic and blood-curdling picture that has been painted of the war" he [Nevinson] added happily.⁵³⁰ Returning to London, in June 1919, Nevinson sent the Imperial War Museum a description of the painting which strongly suggests he conceived it to demonstrate how the British Army in 1917 conducted a major offensive by an orderly step-by-step process. Nevinson identified *The Harvest of Battle* as:

A typical scene after an offensive at dawn. Walking wounded, prisoners and stretcher-cases are making their way to the rear through the waterlogged country of Flanders. By now, the infantry have advanced behind the creeping barrage on the right, only leaving the dead, mud and wire; their former positions are now occupied by the [British] artillery. The enemy is sending up S.O.S. signals and, once more, these shattered men [in the middle ground] will be subjected to counter-battery fire. In spite of the early hour, our aeroplanes are already up, spotting hostile positions.⁵³¹

In this description Nevinson has remained broadly faithful to the actual facts of the early stages of the Third Battle of Ypres, better known today as 'Passchendaele'. Nevinson had been in the vicinity of Ypres at the beginning of August 1917. He may not have got close enough to the battlefield to see the sort of scene he depicts in *Harvest of Battle*. However, he certainly was in a position to question men wounded in the first assault waves who had moved back to Advanced Dressing Stations, behind the British lines in the Ypres sector, in search of medical attention.⁵³²

The Third Battle of Ypres began at 3.50am on 31 July 1917 as the fire from a fortnight-long preparatory barrage, of over 1,100 guns, intensified across an eighteen-mile long front. Conditions for the attackers swiftly deteriorated as six days of continuous heavy rain, which began on 1 August, and the shelling reduced the battlefield to a morass of sticky, clinging mud. By the standards of past battles, Third Ypres began encouragingly with the British taking 6,000 prisoners. However, the attacking troops sustained nearly 27,000 casualties. As the rain continued to fall and resistance stiffened, the British attack stalled and the casualty rate increased at horrifying speed. By the end of the campaign, in November, British and Dominion forces had suffered over a quarter of a million casualties for a gain in ground at the deepest point of not quite five miles. Even before the war was over, Third Ypres quickly became a byword for futile slaughter amidst the most grotesque conditions.

I would suggest, however, that any observer with experience of the Western Front looking at *The Harvest of Battle* when it was finally displayed in public in December 1919, as part of the 'Nation's War Pictures' exhibition at Burlington House, would possess the knowledge to interpret the painting as depicting a series of intelligible and sequenced events. Unlike the majority of the works commissioned by the BWMC in 1918, *The Harvest of Battle* credibly presents an episode from a major offensive mounted by the British Army. The canvas implies that British infantry have recently attacked from left to right and captured the German first front-line defences. Supporting British artillery has been laboriously hauled up, from behind the old British front-line, on to recently captured ground and now fires in support of the second and third British assault waves. Nevinson accurately depicts walking wounded from the first wave of British attackers making their way back through 'No-Man's-Land' to advanced dressing stations behind the British line. It was, indeed, common practice for German prisoners to be put to work to act as stretcher-bearers carrying British wounded. On the

right hand side of the composition the battle still rages. In the forefront of the minds of those who have survived, whatever their nationality, is the knowledge that some German guns will not have been silenced by the British preliminary barrage. These guns will soon be in action to destroy the British guns depicted in the centre. These guns have been brought up into what was, formerly, German-held territory. Nevinson has deliberately left the nationality of the most prominent dead soldier in the foreground unclear, such is the advanced state of decay of the corpse. This dead man confronts the viewer with the gaping void of his open mouth. This could be construed as a reference to the figure in Munch's *The Scream*, protesting against Nature's brutal indifference towards humanity. Nevinson's dead soldier effectively draws the attention of the viewer to himself, by pointing to his open mouth, with a hand rendered rigid by rigor mortis. The gesture suggests that the soldier wants to speak. However, he is dead and forever silent. Perhaps, this gesture infers that the painting is attempting to speak on behalf of the soldiers depicted limping across the pulverised landscape of 'No-Man's-Land'?

In the middle ground, two other dead soldiers lie face down in the earth. From their uniforms and equipment, they can be readily identified as British infantrymen from c.1917-18. These two soldiers appear to have been lifted entirely from Nevinson's earlier *Paths of Glory* (1917) [Plate 68], though much reduced in scale, as if supplying a wider contextualisation of the process which killed the two 'Tommys' in the earlier image. The only evidence for the overwhelming might of technology, on the modern battlefield, is the detail of the British guns providing supporting fire for later waves of attacking British troops. Nevinson prefers to concentrate on the plight of the infantry, on the wounded men from both sides and on the terrifying environment in which they have been trying to kill each other. The soldiers appear utterly exhausted, summoning their last vestiges of strength to put one foot in front of the other through the cloying slime. In the centre a helmeted, hirsute German prisoner, derived from the left-hand figure in Nevinson's large lithograph from 1918, *Hans and Fritz* [Plate 82], manages to support a 'Tommy' with a heavily bandaged head. Such a detail suggests that there was little at the Front to differentiate between the sorry lot of ordinary British and German soldiers jointly enduring the most atrocious conditions. This implied parity, between the British and German wounded in *The Harvest of Battle*, could be interpreted as an early and important contribution to the persuasive 'anti-war myth' identified by Samuel Hynes as having emerged by the late 1920's. The 'myth' emphasised that the longer a British soldier spent at the Front, the more he felt a "growing sympathy for the men on the other side, betrayed in the same ways and suffering the same hardships."⁵³³

Despite the negative connotations concerning the war, which can be extrapolated from the *Harvest of Battle*, the painting was very well received when it was exhibited at

Burlington House in December 1919. Alongside John Singer Sargent's *Gassed*, first exhibited at the Royal Academy in May 1919 much to Nevinson's disgust at what he perceived to be flagrant favouritism, *The Harvest of Battle* was the only other exhibit to prove so popular with the general public that people were willing to queue to look at it for just a few minutes.⁵³⁴ Ezra Pound, usually hostile to anything Nevinson exhibited, found he was impressed by *Harvest of Battle*. He described it as "a bad painting", indifferently painted while he suspected that it was something of a compendium of details assembled from a number of official war art images Nevinson had painted in 1917. This was indeed the case. The two dead British infantrymen in the foreground had been taken from *Paths of Glory*. The British troops guarding the German prisoners are similar to the 'Tommy' in *A Group of Soldiers*. The German prisoners are based on the men in *Hans and Fritz* (1918) [Plate 82]. The depiction of the waterlogged, shell-hole pitted Flanders landscape is related to *After a Push* (1917) and the shells exploding along the distant skyline can be related to the background of *A Front-Line near St. Quentin* (1918). Despite such evidence for Nevinson reworking elements from past works of war art, Pound congratulated the artist for having at any rate painted "mud that clings to the boots and corpses that are not mere bright spots of decorativity; the body in the foreground is not only *nass und tot* [sodden and dead] and has been *nass und tot* for some time ... it is incontestably a representation of reality and an excellent record of war."⁵³⁵ Even though Pound normally disliked Nevinson's work, he accepted that *The Harvest of Battle* possessed a ring of authenticity because the artist had been prepared to paint an ugly subject in an ugly, awkward and unflattering way. He was also impressed that the artist had made no attempt to present the 'Tommy' in either a heroic or noble light.

It is evident from reactions to Jagger's large plaster low-relief *The First Battle of Ypres* [Plate 83], also exhibited at Burlington House in December 1919, that many civilian observers were made distinctly uneasy by an image of the 'Tommy', which unambiguously presented him as a killer. Moreover, Jagger's 'Tommy's' appeared to be plunging into their murderous duty with near sadistic relish. Those who commented upon Jagger's relief described it as offering an image of so-called 'Old Contemptibles' from the original British Expeditionary Force of August 1914 which fought at Mons, as equally reassuring and alarming. On the one hand, the artist was praised for conveying the "blood-chilling ... grim horrors of hand-to-hand fighting".⁵³⁶ However, other commentators indicated they had been disturbed by such an unvarnished revelation that "ordinary Englishmen" could become intoxicated by "the essence of violence".⁵³⁷

'The Nations War Pictures' exhibition, featuring *The Harvest of Battle* and *The First Battle of Ypres*, closed in February 1920. Eight months later, in October, Eric Kennington's *The Conquerors* [Plate 84] was exhibited at the Alpine Club Gallery in

London. It had been commissioned by the Canadian War Memorials Fund in November 1919 and Kennington worked on the large canvas during the first half of 1920. Reactions to the work strongly suggest that, by the autumn of 1920, the assumption that Dominion soldiers were far superior in fighting prowess and general deadliness to British 'Tommyes' had become generally pervasive. *The Conquerors* depicts a platoon of soldiers from the 16th Battalion (the Canadian Scottish), Canadian Expeditionary Force marching across a shattered landscape during the summer of 1918.⁵³⁸ It is revealing that, when the canvas was initially exhibited in Ottawa during July and August 1920, it was described in the official catalogue as depicting "stern-visaged ... and war-hardened stormtroops marching from Arras to Amiens to the relief of an over-taxed British Army."⁵³⁹ The Canadian Corps had indeed been moved to the area, in April 1918, to repel a threatened German breakthrough. In the event, it was not called upon to participate and, instead, went on to the offensive in August. The German commander Ludendorff later described August 8 1918, the date of the Canadian offensive, as the 'black day of the German Army.'⁵⁴⁰ Understandably, in its reaction to *The Conquerors*, the Canadian press placed considerable emphasis on the military prowess of the hardy, well muscled, tough, backwoods Canadian soldier. This was accompanied by a barely concealed conviction that the British army in 1918, though stalwart in defence, was not really effective on the offensive and could not have won the war without the Canadian Corps to smash its way through the most formidable German defences.⁵⁴¹ The local Ottawa newspapers described Kennington's Canadian Highlanders as "decidedly ugly." However, they approved of the fact that men, such as the fearsome-looking *Sergeant Smith* [Plate 85], appeared satisfyingly to be as "hard as nails".⁵⁴² Some displeasure was also expressed at Kennington's decision to include "a Negro ... and an Eskimo [Native Canadian or Inuit] ... in the platoon" [Plate 86], even though he was accurately acknowledging the actual ethnic diversity of the battalion.⁵⁴³

When *The Conquerors* was exhibited in London many critics evidently felt that Kennington's soldiers conformed to the accepted stereotype of the rugged, physically impressive Canadian. The *Morning Post* was typical when it described the Canadian soldiers as "magnificent specimens ... each intimately realised face is tense with the will and assurance that bring victory."⁵⁴⁴ John Middleton Murry was puzzled by the belated decision of the artist to retitle the canvas *The Victims*. He wondered how these "splendid, muscular, unforgettable soldiers, supermen of the PBI" [Poor Bloody Infantry] could possibly be called 'victims'?⁵⁴⁵ Arthur Clutton Brock, of *The Times*, commented "the men themselves are intensely studied as individuals and yet made to seem part of a machinery that has mastered the will of Man. War, the picture says, is that which turns men into machines; yet they are men still, with an unconsciously protesting humanity." He found *The Conquerors* an immensely powerful yet, ultimately, a deeply unsettling image. The Canadians Kennington depicted were undoubtedly impressive,

men who had taken on the Germans in 1918 and decisively beaten them. However, he felt he could not empathise with them "You feel that man has created a Frankenstein's monster that will go on trampling and destroying for ever, a monster parodying the sense of duty ... and of fellowship ... and perverting them to the task of blind destruction." Such men, without "any relenting sentiment", were just what was required during a moment of wartime crisis, but what were they to do once peace had been declared?⁵⁴⁶

During an interview with the *Evening News*, Kennington insisted "It will be against my wish if the name [of the painting] is altered [by the Canadian authorities] ... *The Victims* is the only fitting title"⁵⁴⁷ A few days later, he informed the *Daily Herald* that he had altered the original title because "To him it [the war] was horror and despair and ruin and nothing else ... and so he called his Canadian heroes 'victims' "⁵⁴⁸ Apart from these statements, there appears to be little further contemporary evidence for Kennington seeking to justify the change in title, or to further reveal his opinions concerning the war. If one takes his views published in the press at face value, the impression emerges that Kennington thought the war had been futile and should not have been fought. Yet, it is equally obvious that he felt an immense admiration for the ordinary fighting soldier in the British Army during the Great War. Clearly for him, the 'Tommy' embodied a series of 'manly' qualities with which he readily identified.

Discussion as to whether Kennington's Canadian Scottish were 'conquerors' or 'victims' was paralleled in the press by a lively debate as to how the dead should be remembered in the form of war memorials. If a memorial was to be erected which figures should feature most prominently on them? Indeed, had the conditions of the First World War been so atrocious and grotesque as to render symbolic figures redundant? Philip Gibbs was convinced that only two sorts of figures should be allowed to appear on any future war memorials:

One is the figure of the regimental officer, from subaltern to battalion commander, who went over the top at dawn and led their men gallantly, hiding any fear of death they had, and who, in all the filth and misery of this war, held fast to the pride of manhood and in the worst hours did not weaken ... And the other figure is 'Tommy'. Poor old 'Tommy'! You have had a rough time and you hated it, but by the Living God you have been patient and long-suffering and full of grim and silent courage, not swanking about the things you have done, not caring a jot for glory, not getting much, but now you have done your job and it is well done.⁵⁴⁹

Generally speaking British sculptors confronted a number of problems when attempting to produce images of the British soldier in combat for war memorials. They had to take care not to make them appear too wild-eyed, bloodthirsty or intoxicated with the exaltation of battle. Such images carried with them the disturbing implication that

the 'Tommyes' depicted were not entirely in control of themselves and were deriving too much pleasure from the gory business of killing.⁵⁵⁰

War memorials to the dead of the First World War have recently been described by Alex King as a tangible solution for commemorating the sacrifice of the dead and for recording their names. In addition, memorials honour and celebrate the ordeals endured by both the dead and those men who survived.⁵⁵¹ Niall Ferguson has argued that they could also be interpreted as guilt-inducement structures confronting those who had not fought in the war with a discomfoting reminder of what they owed to the men who had gone to the front, experienced hell on earth and often returned scarred in mind and body.⁵⁵² The actual function of figures on a war memorial has been rather overlooked. I would propose that they operate as tangible gender paradigms, projecting models for male conduct under duress with which younger men can identify and empathise. Many French and British veterans feared that the recollection of the sacrifice made by their dead comrades would evaporate all too quickly in their own memories as well as in those of the civilian population. In his *Les Croix de bois*, published in April 1919, Roland Dorgès wrote of his apprehension that "the image of the soldier, who is disappeared for ever, will slowly fade in the consoled hearts of those he loved so much. And all the dead men will die a second time."⁵⁵³ It is possible that war memorial figures created by Jagger, Kennington, and other like-minded sculptors, prevented this 'second death.' Their figures kept alive an idealized and enhanced image of a dead soldier in the memory of his loved ones and friends.

This hypothesis owes much to Jay Winter's argument that war memorials are as concerned with forgetting as with remembering.⁵⁵⁴ According to Winter, strategies of exclusion facilitate a therapeutic process of amnesia in which the majority of the horrifying and gruesome episodes a combat soldier would have encountered on a daily basis in the front-line, are deliberately set aside and left unvisualised. This process of selective forgetting helps to accelerate the mourning process and encourages the bereaved to gradually cease to dwell on the actual dead body of their loved one and focus instead on an idealized and comforting image of the dead man. It is possible that some sculpted images of the soldier stimulated the memory to summon up an ideal recollection of the departed, when they looked their most heroic, physically attractive, imposing or militarily impressive. It is further possible that figurative sculpture played a significant role in helping surviving ex-servicemen, including some of the sculptors, to selectively filter those aspects of the war they wished to remember, from those episodes they would much rather forget. Alex King is justified in stating that, on the whole, when it came to devising war memorials "artists generally avoided images which might suggest violence", or that British soldiers were capable of behaving in a violent, brutal, and pitiless manner.⁵⁵⁵ There is, however, evidence to suggest that a minority of

sculptors with combat experience, such as Kennington, Jagger and Philip Lindsay Clark, regarded war memorial commissions as an opportunity to present an aspect of the British soldier civilians would rather not dwell upon. They sought to present the 'Tommy' as an ordinary man capable of extraordinary acts, including the killing of large numbers of the enemy.

It would be useful to explore the discernible divide between images of the 'Tommy' commissioned for municipal war memorials, by committees dominated by civilians who had not fought at the Front, as opposed to those commissioned to honour either the dead of military units still in existence, or of units which had been disbanded soon after the Armistice. Committees seeking memorial statuary for military organisations appear to have been more willing to employ younger artists with front-line combat experience. A case of a municipal memorial in the provinces, in which veterans had little noticeable influence within the commissioning process, is that of the one commissioned by Macclesfield Town Council. In May 1919, the editor of Macclesfield's main local newspaper wrote an editorial entitled "The Macclesfield Memorial: What Should It Be?" The article deserves to be quoted at some length as it neatly encapsulates what the majority of war memorial committees, whether they represented local government bodies, military organizations or commercial enterprises, demanded from a memorial design. The editor of *The Macclesfield Courier and Herald* asserted that the only answer to the question posed by his editorial would be:

an object to perpetuate the memory of the fallen soldiers. The very word memorial means ... that which preserves remembrance. A war memorial should be single in its purpose ... It is not a question of the needs of the living but justice to the dead. Death stirs up the deepest sentiments in the hearts of the coarse and untutored as well as the refined and the cultured. A war memorial should be beautiful, noble, enduring and scared in conception. It should be embellished by symbols of the Great War. Every square inch of it should be for the sole purpose of keeping alive the dead soldiers names. People will look upon it with admiration and reverence for its artistic and sacred qualities. It will grow in value as though it were carved in gold ... Nothing prosaic or commonplace should be thought of ... for a memorial ... to keep alive the memory of those who gave their lives to save us.⁵⁵⁶

Six months later the Macclesfield war memorial committee, with not one member possessing any direct combat experience, considered a design submitted by a local sculptor, John Millard. As it transpired, Millard had been too old to serve in the armed services during the war.⁵⁵⁷ Millard decided he wanted to include, in his memorial design, the figure of a British soldier who had succumbed to poison gas. This was a new and terrifying weapon deployed for the first time in history at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915). [Plate 87] When Millard submitted his first sketch model, in November 1919, the memorial committee suggested he alter the expression he had given the gassed soldier. Indeed, he was politely requested to produce an alternative design, without the figure of a dead soldier, and to modify his original design by making

the dead 'Tommy' seem less "harrowing and gruesome."⁵⁵⁸ A minority among the memorial subscribers protested at the inclusion of this figure on the grounds that it too blatantly stressed the finality of death. The figure would therefore upset those in the local population with loved ones listed as 'missing in action' and whose fate as yet remained uncertain.⁵⁵⁹ Millard, eventually, produced an alternative memorial design without any figure of a dead soldier at all. However, he argued strongly for the retention of the dead soldier on the grounds that the committee sought a memorial:

full of feeling and with a meaning about it - something that would deliver a message ... something that would remind future generations ... who had not felt the horrors of this terrible war as we have felt them ... of all that their forebears had gone through ... There were many beautiful monuments all over the country ... which people only looked at and passed by but they needed something that would arrest attention and would speak to future generations.⁵⁶⁰

In the end the original design was accepted once the sculptor promised the committee he would make the figure of the dead soldier appear "not so staring and gruesome"⁵⁶¹ The figure as erected would seem to suggest that a death from inhaling poison gas could be a peaceful and serene one, almost comparable to dying in one's sleep.⁵⁶² [Plate 87]

When the memorial was unveiled, on 21 September 1921, the soldier was described in the local newspaper as having died "on the battlefield, gassed, the principal horror of the war. He lies grasping the tube of his gas mask, which he has not had time to fix over his face."⁵⁶³ Not surprisingly, a fortnight earlier, a deputation from the main local veterans organisation to the war memorial committee had predicted that the figure of the gassed soldier was likely to be misinterpreted in this unfortunate way by civilian observers unfamiliar with the harsh realities of trench warfare.⁵⁶⁴ One ex-serviceman, in the deputation, went so far as to suggest that the committee should have engaged a sculptor endowed with a degree of "trench knowledge" and, thus, more likely to create a less "pathetic" image of one of their "fallen comrades." He also grumbled that in the accepted design the figure of Britannia appeared to be "treading" on the prone body of the dead 'Tommy'.⁵⁶⁵ The Chairman of the memorial committee, Alderman J.G. Frost, whose personal contribution had covered 25% of the cost of the entire memorial,⁵⁶⁶ regretted that the figures had already been cast and the sculptor paid. He called upon the ex-servicemen to observe a "spirit of unity" and forego further public criticism of the figure of the "gassed man". Frost, tellingly, added that the veterans must remember that donations for the memorial had come from all sections of the town's population including: "the wife, mother, sister and sweetheart ... who suffered in silent agony, alone and without complaint."⁵⁶⁷ The deputation was partially mollified and extracted a promise from the committee that a blind ex-soldier and a crippled ex-sailor from the town be permitted to lay the first wreaths after Frost had

unveiled the memorial. The veterans were insistent this must be done before Frost's wife laid a wreath on behalf of the town's female voluntary organisations.

Charles Sargeant Jagger was one of a minority group of younger sculptors with combat experience who, shortly after the war, emerged as one of the leading exponents for presenting the 'Tommy' as a soldier who was a committed, skilful, effective and even physically intimidating combatant. In the spring of 1919, on the recommendation of the established sculptor Sir George Frampton, Jagger was approached by the Hoylake and West Kirby Borough Council war memorial committee. By July 1919 Jagger had supplied the committee with two maquettes, *Soldier on Defence* [Plate 88] and *Humanity* [Plate 89]. The first of the two maquettes is also known as *Wipers*, 'Tommy' slang for the much fought over Belgian town of Ypres. It is intriguing that, for his first war memorial project, Jagger instinctively thought in terms of pronounced gender opposites. *Humanity* is depicted as a mature, emaciated, rather aloof and steely female. By contrast the male figure is as a front-line infantryman whose demeanour strongly implies he has recently killed and, furthermore, relishes the prospect of confronting any other opponents in his immediate vicinity.

Much was made in the local press district that the model for the figure of *Soldier on Defence* was a front-line veteran who had fought alongside Jagger in April 1918.⁵⁶⁸ One article later claimed "The soldier who posed for *Wipers* was the black sheep of his company - constantly in trouble for minor infringements of military discipline. But in action, he was the first over the top, grimly dependable in a tight corner - as Jagger well knew."⁵⁶⁹ Jagger became known for only selecting men with fine fighting records, and down on their luck, as models for war memorial figure sculpture. A year after his death, the second Mrs. Jagger told one newspaper that all the male models employed by her husband were "ex-servicemen with good war records. He would refuse all others, no matter how handsome or finely built."⁵⁷⁰

The specific meaning, in Army Regulations, of the posture 'on Defence', has too often been overlooked. In fact the stance, as described in official Bayonet Instruction books, was not intended to be purely defensive. Apparently, the posture was regarded as an interim moment during which a soldier, who has just bayoneted an enemy, weighed up his options as other opponents closed in upon him. In his 1920 novel, *Fear!*, one of Patrick MacGill's characters describes the "posture of defence" as one adopted by "a fighting man who is ready at any moment to give battle to an enemy." This character then quotes from *Bayonet Training: 1916*, which he had undergone prior to leaving for active duty in France in the spring of 1918. The soldier could either pivot the rifle to his right, and prepare to deliver a conventional jab with the rifle held at a diagonal in front of the body, or he could swing the butt of the rifle upwards and to his

left "bringing it up with all possible force against the jaw, stomach, fork [the euphemism for the male genitalia] ... [or] smashing the trigger guard violently into the opponent's face."⁵⁷¹

It is also possible that the stance Jagger selected for the soldier at West Kirby was influenced by the imagery within Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's celebrated 'Special Order To All Ranks' issued on 11 April 1918. In the order Haig declared "Many of us are now tired. To those I say that Victory will belong to the side, which holds out the longest ... There is no course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause we must fight on to the end."⁵⁷²

Indeed, shortly after Jagger's design for the Hoylake and West Kirby memorial was formally adopted, the local newspaper commented that figure of the soldier "has come through a hard fight and is standing with his 'back to the wall', suggesting a stubborn and victorious defence."⁵⁷³ Haig's order had been published a mere two days before Jagger himself went into action and was wounded while conducting the successful defence of a key position. The loss of this position, an important crossroads, would have exposed the rest of his battalion to encirclement by the Germans. It was for the leadership he displayed, on 13 April 1918, that Jagger was awarded the Military Cross. For the rest of his life he cherished this decoration above all the distinctions and awards he received. When, in October 1922, he was asked by a war memorial committee which distinctions he wished to be have listed after his name in an official memorial unveiling ceremony programme, Jagger replied he would like the letters 'MC' to appear first following his surname. He explained he particularly wanted this done because "insignificant as it is, I value the Military Cross more than any Art Decoration it is possible to give."⁵⁷⁴

Those commenting upon *Soldier on Defence* often detected a distinctly disturbing undercurrent to his pose and facial expression, bearing as they did intimations of cruelty and brutality. When the full-sized model was first exhibited at the Royal Academy, in May 1921, one onlooker described the man as an "indomitable giant" who possessed an "iron strength and energy" making all the other figures of soldiers on display "seem feeble." Jagger's *Soldier on Defence* "may be called brutal and realistic but this ferocious soldier is eminently preferable to the beautiful stage heroes of so many war memorials today"⁵⁷⁵ P.G. Konody, in *The Observer*, thought it regrettable that *Soldier on Defence* should reveal so much "vulgar passion" but conceded that his "massiveness" was at least appropriate for monumental sculpture. It was also "expressive of the grim, defiant strength, not to say brutality" the artist had, no doubt, in the men under his command.⁵⁷⁶

Given the appearance of *Soldier on Defence*, one cannot agree with George L. Mosse's assertion that British artists were unable to create an image of the 'Tommy' comparable to that of the German stormtrooper described by Ernst Junger in the impassioned prose of his *The Storm of Steel* (1920) and *Battle as Inner Experience* (1922). Junger described the stormtrooper of 1917-1918 as the representative and standard-bearer of "a whole new race, energy incarnate ... Supple bodies lean and sinewy, striking features, stone eyes ... These were conquerors, men of steel they stride down asphalt streets, supple, predatory, straining with energy. They will be architects building on the ruined foundations of the world."⁵⁷⁷ One can imagine the "certain ruthlessness" detected by Mosse in the Junger type of stormtrooper, as present in Jagger's *Soldier on Defence* (1919), his Lewis-Gunner at Portsmouth (1920-21) [Plate 90], in the figure he produced to stand guard at the entrance to S. and J. Watts's Warehouse, Manchester [Plate 91] and in the Portland Stone low-relief panels he carved between 1923 and 1925 on the sides of the Royal Artillery Memorial. [Plates 101-102] Purposeful strength and unbending resolve also seem to radiate from the figure of a British infantryman, implacably advancing southwards down Borough High Street in London, created in 1922 by Philip Lindsay Clark for the Southwark Cathedral war memorial. [Plate 92]

Neither Jagger nor Lindsay Clark ever made such elevated and high-flown claims as Junger about what the future held for the sort of ex-servicemen they depicted on their war memorials. However, both sculptors would probably have agreed with Junger when he argued in 1922 that despite the unparalleled destructive power of the new weapons technologies that dominated the battlefields of the Western Front, enough men always emerged from their trenches and dugouts ready to fight "It has been proven ... that man is capable of enduring more than one could have supposed ... his powers of resistance prevail again and again." Junger took heart from what he interpreted as the war having revealed something positive and encouraging about the modern man.⁵⁷⁸ Jagger rarely gave any indication as to what motivated him to visualize the 'Tommy' in the way that he did. However, in 1921, he told a newspaper that "I got to love the 'Tommy' in the trenches and I have tried to show him as I knew him there - not as he looked on the parade ground at home."⁵⁷⁹ Later in the 1920's Jagger told his friend Robert Tatlock, art critic of *Daily Telegraph* and a veteran of the Salonika campaign, that when visualizing the British 'Tommy', he immediately thought of the men he had known during the six years he spent as a metal engraver in Sheffield who "worked in the steel forges ... men who were as hard as the steel they made."⁵⁸⁰

Mosse, thus, is perhaps far too hasty in claiming that *The Homecoming*, the centrepiece of the Cambridge Municipal memorial sculpted by Robert Tait Mackenzie

(1867-1938) and unveiled in July 1922 [Plate 93], representative of a British "normative manly ideal."⁵⁸¹ It is clear, from the many criticisms levelled against Tait McKenzie's figure, that he was widely perceived as excessively handsome, too idealized, too Hellenistic in artistic origin, and obviously not derived from the body and face of a man who had actually fought in the war. Therefore, a number of contemporaries could not accept him, or similar figures on war memorials, as a 'normative manly ideal'. One should take note, for example, General Sir Ian Hamilton's explanation in October 1925 as to why he found *The Driver* [Plate 98] and *The Ammunition Carrier* [Plate 99] on Jagger's Royal Artillery memorial so much more satisfying than the figures present on the majority of war memorials he had unveiled during the past five years. According to Hamilton, the figures on the war memorials to which he objected were "modelled on young soldiers sent [straight] out from the depots of the units to be commemorated." Invariably, "the best-looking lads" were selected with "delicate Greek features and smooth cheeks. The result has been, all over England, a sort of bastard Greek sculpture." Hamilton gave thanks that, in Jagger, a sculptor had finally emerged with the talent and insight to produce figures for a war memorial that were "the real thing, and not only the real thing, but the real thing in the rough."⁵⁸²

The reaction to Eric Kennington's more stylistically unconventional 24th Infantry Division memorial, unveiled in Battersea Park in October 1924, suggests that many critics were prepared to welcome war memorial designs that suggested the First World War 'Tommy' was capable of more emotional complexity than had hitherto been suspected. [Plates 94-95] It would appear that Kennington consciously attempted to present 'Tommies' who were neither entirely ruthless killers nor impossibly, implausibly, noble victims. After a disastrous debut on the Western Front, at the battle of Loos in September 1915, the 24th Infantry Division's fighting performance had steadily improved. By the summer of 1917, it enjoyed the reputation of being a 'spearhead' division, one to which General Headquarters could entrust the most challenging tasks with a good expectation that the unit would be successful.⁵⁸³ Kennington was probably keen to undertake the commission, despite the fact he had little formal training as a stone carver, because he had spent nearly three months, between November 1917 and January 1918, attached to the division as an official war artist. Indeed, after the its unveiling he described the memorial as a "labour of love ... to ... departed comrades."⁵⁸⁴ The memorial commemorates 10,865 men who had been killed or listed as 'missing' while serving with the division. A further 24,000 men had been wounded in the division during the three years it spent on the Western Front. While carving the memorial Kennington may have realised that many of those who had been wounded would be among the first to visit the memorial once it had been unveiled.⁵⁸⁵

Fortunately some notes Kennington made for a press release, issued just prior to the unveiling of the completed memorial, have survived and supply a revealing insight into the process by which he settled upon the final design of the carved figure group. Accepting the commission, in the autumn of 1921, Kennington decided he wanted to fix the group within a specific historical era, while suggesting the timeless nature of certain elements of masculinity he perceived to be desirable. He wrote of having an initial nebulous idea of wishing to "express the spiritual supported by the moral and intellectual."⁵⁸⁶ Initially, Kennington thought of having just a single figure but "as the various natures of British soldiers could not be presented by one man it grew to be three men who, at first, looked away from each other triangle-wise. This was still unsatisfactory for, by increase of numbers, they had lost unity and sense of purpose and direction."⁵⁸⁷

Eventually, these three men "insisted on facing the same front, each choosing his own personality." [Plate 94] It would appear it was at this stage that Kennington decided upon models for the three figures. All the men he selected were veterans of the Western Front who had served, for varying periods, with the 24th Infantry Division. The war poet Robert Graves was the model for the soldier to the left of the central figure.⁵⁸⁸ Trooper Morris Clifford Thomas MM, a heavy machine-gunner who served for the last two years of the war with the divisional machine gun battalion, stands to the right of the central figure. He is led foreword by the smiling central figure modelled by a certain platoon Sergeant Woods of the 9th battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Woods was a soldier to whom Kennington had once been literally and metaphorically close. The platoon sergeant had acted as combined bodyguard and personal servant to the artist during the fortnight he spent with the 9th Royal Sussex during November and December 1917.⁵⁸⁹

In his notes Kennington describes the central figure, modelled by Woods, as "the youngest", and as:

light-hearted, carefree, physically exuberant and irrepressible. On his right is a man [Trooper Thomas] who, with maturity has gained self-mastery, sound judgement and the knowledge based on experience - while retaining the strength and energy of youth. His left-hand man [Graves] is more profound than his fellows, being at once soldier, athlete, poet and intellectual.

Kennington was concerned that the memorial would be seen to have something important to say, not just about the soldiers experience of the Great War, but also as to what values men should embrace and perform throughout life. He describes all three men as imbued with "boundless strength, courage and resolve and their progress is unimpeded by the common danger at their feet. They are British soldiers in uniform and

also men journeying through life - the enemies which they will overcome are not so much German soldiers as the internal, inner, enemies within all of us.⁵⁹⁰

In a text, offering an explanation of the memorial's symbolism and published to coincide with the unveiling ceremony, the poet and critic Harold Monro (1872-1932)⁵⁹¹ emphasised that the physical characteristics of each figure were expressive of certain racial qualities. He interpreted the face of the central figure as "typically English; square, broad and determined ... this figure appears, in a peculiar manner, to dominate the other two ...[he] grasps particularly firmly the palm of his right-hand companion [Trooper Thomas] who, if the noblest in appearance, is plainly the weakest in an emergency." This impressive central figure has "a winning impulsive face. He makes up his mind easily and he asks no questions. The Great War was no problem to him. It was a fight about something. He was English and he liked a scrap. He smiled and he went ahead." The figure on the left [Robert Graves] "can be led without strain ... He is also young and he is a fighter, but he is more inclined to ask questions. Plainly, he has natural wisdom and a thoughtful mind. The setting of his lips is less simple. There is a slight expression of doubt, or even of scepticism, neutralized however by the determined attitude of the whole form."⁵⁹²

It is intriguing that the 'serpent of war', with its extraordinary phallic-looking head, appears to be working its way up the left leg of the Graves figure. The phallic-headed snake, perhaps, may be taken as a reference to the threat posed to close male friendships by unhealthy, transgressive, sexual desire. Alternatively, this singular detail could suggest how this compact all-male group might be sundered by desire for a woman. Such desire could introduce a destabilising element of competition into a friendship, if two men found themselves attracted to the same female.

The figure based on Trooper Thomas, standing to the right of the central figure, emerges in Monro's text as, potentially, the most ambiguous and enigmatic. Monro describes his face as:

the weakest, but, in another way, the strongest. The artist has skilfully left the whole figure less modelled than the others. This man has neither gay innocence to lead him, nor grave thought to decide the issue for him. He might be called a Man of the World. He knows only the unusualness of the situation and the need of his conscience to act rightly. His face is serious. He is probably capable of great endurance, but he is calm, rather cold; determined, but undemonstrative.⁵⁹³

One can infer from Monro's description, since he conferred closely with the artist while writing it, that Kennington's ideal of masculinity combined the intellectual, the physically exuberant happy-go-lucky extrovert and the sober, reticent and solid. The important factor is Kennington's acknowledgement that the ideal of masculinity, commonly perceived by society at large as healthy, normal, and desirable, was by no

means straightforward, or uncomplicated. Kennington's ideal man embodied a blend of different attributes, values, and qualities. The artist, it would seem, believed throughout his life that a close correspondence existed between external appearance and inner character. One could determine a man's moral worth from his physiognomy. He was convinced physically courageous possessed a certain look that could only be detected by a male artist with a lengthy experience of war.⁵⁸⁴

Rather unusually for a text related to a war memorial, Monro refers to at least two of the figures depicted as experiencing some degree of hesitation. The figures derived from Graves and Thomas have to be led forward by the happy-go-lucky, if not terribly imaginative, Sergeant Woods. Monro stresses the weight of the equipment the soldiers must carry and his words could be taken as implying that the figures derived from Graves and Trooper Thomas might not move so confidently forward without the presence of the central figure:

Behind, the bodies are sealed together by a common burden. Pack and equipment here take a large geometric form, and we feel that the soldiers are consolidated by the mutual load that their respective backs have continually to bear. To the Front of the group also the equipment is heavy. But the soldier in front has the courage and the heart to carry any burden, and also to inspire others by his bearing, by his songs, and by his straightforward unflinching fearlessness.

In addition, Monro attributes significance to the physical closeness of the soldiers and the fact that they touch "The figures are firmly knit together ... Their hands are conspicuous and large and each closes with unhesitating firmness on some important element in the group."⁵⁸⁵ Monro does not clearly indicate whether the three men will prevail over the snake at their feet, or ever free themselves from its constricting coils "The snake is War. Whatever their ideals or intentions, their steps are controlled by this reptile ... Their faces, their bodies, endure and persevere; but their feet are tangled in these coils ... There is determination combined with individual hesitation; and there is the drag of the snake." Thus, according to Monro, the individual has scant influence over his destiny and immediate surroundings during wartime. Individual desires and resolutions are relatively unimportant amidst the grand scheme of things. However, the artist does not appear to have agreed with Monro on this point. The memorial, in contrast, seems to suggest that an individual, if endowed with the sort of forceful personality possessed by Sergeant Woods, can still make a difference in modern war. On the whole, Kennington was delighted with the text Monro had provided. However, he did object to a statement that appeared in Monro's initial draft. Kennington insisted that the three figures were not advancing into action with "closed or blind eyes", as if they were "sleep-walking." Their eyes really were "wide open" because they were alert and "ready for anything."⁵⁸⁶

Kennington also asked Monro to slightly alter his concluding remarks. Monro responded by adding a passage in which he emphasised that, despite the presence of the snake, the design of the memorial conveys how "the human spirit can overcome all difficulties and obstacles and that human courage has no limit and is capable of supernatural endurance."⁵⁹⁷ Prior to the unveiling, Major-General Sir John Capper, a previous commander of the division, gave a short address in which he described the three figures as commemorating: "the great qualities of cheerfulness under hardship, intelligent courage and quiet determination, between them crushing to dust the evil serpent of war." Unlike Monro, Capper never harboured any doubts that the individual could eventually triumph and free himself from the physical and mental constraints of war.⁵⁹⁸

The majority of newspapers that discussed the memorial took their lead from Monro's explanatory description and from Kennington's press release. A few thought the 'modern' angular appearance of the equipment, juxtaposed against the long established, timeless Christian symbolism of the snake as representative of evil incarnate, rather odd and jarring.⁵⁹⁹ The *Daily Mirror* congratulated Kennington for not having resorted to "the worn-out, allegorical accessories, which most sculptors persist in using such as the laurel to signify victory. The only thing approaching such symbolism is the snake ... The three men are strongly characterized and represent three distinct types of English manhood ready for the supreme sacrifice."⁶⁰⁰

Interestingly enough, Monro had only actually out singled out the central figure as possessing a specifically English face. The *Daily Telegraph* described it as a "remarkable memorial" representing "three distinct characters but one will; in a really wonderful way it gives composite expression to the doubts, the fears, the courage, the impulsiveness and the caution which, during the war, must at one time or another have swayed the mind of England's manhood."⁶⁰¹ Unusually for the time, this account acknowledges that the 'Tommy' was not immune to caution, fears, and doubts. He was certainly not a superman, which is rather the impression left by the majority of war memorial figures executed by Jagger.

Elsewhere, Kennington was congratulated for the daring to create such a highly unconventional design. In the opinion of the correspondent of *The Sphere* magazine "the country has been overstrewn with sentimental and uninspired war statuary which bore nobody more than they do the ex-combatants." The three soldiers comprising the Kennington's memorial touched "an original note ... The close-wedged group ... is geometrical and austere and yet human and tender. Except for the Cenotaph, it is the best conceived modern memorial I have seen in England."⁶⁰² P.G. Konody also praised Kennington for having eschewed unconvincing, conventional, symbolism. More

interestingly, Konody interpreted the memorial as implying that front-line soldiers had been capable of sensitivity and of experiencing feelings of tenderness for each other. He described the figures as "intensely human and, without being sentimental, intensely tender ..." and the assumption this was so because "the artist himself was in the trenches in the winter of 1914-15 [and] knows well ... the limbs of the boys who were cannon-fodder in the war." Indeed, he detected a certain vulnerability in the three figures, since two of them appeared to require encouragement from the leading figure to move forward into the perilous environment of 'No-Man's-Land' "though this triangle of soldiers is first and foremost a close-knit wedge, it is at the same time, and quite as clearly, three human beings waiting to be shot at."⁶⁰³

One wonders whether Kennington regarded the three men who modeled for the memorial, and were all survivors of the First World War, as 'victims' of the experience? Invariably loathe to talk to newspapers; he appears to have given only one interview in which he explained the meaning of the memorial design. His words suggest he understood the experience of the war in almost Darwinian terms; life as a perpetual struggle. If a man was to retain his self-respect and merit the respect of other men, then he must immerse himself without hesitation in that unending struggle for existence. He described the three men on the memorial as "young, fearless and one in purpose. It is not necessarily a record of soldiers of 1914-1918 fighting in the war. It is also of all men in the battle of life." Kennington's reaction to descriptions of the memorial, as stylistically experimental, is revealing. To some, the memorial may have seemed "ultra-modern. I do not know if it is, or if it isn't. To me, of more importance is the question: Does it give its message powerfully and clearly and is the message a good one?"⁶⁰⁴ This sentiment chimes in with something he said at the same time to his friend the art critic Reginald Wilenski (1887-1975). Carving the memorial, over an eighteen-month period, his primary motivation had been to create something that would be intelligible to the very ex-soldiers from the ranks celebrated by the sculpture.⁶⁰⁵

As far as one can ascertain Kennington's target audience was not at all put off by the unusual appearance of the memorial or the insinuation that, from a distance, the three men appeared not be wearing any trousers.⁶⁰⁶ [Plate 95] One ex-serviceman from the 'rank and file', interviewed at the divisional reunion dinner on the evening of the memorial's unveiling, declared the memorial had made a "strong impression" on him "and his mates ... It's the real thing ... you can see these fellows walking into action all keyed up and knowing what is coming and ready for it. Real 'Tommyes' they are and going through it."⁶⁰⁷ Yet, the men are still moving forward, however cautiously, and the anxiety of the man who must be led forward by the hand is balanced by the tender, sensitive, comradeship implicit in the action. The memorial suggests that the best men are combinations of strength, calculation, hesitation and anxiety. In the field, and under

fire, men had to rely on each other and this included the sharing of fears and doubts. Perhaps, this was why the figures struck observers, who had been former soldiers, as so truthful. One such veteran described the "real thing" because, at the sharp end, even the best soldiers wavered and needed a friendly word or gesture before climbing out of a trench to begin an attack.⁶⁰⁸

The emphasis placed on the 'reality' or 'realism', that had to be present in a war memorial's imagery to satisfy an audience of ex-servicemen, was widely detected by that audience in the imagery Jagger created for the Royal Artillery memorial. This impressive edifice was unveiled on Hyde Park Corner in October 1925. [Plate 96] The *Manchester Guardian*, for example, quoted one former gunner as describing the memorial's Portland stone reliefs as "pictures in stone", which he felt were "the real naked thing."⁶⁰⁹ Indeed, Jagger was primarily offered the commission by the Royal Artillery War Commemoration Fund Committee [RAWCFC] because its members had been extremely dissatisfied with designs for relief sculpture supplied by Francis Derwent Wood, the first sculptor it had approached in October 1920. Derwent Wood had served with the RAMC in London during the war. Several members of the RAWCFC protested it was all too obvious from the manner in which Derwent Wood had presented artillerymen in action, that the sculptor had never spent any time overseas and under fire. A Colonel Lloyd protested to the Chairman of the RAWCFC "how can a man like Wood possibly know what each man should be doing or what their attitude should be? I would strongly recommend his being coached as to the position and attitude of each man [in a gun crew] ... by a young officer who has been in France"⁶¹⁰ Major-General Sir Herbert Uniacke was equally unimpressed by the 'Tommies' in the two low-relief designs Derwent Wood had supplied. Uniacke thought the figures were not imbued with the required energy and determination he expected to see in artillerymen. Altogether there were "far too many men ... hanging about [and] short of a job!"⁶¹¹

General Sir John DuCann, another senior wartime artillery officer, brought Jagger's name to the attention of the RAWCFC in December 1920. DuCann had been greatly impressed by the "plain truthfulness" of the 'Tommies' he had seen in photographs of maquettes of figures Jagger had created for memorials at Hoylake and West Kirby [Plate 88] and for the entrance to a Manchester warehouse.⁶¹² [Plate 91] He felt such works constituted proof that Jagger was more than able to create images of men that convinced the onlooker they would perform magnificently in any emergency. DuCann asserted that Jagger, with his experience of Gallipoli and the Western Front, was just the man they needed to produce a memorial to commemorate the Regiment's 56,000 wartime dead.⁶¹³ Jagger would also bring home to a wider public that an extensive improvement of weapons and tactics within the Royal Artillery had

made a massive contribution to the victory ultimately achieved by the British Army on the Western Front in 1918.⁶¹⁴

In February 1921 DuCann asked Jagger to produce a sketch model for the RAWCFC to view. The committee was well pleased with the result Jagger submitted towards the end of June. Its members were particularly impressed by the sculptor's presentation of infantrymen in low relief in panels such as *Heavy Artillery* and *Horse Artillery* [Plates 102-103], in the round such as *The Driver* [Plate 98], and by his decision to crown the memorial with an over life size reproduction carved in stone of the prototype for a 9.2 siege howitzer. [Plate 97] This howitzer had been nicknamed 'Mother' when it first entered service with the Regiment in the spring of 1915.⁶¹⁵ A few committee members thought the public might be hostile to such an object appearing on the memorial. Called before the committee, in July 1921, to explain his memorial design, Jagger succeeded in persuading its members of the merits of retaining the howitzer by referring to his own war record. He declared, "When I was in [sic] Gallipoli ... I made up my mind that, if ever I was called upon to do a war memorial, I should aim to bring in the big howitzer."⁶¹⁶ During the meeting further objections were raised to Jagger's designs by Lord Stamfordham, personal private secretary to the Regiment's honorary Colonel-in-Chief, King George V. According to Stamfordham, the King had been rather taken aback by the prospect of including such a prominent representation of a siege howitzer in the memorial design and by some of the details within the proposed low-relief panels. King George also had reservations concerning the figure of *The Driver* [Plate 98] It was "such a gloomy figure ... could not the sculptor devise a figure ... more clearly descriptive of Peace?" Jagger was not at all intimidated by this criticism, replying that from the outset he had conceived the memorial as one to those "who [had] died on active service and in battle and I cannot help feeling that the Memorial should, in every sense be a WAR Memorial ... any element of Peace or suggestion of relaxation would be ... inappropriate. I consider [it] a Memorial to men who actually died in battle."⁶¹⁷

With this argument, Jagger won his point and the design he submitted was accepted with a few minor alterations. However, three years later, considerable debate was generated within the RAWCFC by Jagger's determination to produce a recumbent figure of a *Dead Artilleryman* (1923-25) for the as yet empty Northern end of the memorial. [Plate 100] More than one committee member described the figure as one of the most unsparing representations of death on the battlefield they had ever seen.⁶¹⁸ From being part of a close-knit gun team, death has transformed this unfortunate gunner into inanimate flesh and an encumbrance, which his comrades have dragged roughly out of the way so as not to impede the operation of their gun in action. The gunner's death has been all the more potentially distressing precisely because one is

prevented from seeing his facial expression by the greatcoat casually thrown over him. In the opinion of Sir Stanley von Donop, one of the committee members with reservations about the figure, it was all too easy to imagine the face of the *Dead Artilleryman* convulsed with a rictus of pain and terror. He conceded that the artist's decision, not to indicate precisely how the man had been killed, was justifiable since he had seen many men in France who had been killed by the concussion produced from the detonation nearby of a high explosive shell. Such men appeared to have died in their sleep, without any obvious visible wounds.⁶¹⁹

The figure had its fervent defenders at a specially convened meeting of the RAWCFC in November 1924. General Phipps-Hornby, for example, stated he was "strongly in favour of having the figure ... this is a memorial to the dead and not the living", while the representative from the ranks on the RAWCFC, Regimental Sergeant-Major Tott, agreed that introducing the recumbent figure would make the memorial one "to the dead as well as the living."⁶²⁰ The most thoughtfully argued opposition to the *Dead Artilleryman* took the form of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel H.F.E. Lewin. The two main reasons he advanced for rejecting the recumbent figure concern the audience to whom he expected the memorial to appeal and an assumption that the reactions of the intended audience would be strictly determined by gender. Firstly, he suspected such a stark and unadorned depiction of death on the battlefield would cause relatives, and especially female relatives, of the dead visiting the memorial unnecessarily heartless emotional suffering. Lewin was also convinced that the exclusively male serving and former members of the Regiment would prefer to remember their dead comrades at their most appealing and admirable. He argued that the monument should be:

an inspiration to those who come after to follow in the footsteps of the fallen and an emblem of hope and comfort to the bereaved relatives. I know in this view I differ from Mr. Jagger. He regards a war memorial as a means of forcing home on the minds of the public the horror and the terrors of war ... I submit that, in a memorial to our dead, horror and the ghastly side of war has no place. Imagine the feelings of a Mother or Widow coming to see the memorial to her Gunner son or husband and finding there such a grim, realistic presentiment of his stark dead corpse, just as it lay when pulled aside from the gun, with the coat thrown over the face to cover the ghastly stare of death. We have seen only too many such sights. It would be cruel to represent [him] so vividly to a sorrowing relative. When we cast back in our minds to remembrance of our comrades we do not wish to think of them in that light. We either prefer to remember the happy, joyous good fellow we knew, such as are typified by the standing figures of our memorial, or we wish to think of them in the calm and peace of sleep, released from worldly strife and hardship.⁶²¹

Having heard of this dispute, Jagger felt so strongly that the figure should not be discarded that he apparently offered to pay for the casting of the *Dead Artilleryman* into bronze and for the figure to be installed at his own expense.⁶²² In the end the majority of RAWCFC members allowed themselves to be swayed by the argument of a former

army commander, General Andrew Horne, that the nature of the figurative sculpture be left to the discretion of "Mr. Jagger who has really embodied in himself the spirit of the Memorial we wish to raise." Following this appeal, thirty-five members of the fifty-strong committee voted to accept the figure.⁶²³

Ironically, the figure of the *Dead Artilleryman* attracted relatively little comment, when the Royal Artillery memorial was unveiled in October 1925. Many objections, however, were raised as to the propriety of according the siege howitzer such prominence on the memorial. The Royal Academician, Sir Philip Burne-Jones, predicted that the feature would become a "daily eyesore".⁶²⁴ Jagger was just as frequently praised for having excluded any feminine symbolism from the memorial design. P.G. Konody, who had so admired Kennington's *The Conquerors* [Plate 84], described it as: "a true war memorial inspired by the realities of modern warfare ... all too often inadequately represented these days by female figures holding laurel wreaths, angels with outstretched wings and other worn-out symbols of that kind."⁶²⁵ What is particularly interesting is the near unanimous approval expressed by ex-servicemen for the way in which the Royal Artillery memorial presented the figure of the 'Tommy'. The *Manchester Guardian* quoted one "young ex-gunner" as describing the memorial as "the finest memorial, or cenotaph, or anything in the country." The man was also fascinated by the figure of *The Ammunition Carrier* [Plate 99] "See that man carrying the shells. He is real ... all the men [on the memorial] are real."⁶²⁶ It would also appear that men and women responded to the imagery of the memorial, especially the low-relief panels such as *Heavy Artillery* and *Horse Artillery* [Plates 101-102] in markedly different ways. Women, it was noted, tended to circle the memorial alone holding wreaths to which were attached "bits of paper" bearing "a name and perhaps a text."⁶²⁷ Eventually, the wreath would be left propped up against one of the relief panels. Former servicemen, by contrast, approached the relief carvings in groups with many of them wearing their old wartime uniforms:

Veterans ... discussed the details of the reliefs and pointed out to civilian friends the work men were doing ... They sorted out the figures of gunners and casualties on the eastern side [*Heavy Artillery* [Plate 101]] and approved of the accuracy of the guns [depicted] ... A bus conductor ... felt the pictures in stone ... to be the real naked thing ... and was pointing out to a comrade of those times, who wore spats and a prosperous air, how it was just so that they would be staring upwards ... when 'Jerry' was sending shells over.⁶²⁸

Such was the compelling authenticity of Jagger's imagery, credible in the eyes of the veterans because it depicted their younger selves coping with whatever the enemy was sending their way, that it prompted men to exchange stories and recall memories of their time at the Front. Given such a reaction, one can understand the claim made by the Rev. Andrew Jervis, Chaplain-General to the Forces and a survivor of eighteen months on the Western Front as an Army Chaplain, after discussing the memorial with

several ex-servicemen, that it had "brought a new idea of art to the people." Jervis predicted "Men will bring their wives and children here to show them things they have never been able to tell them – what happened and what they went through in the field. It is a terrible revelation, long overdue."⁶²⁹ The veterans of the First World War he had encountered, at the unveiling ceremony, sought understanding, and not pity, from those who had not experienced life at the Front. They also hoped the civilian public would appreciate that their sense of being men had been reinforced, and not diminished, by the horrors they had been able to endure at the Front. As one former artillery officer wrote to *The Times*, although the imagery on the memorial was of "horrible, bloody war", it also illustrated "what human flesh did, and can, endure ... It is the memorial our fallen comrades would have wanted."⁶³⁰

CONCLUSION

Two days after the official unveiling of Jagger's Royal Artillery memorial, a senior officer of the Royal Artillery cited the following as evidence for the power a war memorial could exert:

At 5.20 am on Tuesday, Oct[ober] 20, ... before it was yet light, a small crowd were seen gathered in reverent groups round the Memorial. The men, without exception, were standing bareheaded in the pelting rain; every woman was wearing somewhere about her person some small emblem of mourning, while a few were kneeling on the wet, muddy stones. They were all workers who had risen earlier even than usual and devoted the time thus gained to coming, in some cases far out of their way, to pay a tribute to what they obviously regarded as a shrine to the memory of lost, comrades, relatives and friends. As far as I am personally concerned, when strictures are raised as to the appropriateness of the Memorial in certain details as a fitting tribute to the 50,000 of my dead gunners, I prefer to accept the verdict of the humble folk assembled that morning to that of any 'high-brow' critic or milk-and-water sentimentalist of either sex ... wilfully blind to actualities.⁶³¹

This passage, part of a much longer article in a mass-circulation popular publication justifying the memorial's design, deserves to be quoted at length because it serves to suggest how deeply the Royal Artillery memorial was valued for not evading the grim realities of the First World War battlefield. It also serves to illuminate the rapidly growing divide, between ex-servicemen and the nation's intelligentsia, as to what a memorial should communicate about the war. Indeed, the reaction to the Royal Artillery memorial would tend to support Niall Ferguson's hypothesis that, within five to six years of the end of the war, there was a clear and widening gulf between a majority populist perception and a minority elite view. The former broadly regarded the war in a positive light while the latter advocated an 'anti-war' line which, today, is too often assumed to have become an orthodoxy.⁶³² Many so-called 'high-brows' condemned the memorial for being triumphalist and for celebrating the manufacture of artillery pieces of an ever-greater destructive power. Perhaps there was a certain squeamishness on their part when confronted with a war memorial that frankly acknowledged, in its design and decoration, the weapons and military hardware used to win a world war. [Plate 96] Selwyn Image, editor of *The New Age*, wondered whether it was "really a fine culminating symbol to have set high aloft over all as finally expressive of our thankfulness to God for deliverance ... just this bare facsimile in stone of the latest mechanical invention of man's wit for blowing ... his fellow creatures ... to pieces?"⁶³³

Significantly, from the perspective of a gendered reaction, some of the most vociferous defenders of the memorial, and of the unusual 'frankness' of its imagery, proved to be female. A former member of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps was typical when she wrote to *The Times* stressing that the artist had won the right to create

a memorial which presented scenes from the war in an unsentimental and unvarnished fashion "Mr. Jagger fought and was awarded the Military Cross and knows what war means. He knows that any man who had been a month at the Front would be wearing frayed puttees, worn boots and have a button or two missing." It is evident from the conclusion to the woman's letter that the sort of masculine ideal Jagger projected from the imagery of the Artillery memorial appealed as much to some female spectators, as it did to the vast majority of former artillerymen: "I feel there was not a woman present at the unveiling who, in spite of the heartache" did not recall the words of the poet Margaret Peterson: "Our hearts leapt up to sudden proud content, Because we loved you, we are glad you went."⁶³⁴

Intriguingly, Jagger told a reporter for *The Morning Post*, shortly after the memorial had been unveiled, that his wife "had almost as much to do with the general conception of the Royal Artillery Memorial as I had. She prevented my making it melodramatic and theatrical ... she supplied restraint, especially in the bas-reliefs, and kept me on an austere and severe note."⁶³⁵ After his death, Jagger's close friend Robert Tatlock (1889-1954) recalled: "Jagger told me that, if he had had his own way with the famous Artillery memorial, it would have been far more grim and realistic than it is now. It was his wife who restrained him and the memorial, as it stands today, owes much to her influence."⁶³⁶ Tatlock, thus, seems to be suggesting that the artist only reluctantly heeded his wife's advice to tone down the imagery on the memorial. Or perhaps, she helped him to realise that too much searing reality would prevent the design from being sanctioned by the memorial committee? It is possible that Jagger's war memorial proved so controversial because it unrepentantly celebrates the achievements of the Royal Artillery, and those qualities which enabled the men to operate their guns with such skill and ferocious determination, rather than constituting an 'anti-monument' in the sense of the term used by Samuel Hynes.⁶³⁷

Four years of intense activity on the Royal Artillery Memorial, interspersed with work on at least six additional war memorial commissions⁶³⁸, left Jagger feeling physically and mentally exhausted. A few years later, his wife hinted that the imagery he had created for the memorial exacted such an emotional toll on her husband he suffered some sort of nervous breakdown. This left him a virtual invalid for the best part of six months.⁶³⁹ Remarkably, however, by the summer of 1926 Jagger was hard at work on two further large war memorial projects for the Imperial War Graves Commission, for memorials to the Missing at Nieuport in Belgium, unveiled in July 1928, and near Cambrai in France, unveiled in August 1930. In the autumn of 1924, Kennington discovered that, after two years of carving the 24th Infantry Division memorial, he felt he was mentally "running out of steam" and urgently required a rest.⁶⁴⁰

Once the memorial had been safely installed on its plinth in Battersea Park, he left for a month-long sailing holiday with his recently acquired river barge on the Thames.

Whether by good fortune or calculation, Kennington found that involvement with a successful war memorial project was extremely beneficial for his reputation. Indeed, the unveiling of the memorial in Battersea Park, and the overwhelmingly positive reaction it received, helped to launch his career as a sculptor. Towards the end of 1924 he was offered the prestigious commission of carving a figure in plaster for the exterior of the British pavilion at the forthcoming Paris exhibition of Decorative Arts to be held in Paris, which lent its name to *Art Deco*. In April 1925 he contributed the sculptural element to the winning entry for a competition held by the Imperial War Graves Commission to erect a memorial to the Missing at Soissons.⁶⁴¹

It would take another three years before the Soissons memorial had been completed and unveiled. [Plate 103] Again, Kennington was left feeling utterly drained by the process. However, he never gave any indication that he regretted spending so many years during the 1920's focussed on war memorial commissions. Nor did he ever attempt to downplay the fact he had first achieved wider public recognition through his work as a war artist. Jagger shared this attitude. In an interview, given just prior to the unveiling of the Artillery memorial, he stated that even though he had spent much of the last seven years on war memorials he did not believe he could have, during that time, accepted any commissions involving peacetime subject matter.⁶⁴²

Nevinson, to his chagrin, found that a reputation as a war artist after a world war was far more of a hindrance than a benefit. As noted in the previous chapter, he had fallen out with the authorities of the Imperial War Museum over the display of *The Harvest of Battle* [Plate 81] at Burlington House during the 'Nation's War Paintings' exhibition of December 1919 to February 1920. He quickly came to regard the canvas as 'cursed' and hoped it would not be displayed in public. At one point, he even attempted to buy the work back from the Imperial War Museum.⁶⁴³ By the time the Royal Artillery memorial was unveiled in 1925, Nevinson had come to the conclusion that the notoriety he had earned as a war artist had overall done his career more harm than good. He felt so strongly on the issue that he even agreed with the decision of the authorities of the Tate Gallery not to exhibit *La Mitrailleuse*; one of the most compelling images of the First World War even executed by a British artist. [Plate 26]⁶⁴⁴ *The Harvest of Battle* was rarely displayed at the Imperial War Museum during the 1920's. However, in 1926, the war novelist Henry Williamson, while reviewing Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War*, referred to the painting while formulating an influentially negative estimation of the First World War. According to Williamson, Nevinson's canvas, more effectively than Blunden's prose, conjured up the reality of the war "life without horizon or hope, the will stolen and the body enslaved, the unimaginable fatigue

and misery and pain endured through the long, slow hours ... of an unending war, the feeling of release only be death's oblivion."⁶⁴⁵ Williamson argued that Nevinson's image was more truthful because, unlike Blunden the officer, he viewed the war from the lowly and restricted viewpoint of the ordinary private. He assumed from Nevinson's painting, that the man from the ranks could never perceive the war as possessing any credible or justifiable point.

Nevinson's eventual perception of the war artist label as undermining his wider artistic reputation raises the question as to what extent the three artists discussed in this thesis felt that their experience of war had either validated, or completely discredited the codes of masculine conduct to which they had ascribed before the war. According to the models established by Mosse⁶⁴⁶ and Bourke⁶⁴⁷, the First World War did not lead to any fundamental or radical re-evaluation of what was widely perceived by the majority of ex-servicemen to be healthy masculine behaviour. With regard to Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger, I would agree with Mosse when he states: "The First World War added no new feature to the stereotype of modern manhood."⁶⁴⁸ He has, however, perhaps seriously underestimated the appeal of this conventional stereotype to men, such as the war artists under discussion who, before the war, had not seriously explored what it was to be the sort of man who attracted the frank approval of other men. Mosse also seems oblivious to the psychic cost extracted from men attempting to preserve the façade of this stereotype while fighting in the trenches.

On the other hand, Abigail Solomon Godeau has persuasively argued that times of particularly acute crisis, such as a world war, expose the inherently unstable and contingent nature of normative heterosexual masculinity. This performative role requires constant reinforcement and supportive intervention to remain the dominant form of masculinity embraced by the majority of men.⁶⁴⁹ I would argue, on the basis of the images of men in uniform created by Nevinson, Kennington and Jagger that, while these three artists may have come to doubt some aspects of pre-war middle-class masculinity, their faith in the British skilled working-class as offering the most credible model of normative masculinity was deepened and strengthened by encountering the British 'Tommy' at the Front. There is evidence to suggest that, in the light of some soldiers were succumbing to the supposedly feminine, 'hysterical', symptoms of shell-shock, some guarded reassessment did take place within the medical profession. This concluded that modern masculinity was far more complex and influenced by the exterior expectations of society than anyone had ever hitherto suspected. As mentioned previously, this aspect of masculinity has been convincingly explored by Elaine Showalter⁶⁵⁰ and George Mosse.⁶⁵¹ However, Showalter perhaps makes too many sweeping assumptions on the basis of the relatively small number of men who actually received treatment for serious war-related psychological problems after the war.

Millions of men were demobilised after the war and returned home to lead productive and fulfilling civilian lives, without feeling the need to seek out psychiatric help.

The research undertaken for this thesis would tend to suggest that the pre-war working-class masculinity, admired by all three of the artists under examination, proved to be far more flexible, resilient and able to absorb the impact of terrible wartime experiences than Mosse and Bourke have estimated. This form of masculinity supplied a model of performative conduct that Kennington and Jagger both found highly satisfying and comforting. They sought to emulate this exemplar and to celebrate it, in their images of the war, as one with which men in the future could profitably identify. In this regard, Mosse is correct to lay particular emphasis on the enormous impact Kipling had on the formulation of stereotypical British masculinity during the early twentieth-century.⁶⁵² Both Jagger and Kennington remained fervent admirers of Kipling despite their frequently painful experiences during the First World War. Jagger's widow recalled her husband telling her how much he enjoyed reading Kipling's verse in the trenches only a few weeks before he was wounded in April 1918. She, unfortunately, did not specify which volume of Kipling's poems Jagger was reading at the time.⁶⁵³ Kennington referred to Kipling approvingly in one of the last articles the artist wrote, published over thirty-five years after the end of the First World War.⁶⁵⁴ Indeed, it is possible that Kennington included a reading from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, at the unveiling of the 24th Infantry Division memorial, because he was aware that Kipling held the book in high regard.⁶⁵⁵

Of the three artists, Nevinson was the only one who, before the war, consciously sought to identify himself to the public as a champion of an aggressively heightened, avant-garde, masculinity by promoting himself as a Futurist. The sort of behaviour associated with Futurist masculinity, rude, energetic, combative, was evidently regarded as far removed from that expected of an English gentleman. This was the model of masculinity Nevinson would have been expected to embrace as a conventional middle-class male educated at an English public school. Ironically, while Futurists denounced the sedentary, office-bound lifestyle of the middle-class European male, as encouraging a slide into debilitating physical degeneracy, the Futurist model of masculinity was in turn labelled as 'degenerate' because its preoccupation with physical violence was construed as 'primitive.' This category was assumed to emphasise an excessive, and therefore transgressive, concern with male physicality. Going to war, however, Nevinson found to his distress that he was neither mentally nor physically equal to the challenges imposed on him by seeking to perform the role of intrepid, fearless, front-line Futurist. From the outset the gap between the reality of his own bodily capabilities and the demands made on that body, by attempting to live the life of a Futurist, progressively widened as Nevinson confronted the realities of participating in

the world's first modern technologically driven war. He was but one individual amidst anonymous masses of militarised men. Perhaps, he continued to identify himself as a Futurist for a short while longer because the notoriety of this label propelled him above the crowd.

In the event, Nevinson discovered that eight days as a motor ambulance driver imposed too great a strain on his body. Then, for two months at the Friends' Hospital, and for six months at Wandsworth, he served as a medical orderly. This role involved performing duties identified by Nevinson's fellow medical orderly Ward Muir as the sort of work that had been, before the war, automatically regarded as the preserve of women. These duties, such as cooking for men, feeding them, helping them to shave, and to dress themselves, bathing them and dressing their wounds, made Nevinson begin to question the efficacy of the Futurist hyper, or super masculine role he had attempted to perform. In February 1915 Nevinson was already starting to qualify his commitment to Futurism and, by the summer of 1916, he made it known that he no longer wished to be considered as a member of the movement. By this time, he was no longer serving in uniform having been invalided from the army on health grounds. The prospect of his being conscripted back into the ranks, to live the life of an ordinary 'Tommy', plunged him into depression. In March 1917, for the first time, one finds Nevinson consulting a 'nerve specialist'. Only a couple of months later he succeeded in persuading the Department of Information that he was sufficiently fit to serve as an official war artist. However, the psychological damage had already been done and proved to be permanent.

Nevinson's experiences as a war artist in July 1917 served to undermine and corrode an already precarious nervous state. There is considerable evidence to suggest that Nevinson never fully recovered the drive and self-confidence he had displayed as a Futurist before the war. To a great extent he set aside the role of Futurist in 1916 to return to that of professional middle-class artist with a dash of the racy Bohemian but without any hint of sexually ambivalent aestheticism. It is evident, from his horrified response to the prospect of being conscripted into the ranks of a pioneer battalion, that his respect for the 'Tommy' was strictly conditional.⁶⁵⁶ He was artist from a different class entirely and, while he could admire the good-humoured stoicism of the common soldiery, he did not wish to either emulate or identify with them. His unstable mental state, immediately prior to the opening of his exhibition as a war artist, probably ensured that the authorities would not send him out to the Front for any useful length of time. After the war Nevinson came to regret being so closely associated with war art, and even to having been a war artist. In 1930, for example, one finds him declaring that he wished the First World War had never happened. He did acknowledge though that, without the war, he would never have become so well known, so young "I only wish I had been born in my father's time because I would have had nothing to do with that war

of 1914 which interrupted all important things ... [and] in these disillusioned years I have heard many of my generation say that the ones who got killed came off best."⁶⁵⁷

The following year he wrote an article for the avant-garde magazine *The Island* in which he seemed to suggest that Futurism's very obsession with a brutish form of masculine behaviour had fatally undermined the value of the movement's artistic output. He also argued that Futurism's preoccupation with masculine posturing had led to its lamentably close association with the thuggish creed of Fascism.⁶⁵⁸ In 1932 Nevinson wrote to his old friend, and fellow war artist, William Rothenstein of his conviction that it was entirely due to his service as a private, and as a war artist, that he had been ill so often during the preceding decade.⁶⁵⁹ Nevinson's tragedy was that he sought a certain role and, when he attempted to perform it, he found the role overwhelmed him mentally and physically. Thereafter, he felt himself completely alienated from the model of working-class masculinity Kennington and Jagger found so satisfying and even therapeutic.

In 1932 Kennington began carving a figure entitled *War God* [Plate 105], identifying the Italian Fascist dictator Mussolini as the unacceptable face of modern, martial masculinity. To a certain extent the figure can be interpreted, and has⁶⁶⁰, as Kennington's mea culpa at becoming famous through war art. Yet, when the work was first exhibited in November 1935, to protest against the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, Kennington carefully inscribed 'uanmi' on the base on which the grotesque figure stood. It is highly likely he did this to suggest that men are congenitally predisposed to strife and the ceaseless search for new outlets for their aggressive instincts.⁶⁶¹ This would accord with his contribution to *Sermons by Artists* the previous year in which referred to man's "ceaseless boiling of the flesh" for action, strife and conquest.⁶⁶² Humanity would have to undergo a radical change in order to rid itself of such inherent and, apparently, inextricable murderous compulsions. In a similar way to Jagger, Kennington appears to have viewed human history along bleakly Darwinian lines, convinced that the struggle between peoples for territorial or ideological hegemony was an ineluctable part of existence.

As mentioned previously, Kennington spent much of the latter part of the 1920's working on his contribution to the Soissons memorial to the Missing [Plate 103] He carved three colossal nine foot high figures of British 'Tommyes' for the memorial. They impassively and inscrutably stand in respect by the rudimentary battlefield grave of a recently killed comrade. Even though this memorial was unveiled as late as 1928, exactly when the first texts which have traditionally, and perhaps erroneously, been labelled 'anti-war' were being published in Britain, Kennington emphasised to *The Times* that he did not regard these men as objects for pity. Rather, he saw them as

deserving admiration and, indeed, emulation. He had expressly carved them to project a reassuring sense of "majesty and peace" and the underlying implication that the British nation would always be able to produce men as solid, reliable, and stoically implacable as he hoped the three figures appeared to the passer-by.⁶⁶³ There is evidence to suggest that he carved the three massive figures to demonstrate that the masculine type it celebrated, incorporating qualities associated with the wartime working-class 'Tommy', was timeless. Indeed, the artist sought to make his stone 'Tommies' appear to belong both to the contemporary age of the machine and, simultaneously, traceable to the 'primitive', trans-cultural masculine virtues he detected in the huge and enigmatic carvings of male ancestor figures found on Easter Island.⁶⁶⁴ [Plate 104] Kennington, evidently, cherished the pre-war normative model of masculinity, believing he had first found it, in its purest and most convincing form, in the trenches. During a Second World War, the men from no.7 Platoon, C. Company of the Kensingtons [Plate 34], with whom he had served for two months in the trenches, remained a collective benchmark of masculine behaviour in a time of stress for Kennington. His First World War comrades had been resourceful, stoical, self-confident without being boastful, self-deprecating, unwilling to dwell upon any deeds of bravery, emotionally restrained, and capable of tremendous self-control in adversity. In 1941 Kennington told a friend of many years standing that "In 1914-15 I became convinced that I was a bloody coward surrounded by brave men."⁶⁶⁵ However, he had found their quiet, undemonstrative, yet tenacious courage contagious. To his combined delight and relief he detected, twenty years on, the very same qualities in the British sailors and airmen he was drawing for the Ministry of Information.

Kennington clearly regarded the British 'Tommy' as a timeless figure, along the lines sketched by Robert Graves in the preface he had penned for the catalogue to Kennington's exhibition of June 1918. Graves claimed the "the British soldier that fought ... under Cromwell, Marlborough [and] Wellington ... is the finest soldier that has ever handled arms."⁶⁶⁶ He had found carving the Soissons memorial figures physically very demanding and his close friend T.E. Lawrence thought Kennington had been left "hag-ridden" by the war.⁶⁶⁷ However, Kennington seems to have found something emotionally therapeutic in the very process of spending years, slowly and painstakingly, carving a war memorial. It provided him with time to disentangle his thoughts about the war and to come to terms with what he had experienced.⁶⁶⁸ He also derived great satisfaction from discussing the war with Robert Graves, Morris Thomas and former Sergeant Woods, his carefully selected models for the three figures comprising the 24th Infantry Division memorial. [Plate 94] It was for, perhaps, similar reasons that Jagger insisted upon using ex-servicemen as models for the majority of the figures of soldiers he provided for the war memorial projects with which he was involved. For example, an ex-gunner called Fosten served as the model of the figure of *The Driver* [Plate 98] on

the Royal Artillery Memorial. Jagger selected another ex-gunner named Metcalfe as the model for the memorial's imposing figure of *The Ammunition-Carrier*. [Plate 99] Indeed, Jagger found employment for Metcalfe in his own studio.⁶⁶⁹

As mentioned previously, Jagger experienced some form of physical and, possibly, psychological collapse immediately after the completion of the Royal Artillery memorial. On the advice of his doctors, he took six months rest. However, at some point in 1927, he began to experience occasional severe chest pains and was diagnosed as suffering from angina.⁶⁷⁰ Both specialists Jagger consulted concluded his condition had been exacerbated by his war wounds and by the punishing workload he had inflicted upon himself. Jagger insisted that his second wife, Evelyn, remained entirely ignorant as to the seriousness of his medical condition. He then, if anything, accelerated work on existing commissions and sought to attract more.⁶⁷¹ It was as if he realised that time was running out for him with the prospect of his dying prematurely in the near future. By the early 1930's he was working even longer hours in his studio in order to complete what would prove to be his last public war memorial; two nine foot high figures flanking the main entrance to the new headquarters of ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) on Millbank. Jagger, revealingly, gave these two figures the collective title of 'The Price of Empire.' It is also significant that, at the artist's express wish, the memorial was unveiled on 4 August 1933 - the 19th anniversary of the British declaration of war on Imperial Germany. [Plates 106 and 107]⁶⁷²

The symbolism of the group is striking. On the left-hand side, St. George, depicted as the crusading patron saint of England, tenderly embraces the souls of dead 'Tommyes' rising from their battlefield graves in France and Flanders below. [Plate 106] Though nude, the figures ascending to the embrace of the saint though nude are easily identifiable as British soldiers. A few, indeed, are still wearing their distinctively shaped steel helmets, or 'tin hats', at a variety of rakish angles. [Plate 107] Given the thoughts about the war he had articulated in the past, it is quite possible that Jagger hoped the symbolism of the St. George would be interpreted as a tangible indication that the country still fervently valued the sacrifice of its First World War dead. The artist was in no doubt that the suffering had not all been in vain and that the 'price of empire' had been worth paying. Jagger, and his circle of friends at the time, strongly suspected that a future war with the Führer's Germany was unavoidable as it became more powerful and truculently self-confident, while irreversible economic and military decline seemed to be the unavoidable fate of the British Empire.⁶⁷³ As Jagger's health worsened, he was still preoccupied with thoughts of his First World War service and, especially, his ordeal at Gallipoli. In 1933 he made a rare, uncommissioned work, a five-foot high plaster head he entitled *The Steel Puddler* [Plate 108]. When the head was exhibited at the Royal Academy, the following year, Jagger described it in the press as an "idealised

portrait from memory of a soldier from Yorkshire" who had served in the platoon of the Worcesters at Suvla Bay the artist had commanded.⁶⁷⁴ Could this man possibly have been the anonymous corporal who, on 5 November 1915, crawled thirty yards, under intense Turkish fire, into 'No-Man's-Land' to reach a wounded Jagger and drag him back to the safety of the British lines? According to Jagger's friend Robert Tatlock, while working on *The Steel Puddler*, Jagger had told him he remained confident Britain could still produce men of similar sterling calibre to the Sheffield steel worker commemorated by his grim plaster head.⁶⁷⁵

Poignantly, Jagger's own end was hastened by wishing to remember the dead of the First World War. Though not feeling at all well, he attended the Armistice Day ceremony for 1934 at the Royal Artillery memorial, observing the two minutes silence with head bared to the pouring rain. Shortly afterwards he caught a chill, took to his bed and, five days later, died in his sleep from a massive heart.⁶⁷⁶ His widow later recalled that, only a couple of days before his death, she had found her husband brooding about his First World War service. Jagger asked his wife, rhetorically, whether all the bloodshed could be possibly justified "One of the last things I remember him saying was – if war came again, should we all be fools and go again? 'Of course we should' he said to himself, with all the considerable emphasis of which he was capable."⁶⁷⁷ While Nevinson generally bemoaned his involvement in the First World War, Kennington and Jagger certainly did not. Nevinson may have lost his faith in the more overtly modern, Futurist, model of masculinity and found no secure and lasting substitute. Kennington and Jagger, however, both found hope for future in a far more traditional and conventional masculine type derived from a class often overlooked and denigrated by the nation's intelligentsia. Neither artist could ever forget, not did they wish to, that comradeship with ordinary working-class males, with their staggering capacity for grimly humorous endurance, had enabled both to survive the daily hell of life in the trenches. Both Kennington and Jagger shared a view of the world infused with a rough and ready Social Darwinism that had been reinforced by their experience of the First World War. As admirers of *Her Privates We*, both men would have wholeheartedly endorsed the bleakly unsentimental statement of fact offered by Frederic Manning in his foreword to the book "War is waged by men; not by beasts, or by gods. It is a peculiarly human activity."⁶⁷⁸

PLATES.**Chapter One: Plates 1-13.**

[1] *Gasometers*, C.R.W. Nevinson, c.1910-11, oil on canvas, 44 x 59.5 cm (17 ¼ x 23 ½ inches), Private Collection.

[2] *A View of Bradford*, C.R.W. Nevinson, c.1912, oil on canvas, 40.5 x 51 cm (16 x 20 inches), Private Collection.

[3] *La Villette*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, lithograph (after an oil on canvas, c. 1913), 38.5 x 30.3 cm (15 ¼ x 12 inches), British Museum.

[4] *Allotments*, C.R.W. Nevinson, c.1912-13, oil on canvas, 42 x 46 cm (16 ½ x 18 ¼ inches), Private Collection.

[5] *After a German Retreat: Labour Battalion Making a Road through a Captured Village*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1918, lithograph, 22.9 x 31.1 cm (9 x 12 ¼ inches), British Museum.

[6] *The Workers*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1919, lithograph, 51.5 x 25.3 cm (20 ¼ x 14 inches), British Museum.

[7] *Crosse and Blackwell Factory Dining Hall Mural*, Eric Henri Kennington, c.1912, watercolour study, Private Collection.

[8] *Work (Detail)*, Ford Madox Brown, 1856-63, oil on canvas, 137 x 197.3 cm (54 x 77 ½ inches), Manchester City Art Gallery, Great Britain.

[9] *The Costardmongers*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1914, oil on canvas, 131 x 122 cm (51 ½ x 48 inches), Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

[10] *Laying a Field Telephone Wire*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, pastel on paper, 60 x 42 cm (23 ¾ x 16 ½ inches), Manchester City Art Gallery, Great Britain.

[11] *The Ration Carrier (9th Royal Sussex)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, pastel on paper, 62.8 x 49.5 cm (24 ¾ x 19 ½ inches), Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

[12] *East Surrey Farmer*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, pastel on paper, Private Collection.

[13] *Tum-Tiddly-Um-Tum-Pom-Pom*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1914, oil, lace and confetti on canvas, Whereabouts Unknown.

Chapter Two: Plates 14-34.

[14] *C.R.W. Nevinson standing next to his motor ambulance c. November 1914*, postcard, Palazzo Grazzi, Venice.

[15] *The Automobilist (Also known as 'The Mechanic')*, C.R.W. Nevinson, c.1914, plaster head, Whereabouts Unknown.

[16] *C.R.W. Nevinson explaining the meaning of The Automobilist to Private Smith, September 1915*, newspaper cutting, Tate Gallery Archive, London.

[17] *Portrait of a Motor Ambulance Driver*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, pen and ink. Reproduced in the *Gazette of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth* April 1916 p.179.

[18] *Portrait of a Motor Ambulance Driver*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, pastel on paper, 25.2 x 29.1 cm (10 x 16 ½ inches), Private Collection.

[19] *Returning to the Trenches*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1914-15, pastel, 13.9 x 20.3 cm (5 ½ x 8 inches), Imperial War Museum. London.

[20] *Returning to the Trenches*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1914-15, charcoal on paper study, 14.5 x 20.5 cm (5 ¾ x 8 ¼ inches), Tate Britain.

[21] *Returning to the Trenches*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1914-15, pen and ink. Reproduced *Blast Two: War Number*, July 1915 as *On The Way To The Trenches*.

[22] *Returning to the Trenches*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, drypoint, 15.2 x 19.6 cm (6 x 7 ¾ inches), British Museum.

[23] *Night Arrival of the Wounded*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1915, pen and ink. Reproduced in *T.P.'s Weekly*, 4 December 1915.

[24] *Night Arrival of the Wounded*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1915-16, oil on canvas, 46.3 x 61.2 cm (18 ¼ x 24 inches), Private Collection.

[25] *The Receiving Hall*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1915, blue pencil and pen and ink, 21 x 35 cm (8 ¼ x 5 ¼ inches), Private Collection. Reproduced in the *Gazette of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth*, February 1916 p.115.

[26] *La Mitrailleuse*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1915, oil on canvas, 61 x 50 cm (24 x 19 ¾ inches), Tate Britain.

[27] *La Mitrailleuse*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1915, pen and ink, 17.2 x 14 cm (6 ¾ x 5 ½ inches), Private Collection.

[28] *Column on the March*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 61 x 74.9 cm (24 x 29 ½ inches), Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

[29] *Southampton*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 51 x 61 cm (20 x 24 inches), Southampton Art Gallery.

[30] *Making the Engine (from 'Making Aircraft' series in 'Britain's Efforts and Ideals')*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, lithograph, 40.4 x 30.3 cm (16 x 12 inches), British Museum.

[31] *Acetylene Welder (from 'Making Aircraft' series in 'Britain's Efforts and Ideals')*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, lithograph, 40.4 x 30.3 cm (16 x 12 inches), British Museum.

[32] *The Shell Factory*, Joseph Pennell, 1916, lithograph. Reproduced in *Joseph Pennell's Pictures of War Work in England*, London 1916 p.19.

[33] *The Towing Path, Camden Town*, C.R.W. Nevinson, c.1912, oil on canvas, 76 x 56 cm (30 x 22 inches), Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

[34] *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1915, oil, silver paint and gold leaf on glass, 139.8 x 152.4 cm (55 x 60 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

Chapter Three: Plates 35-48.

[35] *A Dawn 1914*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, drypoint, 20.1 x 15 cm (8 x 6 inches), British Museum.

[36] *Troops Resting*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 71.1 x 91.4 cm (28 x 36 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[37] *Where Did That One Go To?*, Bruce Baimsfather, 1915, pencil and watercolour on paper. Reproduced in *The Bystanders Fragments from France*, London 1916 p.8.

[38] *The Canadians at Ypres*, William Barnes Wollen, 1916, oil on canvas, 111.8 x 162.8 cm (44 x 64 inches), Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

[39] *At the Concert/When Harry Tate Came Down*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, pen and ink. Reproduced in the *Gazette of the Third London General, Wandsworth*, June 1916 p.237.

[40] *The Bayonet Instructor (from 'Making Soldiers' series in 'Britain's Efforts and Ideals')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, lithograph, 46.5 x 35.5 cm (18 ¼ x 14 inches), British Museum.

[41] *Over the Top (from 'Making Soldiers' series in Britain's Efforts and Ideals')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, lithograph, 45.6 x 36.5 cm (18 x 14 ½ inches), British Museum.

[42] *Bringing in Prisoners (from 'Making Soldiers' series in 'Britain's Efforts and Ideals')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, lithograph, 46.3 x 36 cm (18 ¼ x 14 ¼ inches), British Museum.

[43] *Yorkshire Lewis-Gunner*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, pastel on paper, 67.8 x 46.8 cm (26 ¾ x 18 ½ inches), Manchester City Art Gallery, Great Britain.

[44] *The Sniper*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, pastel on paper, Whereabouts Unknown. Reproduced in *The Graphic*, 5 May 1917.

[45] *Got'Im*, Alfred Priest, 1918, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 127 cm (40 x 50 inches), Whereabouts Unknown. Exhibited Royal Academy, May 1918.

[46] *Signallers*, William Roberts, 1918, pen and ink and watercolour on paper, 31.8 x 50.8 cm (12 ½ x 20 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[47] *The Raider with a Cosh*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel on paper, 63 x 47 cm (24 ¾ x 18 ½ inches), Tate Britain.

[48] *The Cupbearer*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel on paper, 50.5 x 36.6 cm (19 ¾ x 14 ½ inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

Chapter Four: Plates 49-58.

[49] *My Dream For Years To Come*, Bruce Bairnsfather, 1915, pencil and watercolour on paper. Reproduced in *The Bystander's Fragments From France*, London 1916 p.41.

[50] *What It Really Feels Like*, Bruce Bairnsfather, 1915, pencil and watercolour on paper. Reproduced in *The Bystander's Fragments From France*, London 1916 p.37.

[51] *That 16-Inch Sensation*, Bruce Bairnsfather, 1915, pencil and watercolour on paper. Reproduced in *The Bystander's Fragments From France*, London 1916 p.40.

[52] *The Communication Trench*, Bruce Bairnsfather, 1915, pencil and watercolour on paper. Reproduced in *The Bystander's Fragments From France: Volume Two*, London 1916 p.25.

[53] *In The Observation Ward*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, Whereabouts Unknown. Reproduced in *Modern War: Paintings by C.R.W. Nevinson*, P.G. Konody, London 1916 p.49.

[54] *To The Padded Room*, Stephen Baghot de la Bère, 1915, pen and ink. Reproduced in the *Gazette of the Third London General, Wandsworth*, December 1915 p.63.

[55] *Sprucers*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 64.8 cm (30 x 25 ½ inches), Bristol City Art Gallery and Museum.

[56] *A Group of Soldiers*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, oil on canvas, 91.4 x 61.9 cm (36 x 24 ½ inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[57] *Via Crucis (also known as Bothered, Bewitched and Bewildered)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel, 63.5 x 41.5 cm (25 x 16 ¼ inches), Manchester City Art Gallery.

[58] *A Man Chosen for Dangerous Work (also known as '8th Queens Hero')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1917, pastel, 45 x 53.2 cm (17 ¾ x 13 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

Chapter Five: Plates 59-80.

[59] *The Great Sacrifice*, James Clark, 1915, colour lithograph. Reproduced Wilkinson, Alan, *The Church of England and the First World War*, London, 1978 p.146.

[60] *Greater Love Hath No Man*, Charles Sims, 1917, watercolour on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Exhibited Royal Academy, May 1917.

[61] *La Patrie*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 60.8 x 92.5 cm (24 x 36 ½ inches), Birmingham City Art Gallery.

[62] *The Doctor*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, oil on canvas, 57.1 x 41.2 cm (22 ½ x 16 ¼ inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[63] *The Doctor*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1916, drypoint, 20.3 x 15.2 cm (8 x 6 inches), British Museum, London.

[64] *The Creditors*, J.C. Dollman, 1916, oil on canvas, 104.1 x 182.8 cm (41 x 72 inches). Whereabouts unknown. Exhibited Royal Academy, May 1916.

[65] *Forgetting Their Pains*, J.H. Dowd, 1916, pencil and ink on paper. Reproduced *Gazette of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth*, May 1916 p.44.

[66] *Portraits of Men with Facial Wounds*, Henry Tonks, 1916, pastel, 61 x 45.7 cm (24 x 18 inches), Royal College of Surgeons.

[67] *Sergeant Luff*, Tom Roberts, 1916, pencil on paper. Reproduced *Gazette of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth*, December 1916 p.67.

[68] *Paths of Glory*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1917, oil on canvas, 45.7 x 60.9 cm (18 x 24 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[69] *Paths of Glory 'Censored'*. (As appeared *Daily Mail*, 2 March 1918). Reproduced Hynes, Samuel, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, London 1992 plate 14.

[70] *Dead and Wounded of the 60th Battalion AIF on Broodseinde Ridge, 12 October 1917*, Frank Hurley, 1917, photograph, Australian War Memorial, Canberra (Neg. E03864).

[71] *Mother! Mother!* Alfred Priest, 1917, oil on canvas, 152.5 x 124.5 cm (60 x 49 inches). Whereabouts unknown. Exhibited Royal Academy, May 1917.

[72] *Mustard Gas Patient with Oxygen Tank*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel, 55.9 x 75.6 cm (22 x 29 ¾ inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[73] *Gassed and Wounded*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, oil on canvas, 71.1 x 91.4 cm (28 x 36 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[74] *Mustard Gas*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel, 65.4 x 50.2 cm (25 ¾ x 19 ¾ inches), Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

[75] *Soldier with 'Trench Fever'*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel, 43.8 x 59 cm (17 ¼ x 23 ¼ inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[76] *A Ward in a Casualty Clearing Station*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1918, pastel, 55 x 73.8 cm (21 ¾ x 29 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[77] *Battered But Victorious*, Fortunio Matania, 1918, pencil and wash on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Reproduced Bourke, Joanna, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, London, 1996, p.32.

[78] *The Listening Post/No-Man's-Land' (First Version)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1918, bronze low-relief, 14.2 x 48.5 cm (5 ¾ x 19 ¼ inches), Private Collection.

[79] *The Listening Post/No-Man's-Land' (Second Version)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1918-1919, plaster low-relief, 129.5 x 335.4 cm (51 x 132 inches), Imperial War Museum, London.

[80] *Study for The Listening Post/No-Man's-Land'*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1918, pencil on paper, 35.5 x 28 cm (14 x 11 inches), Henry Moore Centre for the Study of Sculpture, Leeds.

Chapter Six: Plates 81-102.

[81] *The Harvest of Battle*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1919, oil on canvas, 182.8 x 317.8 cm (71 ¼ x 125 inches), Imperial War Museum.

[82] *Hans and Fritz*, C.R.W. Nevinson, 1918, lithograph, 47 x 34.5 cm (18 ½ x 13 ½ inches), British Museum.

[83] *The Worcesters at Gheluvelt (The First Battle of Ypres)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1918-19, low-relief in plaster, 243 x 386 cm (95 ¾ x 152 inches), Imperial War Museum, London. Commemorates a successful action fought on 31 October 1914 by 8 officers and 360 men of the 2nd battalion, the Worcestershire Regiment.

[84] *The Conquerors (also known as 'The Victims')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1920, oil on canvas, 295.9 x 242.5 cm (116 ¼ x 95 ½ inches), Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

[85] *Sergeant Smith (Study for The Conquerors)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1919, charcoal, 56.2 x 38.7 cm (22 ¼ x 15 ¼ inches), Leicester City Art Gallery.

[86] *Two Soldiers of the 16th Canadian-Scottish (Studies for The Conquerors)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1919, charcoal, 48.3 x 66 cm (19 x 26 inches), Private Collection.

[87] *Macclesfield Town Council War Memorial*, John Millard, 1919-21, bronze, figures 243.8 cm (96 inches) high, Macclesfield Cheshire. Unveiled: 21 September 1921. Commemorates 697 dead and 'missing' from the town and surrounding areas.

[88] *Soldier on Defence (Hoylake and West Kirby Borough Council War Memorial – East Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1919-21, bronze, 244 cm (96 inches) high, West Kirby, Merseyside. Unveiled: 16 December 1922. Commemorates 337 dead from the borough.

[89] *Humanity (Hoylake and West Kirby Borough Council War Memorial – West Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1919-21, bronze, 244 cm (96 inches) high, West Kirby, Merseyside.

[90] *Royal Marine Lewis-Gunner (Portsmouth City War Memorial)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1920-21, Portland stone, 91.5 cm (36 inches), Portsmouth. Unveiled: 19 October 1921. Commemorates 5,915 dead from the city.

[91] *The Sentry (S and J Watts Warehouse War Memorial)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1920-22, bronze, 213.8 cm (84 inches), entrance to the Britannia Hotel, Portland Street, Manchester. Unveiled: 4 August 1922. Commemorates 87 dead employees of S. and J. Watts' Warehouses.

[92] *Advancing Infantryman (Southwark Cathedral War Memorial)*, Philip Lindsay Clark, 1921-22, bronze, 243.8 cm (96 inches high), Borough High Street, London. Unveiled: 16 November 1922. Commemorates 452 dead who once worshipped at St. Saviours Parish Church, later designated Southwark Cathedral.

[93] *The Homecoming (Cambridge Town Council War Memorial)*, Robert Tait McKenzie, 1921-22, bronze, 243.8 cm (96 inches) high, Cambridge. Unveiled: 3 July 1922. Commemorates 1,867 dead from the town and surrounding areas.

[94] *24th Infantry Division Memorial (Front View)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1921-24, Portland stone, figures 205.7 cm (81 inches), figures with base 380.9 cm (150 inches), Battersea Park, London. Unveiled: 4 October 1924.

[95] *24th Infantry Division Memorial (Rear View)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1923-24, Portland stone, Battersea Park, London.

[96] *Royal Artillery Memorial*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1921-25, bronze and Portland stone, 11.3 x 6.4 x 13.1 meters (37 x 21 x 43 feet), Hyde Park Corner, London. Unveiled: 18 October 1925. Photograph of the Unveiling Ceremony, reproduced: *The Illustrated London News*, 24 October 1925, p.795.

[97] *Charles Sargeant Jagger standing beside the Portland Stone 9.2 inch Siege Howitzer on top of the Royal Artillery Memorial*. Photograph taken c. September 1925, G. Jagger Collection.

[98] *The Driver (Royal Artillery Memorial – West Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1921-25, bronze, 259.1 cm (102 inches) high, Hyde Park Corner, London.

[99] *The Ammunition Carrier (Royal Artillery Memorial – East Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1923-25, bronze, 259.1 cm (102 inches) high, Hyde Park Corner, London.

[100] *Dead Artilleryman (Royal Artillery Memorial – North End)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1923-25, bronze, 259.1 cm (102 inches) long, Hyde Park Corner, London.

[101] *Heavy Artillery (Royal Artillery Memorial – East Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1923-25, low-relief in Portland stone, 200 x 535 cm (78 ¾ x 210 inches), Hyde Park Corner, London.

[102] *Horse Artillery (Royal Artillery Memorial – West Side)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1923-25, low relief in Portland stone, 200 x 535 cm (78 ¾ x 210 inches), Hyde Park Corner, London.

Conclusion: Plates 103-108.

[103] *The Soissons Trinity (Soissons Memorial to the Missing of the Battles of the Marne and the Aisne)*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1925-28, Euville stone, 274.4 cm (108 inches) high, Place des Anglais, Soissons, France. Unveiled: 22 July 1928. Commemorates 3,987 'missing' British soldiers.

[104] *Easter Island Ancestor Head*, Unknown Carver, Second century AD, granite, 242 cm (95 ½ inches) high, British Museum, London,

[105] *God of War (also known as 'Mammon')*, Eric Henri Kennington, 1932-33, Portland stone, 135 x 45 x 40 cm (53 ¼ x 17 ¾ x 15 ¾ inches), C.J. Kennington on loan to the Henry Moore Centre for the Study of Sculpture, Leeds.

[106] *St. George (Part of the 'Price of Empire' – Brunner Mond War Memorial)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1932-33, Portland stone, 365.8 cm (144 inches) high, Thames House, Millbank, London. Unveiled: 4 August 1933. Commemorates 3,020 dead and 'missing' employees of Brunner Mond Chemicals (amalgamated into Imperial Chemical Industries, 1927).

[107] *Detail of St. George (The Price of Empire)*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1932-33, Portland stone, 365.8 cm (144 inches) high, Thames House, Millbank, London.

[108] *The Steel Puddler*, Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1933, bronze, 152.4 cm (60 inches) high. Whereabouts unknown. Exhibited Royal Academy, London, May 1934.

Abbreviations.

Berg Collection, New York Public Library: NYPL

British War Memorials Committee: BWMC

Houghton Library, Harvard University: HLHU.

Department of Art, Imperial War Museum, London: IWM

Kennington Archive, Department of Modern Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford University: KABL

Henry Wood Nevinson Papers, Department of Modern Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford University: HNPBL

Department of Art Archives, Manchester City Art Gallery: MCAG.

Public Record Office, Kew Gardens, London: PRO

Tate Gallery Archive, London: TGA

End Notes.

Introduction.

¹ *Soldiers Three*, Rudyard Kipling, Lahore, Indian Railway Library, 1888; London, Penguin, 1993, p.185. 'Thomas Atkins' was a Private in the Royal Welch Fusiliers whose name was selected at random in August 1815 by the War Office to be used on a trial version of a projected Army Pay Book. This would become standard issue to all men serving in the ranks. The Duke of Wellington suggested the name be used again in June 1830. It was formally adopted, as part of Queen's Regulations for the Army of the Victorian Age, in 1837.

² *The Unquiet Western Front: Britain's Role in Literature and History*, Brian Bond, Cambridge UK, 2002, p.2.

³ *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.198.

⁴ *Television and History*, Graham Roberts and Philip M. Taylor (eds.), Luton UK, 2001, pp.113-125.

⁵ Bond, Cambridge UK, 2002, p.118.

⁶ *The Collapse of British Power*, Correlli Barnett, London, 1972, p.424.

⁷ *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in 20th Century Warfare*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1999, pp.1-2.

⁸ *Her Privates We*, Frederic Manning, London, 1930/1999, pp. xii-xiii.

⁹ Bond, Cambridge UK, 2002, p.29.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.30.

¹¹ Manning, London, 1930/1999, p.vii.

¹² *Warrior*, Graham Seton Hutchison, London, 1932, p.149 and *Twelve Days*, Sidney Rogerson, London, 1933, p.335.

¹³ *C.R.W. Nevinson: The Twentieth-Century*, Richard Ingleby, Jonathan Black, David Cohen and Gordon Cooke, London, 1999, pp.27-37.

¹⁴ *C.R.W. Nevinson: This Cult of Violence*, Michael Walsh, London, 2002, pp.1-2. The author indicates that one of his principal objectives for the book is to rectify the "inconsistencies" in *Paint and Prejudice* covering the key periods in Nevinson's career such as: his involvement with Futurism, his work as a war artist and his two trips to New York between 1919 and 1920 working from "recently uncovered archival sources."

¹⁵ *The Burlington Magazine*, April 1916, 7311.2B, TGA.

¹⁶ *Sunday Times*, 24 September 1916. Press Clippings, Department of Art, IWM.

¹⁷ Robert Ross to Arnold Bennett, memorandum 23 April 1918. Minutes of the British War Memorials Committee [BWMC], Department of Art, IWM.

¹⁸ *Saturday Review*, 16 March 1918. Press Clippings, Department of Art, IWM.

¹⁹ *Glasgow Herald*, 19 March 1918. 7311.2C. TGA.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p.16.

²¹ *Constructing Masculinity*, edited by Maurice Berger, Brian Wallis and Simon Watson. New York, 1995, pp.4-5.

²² Kennington was in the firing line in France, with the Kensingtons, from 21 November 1914 to 19 January 1915. *Army Form B.2067* (Discharge Papers for Private 1799 E.H. Kennington, 1 June 1916). C.J. Kennington Collection.

²³ *The Graphic Art of Eric Kennington*, Jonathan Black, Strang Print Room, University College London, 2001, pp.1-28.

²⁴ Eric Kennington to William Kennington, c. late February/early March 1915, 193h Kennington Papers, KABL.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 193e.

²⁶ Eric Kennington to William Kennington, c. late March 1915, 194d, KABL.

²⁷ Eric to William Kennington, c. late February/early March 1915, 193e, KABL.

²⁸ Eric to William Kennington, c. late March 1915, 194a, KABL.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 193e, KABL.

³⁰ *The British Soldier*, Preface by Robert Graves, London, 1918, p.3.

³¹ Bond, London, 2002, p.30. *Goodbye To All That*, Robert Graves, London, 1929/1960, p.162 details the depth of his faith in the British military tradition and suggests just how much importance he attached to the continuing need for that tradition.

³² Eric Kennington to Celandine Kennington, Letter postmarked, 29 August 1924, 214a, KABL.

³³ *The Times*, 20 May 1916, p.9.

³⁴ William Rothenstein to Alfred Yockney, 7 January 1918. Rothenstein WWI File, Department of Art, IWM.

³⁵ Interview between Robert Ross and Eric Kennington, 25 March 1918. British War Memorials File, Department of Art, IWM.

³⁶ Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. late December 1917. BMS Eng. 1148-823, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

³⁷ Eric Kennington interviewed by John Rothenstein in *Apollo*, June 1926, p.318.

³⁸ Gilbert Bayes quoted in the *Morning Post*, 17 November 1934. Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

- ³⁹ Fulsome praise for the Royal Artillery memorial, as the most effective memorial of its type erected in Britain since the end of the war, featured in: *Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1934, p.13; *Daily Express*, 17 November 1934, p.11 and *The Sunday Times*, 18 November 1934, p.17. Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁴⁰ *Manchester Guardian*, 20 October 1925, p.20.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* 19 October 1925, p.10 and the *Daily Mail*, 19 October 1925, p.9.
- ⁴² 'The Royal Artillery Memorial' by Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Uniacke in *The Illustrated London News*, 14 November 1925, p.956.
- ⁴³ *Manchester Guardian*, 19 October 1925, p.10.
- ⁴⁴ Jagger won the British School at Rome's *Prix de Rome* in 1914, but set it aside to volunteer for the infantry. An article in *The Studio*, published later in 1914, identified Jagger as a 'rising British artist.' I.G. McAllister, *The Studio*, Vol.63, no.260, 14 November 1914.
- ⁴⁵ Mrs. Evelyn Jagger quoted by *The Sheffield Independent*, 17 January 1936. Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection. Mrs. Jagger describes her husband as having been "extremely fond of Kipling."
- ⁴⁶ Minutes of the Hoylake and West Kirby war memorial committee, 11 September 1919, Birkenhead Public Library.
- ⁴⁷ *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling*, Harry Ricketts, London, 1999, p.315. The poem begins: "For all we have and are, For all our children's fate Stand up and take the war The Hun is at the gate!"
- ⁴⁸ *The Poetry of Rudyard Kipling*, Ann Perry, Buckingham UK, 1992, p.128. For the date Jagger volunteered to serve in the 28th battalion, the London Regiment, popularly known as 'the Artist's Rifles', refer to his official army service record WO-339-4591, PRO.
- ⁴⁹ *The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War*, Captain H. Fitz M. Stacke MC, London, 1929, pp.355-358 and the War Diary of the 2nd Worcesters, WO-95-2430, PRO.
- ⁵⁰ Bourke, London, 1999, pp.5-6. See also: *British Fighting Methods in the Great War*, edited by Paddy Griffith, London, 1996, p.101.
- ⁵¹ C.S. Jagger to Robert Tatlock, c. May 1918. G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵² WO-95-339-4591, PRO.
- ⁵³ C.S. Jagger to Violet Constance Smith, 20 November 1915. C. Jagger Archive.
- ⁵⁴ During 1923-4 Jagger employed an ex-artilleryman, Bombardier William Fosten, as the initial model for the figure of *The Driver* destined for the Royal Artillery Memorial. When he found he could not afford to keep Fosten on as an assistant he recommended him in that role to his friend Gilbert Bayes, who took him on. *Military Illustrated: Past and Present*, no.5, February/March 1987 p.20.
- ⁵⁵ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 22 July 1925. Jagger Press Clippings File, IWM.
- ⁵⁶ *Evening News*, 6 May 1923. Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵⁷ 'Confessions of a Sculptor' in *T.P.'s and Cassell's Weekly*, 12 March 1927. Jagger Press Clippings File, IWM.
- ⁵⁸ Mrs. Evelyn Jagger quoted in the *Leeds Mercury*, 29 June 1936. Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵⁹ *War and Peace Sculpture: Charles Sargeant Jagger*, edited by Ann Compton, London, 1985. In the main, a most reliable introduction to Jagger's work though there was evidently insufficient space for anything more than a brief discussion of the majority of his war memorials. There are a number of mistakes contained within the chronological list of Commissions, pp.102-103.
- ⁶⁰ *The Listener*, 2 May 1985, p.38. Jagger Press Clippings File, IWM.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.* *The Guardian*, 7 May 1985, p.8.
- ⁶² *Ibid.* *The Sunday Times*, 8 September 1985, p.4.
- ⁶³ Lisa Tickner, 'Men's Work? Masculinity and Modernism' in *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, edited by Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey, New Hampshire USA, 1994, pp.46-48 and pp.54-55.
- ⁶⁴ *Constructing Masculinity*, edited by Maurice Berger, Brian Wallis and Simon Watson, New York, 1995, pp.71-74.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.* pp.3-5.

⁶⁶ *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture*, Elaine Showalter, London, 1997, pp.72-73.

⁶⁷ *Army Form B.2067* (Discharge Papers for Private 1799 E.H. Kennington, 1 June 1915). C.J. Kennington Collection.

⁶⁸ *The Western Front*, Richard Holmes, London, 1999 and *Forgotten Victory: The First World War, Myth and Realities*, Gary Sheffield, London, 2001 are two recent examples of the revisionist treatment of the war, emphasising the significance of the part played by the British Army in the eventual defeat of Germany.

⁶⁹ *Realities of War*, Philip Gibbs, London, 1920, p.450.

⁷⁰ *Disenchantment*, C.E. Montague, London, 1922, pp.152-154.

⁷¹ *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919-1946*, Adrian Gregory, Oxford UK, 1994.

⁷² *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance*, Alex King, Oxford, 1998.

⁷³ *The Spectator*, 8 July 1916, p.39.

⁷⁴ Gibbs, London, 1920, p.324.

⁷⁵ Manning, London, 1930/1999, p.40.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p.182.

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⁷⁷ *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, edited by Norman Bryson, Michael A. Holly and Keith Moxey, New Hampshire USA, 1994. See Chapter: *Men's Work? Masculinity and Modernism* by Lisa Tickner, pp.47-48.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* *Gericault and Masculinity*, Norman Bryson, p.231.

⁷⁹ *Life's Fitful Fever*, Margaret Nevinson, London, 1926, p.121.

⁸⁰ *Paint and Prejudice*, C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, pp.11-12, p.15 and p.17.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* pp.36-37 and pp.40-42. 11 May 1911, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-2*, HNPBL.

⁸² *London Labour and The London Poor. Volume One*, Henry Mayhew, London, 1967, pp.11-12 and p.15.

⁸³ *Fifty Years of the Costers Mission*, James Stuart, London, 1911, pp.100-103.

⁸⁴ *The City of the World: A Book About London and the Londoner*, Edwin Pugh, London, 1912, pp.41-42.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* p.44.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p.315.

⁸⁷ *The Thirty Nine Steps* was published in October 1915 see: *The Times Literary Supplement*, 21 October 1915, p.369.

⁸⁸ *Carrington: A Life of Dora Carrington 1893-1932*, Gretchen Gerzina, Oxford UK, 1989, p.33.

⁸⁹ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.49 and p.88. Nevinson, with pride, claimed that, in his Parisian student days c.1911-12, he was known in Montparnasse circles as "L'Apache qui rit", the 'laughing Apache'. It may be relevant that the *Manifesto of the Futurist Painters*, published in February 1910, asked: "How can we remain insensible to the frenetic life of our great cities and to the exciting new psychology of night-life: the feverish figures of the bon-viveur, the cocotte, the apache and the absinthe drinker?" *Futurist Manifestos*, Umbro Apollonio, London, 1973, p.25.

⁹⁰ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.75.

⁹¹ Nevinson mentions in his autobiography that on returning from a trip to Paris he bought a motorcycle and exhibited a picture at the New English Art Club of "some men hauling a barge along the canal at La Villette [in Paris]" C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.54. The work was actually exhibited at the Friday Club, early in February 1914. *The New Statesman*, Vol.2, no.46, 21 February 1914 p.629.

⁹² 24 January 1913, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-3*, HNPBL. The exhibition was open to the public 25 January-11 February 1913.

⁹³ *The Allotment: Its Landscape and Culture*, David Crouch and Colin Ward, London, 1988, pp.95-96 and p.293.

⁹⁴ *Essays in Rebellion*, H.W. Nevinson, London, 1913, pp.72-74. The essay, entitled *The Imperial Race*, was originally published in the *Nation*, April 1912.

⁹⁵ Crouch and Ward, London, 1988, p.31.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p.9.

⁹⁷ Ibid. pp.240-241.

⁹⁸ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.25.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.24.

¹⁰⁰ Apparently, H.W. Nevinson first met MacDonald in June 1907 in connection with his work for the *Nation*. *More Changes, More Chances*, H.W. Nevinson, London, 1925, p.225.

¹⁰¹ 6 August 1911, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.616-4*, HNPBL

¹⁰² 9 June 1912, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-2*, HNPBL

¹⁰³ *The Age Of Urban Democracy: England 1868-1914*, Donald Read, London, 1994, p.392. Nevinson later gave the Labour Party permission to use the design as a poster, highlighting the evils of unemployment, for the General Election of November 1922. *Labour Leader*, 13 October 1922, 7311.6A-469, TGA.

¹⁰⁴ *Ford Madox Brown and The Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, Teresa Newman and Ray Watkinson, London, 1990, pp.122-123.

¹⁰⁵ *Christianity and Social Questions*, William Cunningham, London, 1910, pp.187-189 and pp.214-215.

¹⁰⁶ *Making The Modern: Industry, Art and Design in America*, Terry Smith, London, 1993, pp.19-20. See also: *Henry Ford: Mass Production, Modernism and Design*, Ray Batchelor, Manchester UK, 1994, pp.47-48 and p.75. In the early 1920's, Ford claimed that his first automated assembly line, inaugurated in April 1913, had been inspired by his visits to slaughterhouses in Chicago and Philadelphia, and to a local factory that canned peas. Ford introduced Britain's first mechanized assembly line at his car plant in Trafford Park, Greater Manchester, in September 1914. However, well into the 1920's, many British car and motorcycle manufacturers persisted with less efficient, hand-propelled, assembly line systems.

¹⁰⁷ *Drawing the RAF: A Book of Portraits*, Sir Ronald Storrs, London, 1942, p.11.

¹⁰⁸ *The Sunday Times*, 17 May 1914 p.7. There was a healthy coster presence at North End Road Market well into the 1920's; in 1901 the social reformer Charles Booth had counted 84 stalls and around the same number were there in 1930 see: *The New Survey of London Life and Labour Volume III: Survey of Social Conditions (I) The Eastern Area*, edited Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith and S.K. Ruck, London, 1932, p.290 and pp.320-321.

¹⁰⁹ *London Labour and The London Poor: Volume One*, Henry Mayhew, London, 1967, pp.21-24.

¹¹⁰ *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations Since 1800*, edited by David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones, London, 1989, p.296.

¹¹¹ Henry Mayhew, London, 1967, pp.33-34.

¹¹² *The Condition of England*, C.F.G. Masterman, London, 1909, pp.3-5.

¹¹³ *The Star*, 18 April 1914, p.7.

¹¹⁴ *The Saturday Review*, 25 April 1914, p.533.

¹¹⁵ *The New Statesman*, Vol. III, no.55, 25 April 1914, pp.85-86.

¹¹⁶ The growing perception that technology had restricted rather than liberating combatants on the Western Front is discussed in *'No-Man's-Land': Combat and Identity in World War One*, Eric J. Leed, Cambridge UK, 1981, p.30.

¹¹⁷ *The Western Mail*, 15 May 1914, reproduced a photograph of Nevinson standing besides the work. 7311.2A-38, TGA.

¹¹⁸ H.W. Nevinson noted in his diary, 4 May 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-2*, HNPBL, that he had seen a "big Futurist bank Holiday" in his son's studio in a room of the family home at 4 Downside Crescent.

¹¹⁹ *More Changes, More Chances*, H.W. Nevinson, London, 1925, pp.378-379.

¹²⁰ *Futurist Manifestos*, Umbro Apollonio, London, 1973, pp.21-23.

¹²¹ Part of a talk Marinetti gave to the Lyceum Women's Club, whose secretary was Nevinson's mother, in April 1910. *Vorticism and The English Avant-Garde*, William C. Wees, Toronto, 1972, p.92.

¹²² *Marinetti: Selected Writings*, edited by R.W.Flint, London, 1972, p.60. The *Manifesto of Futurist Painters*, dated 11 February 1910 and signed by Boccioni,

Carra, Russolo, Balla and Severini, condemned as "insulting to youth...the neurasthenic cultivation of hermaphroditic archaism" present amongst the aesthetes of Europe. *Futurist Manifestos*, Umbro Apollonio, London, 1973, p.25.

¹²³ Published April 1909, reprinted R.W. Flint, London, 1972, pp.53-54.

¹²⁴ 13 April and 18 April 1913, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-4*, HNPBL.

¹²⁵ 30 March 1913, *Ms. Eng. Ms. e.617-4*, HNPBL.

¹²⁶ H.W. Nevinson noted that his son was advised to sell the motorcycle by the family doctor in January 1914 after a prolonged period of illness, during June-July 1913, owing to unspecified 'liver' problems. Entry for 2 January 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-1*, HNPBL.

¹²⁷ Severini to Marinetti, 5 November 1913 in *Severini Futurista: 1914-1917*, A.C. Hanson, London, 1995, p.158.

¹²⁸ 12 August 1913, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-4*, HNPBL.

¹²⁹ *The Western Mail*, 15 May 1914, 7311.2A-38. TGA.

¹³⁰ *Essays in Rebellion*, H.W. Nevinson, London, 1913, pp.72-74.

¹³¹ *The Athenaeum*, 20 June 1914, p.860.

¹³² *The Daily Mirror*, 25 May 1914, p.5. Nevinson may have been aware of and was referring to the plump, grimacing, female face present in the upper left-hand side of Boccioni's *Laughter* [1911, oil on canvas, 110 x 145.5 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York] exhibited at the Sackville Gallery in March 1912.

¹³³ H.W. Nevinson noted that his son attended a pro-suffrage march in Hyde Park, on 4 May 1913, which was dispersed by the police, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.617-4*, HNPBL. In addition, Nevinson junior was present when his father was arrested for affray during a demonstration, on 24 February 1914, in Downing Street against the treatment of Suffragettes in prison under the terms of the so-called 'Cat and Mouse' Act. *More Changes, More Chances*, H.W. Nevinson, London, 1925, p.334.

¹³⁴ Umbro Apollonio, London, 1973, p.96. 'The Destruction of Syntax – Imagination Without Strings – Words in Freedom.' First published in *Lacerba*, 15 June 1913.

¹³⁵ H.W. Nevinson was able to read a draft of his sons manifesto as early as 29 May 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-2*, HNPBL.

¹³⁶ When the Rebel Art Centre was formed, towards the end of March 1914, Nevinson expressly urged that women should be barred from membership. *Art in the Gallery*, Richard Cork, London, 1985, p.196. The Centre formally opened on 30 March 1914.

¹³⁷ A letter, repudiating Nevinson's claims, penned by Lewis and signed by Richard Aldington, David Bomberg, Frederick Etchells, Ezra Pound, Lawrence Atkinson, Edward Wadsworth, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Cuthbert Hamilton and William Roberts, was published in *The Observer*, 14 June 1914. *Vorticism and the English Avant-Grade*, William C. Wees, Toronto, 1972, p.112.

¹³⁸ *The Manchester Guardian*, 13 June 1914, 7311.2A-42, TGA and *The Glasgow Herald*, 13 June 1914, 7311.2A-43, TGA for accounts of a lecture Nevinson and Marinetti gave on the purpose of Futurism at the Doré Galleries the previous evening, which was frequently interrupted by catcalls and the throwing of firecrackers.

¹³⁹ Wyndham Lewis to the Editor of the *Daily News and Leader*, 7 April 1914. *Art Beyond The Gallery*, Richard Cork, London, 1985, p.311, note 141.

¹⁴⁰ One particularly cruel caricature, by Edmund Xavier Kapp, was reproduced in *The New Weekly*, 30 May 1914. Wees, Toronto, 1972, p.141.

¹⁴¹ *The New Statesman*, Vol.3, no.56, 2 May 1914, p.115.

¹⁴² *The Times*, 16 June 1914 and the *Daily Graphic*, 17 June 1914 quoted in Wees, Toronto, 1972, p.105. Typical in his reaction to Marinetti was Augustus John who described him to a friend as: "a superior head waiter or ice cream salesman ... a common type of the meridional: naïve, earnest, excitable, voluble and ignorant." Augustus John to John Quinn, 24 June 1914, Quinn Papers, Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, NYPL.

¹⁴³ *A War Imagines: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.12.

¹⁴⁴ *The New Age*, 8 October 1914, quoted in Hynes, London, 1992, p.64.

¹⁴⁵ *The Daily Mirror*, 26 May 1914, p.5.

¹⁴⁶ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.94.

Chapter Two.

¹⁴⁷ *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Machine Age*, Daniel Pick, London, 1993, p.174 and p.209.

¹⁴⁸ *The Friend*, 6 October 1916 p.781.

¹⁴⁹ *Temp. Mss. 881/1-1-397*, Friends Library, London.

¹⁵⁰ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, pp.96-97.

¹⁵¹ 14 November 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-3*. HNPBL.

¹⁵² C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.100 and p.150.

¹⁵³ Nevinson was to work at the *Hôpital St. Pierre* for the remainder of his time with the Friends Ambulance Unit, between 28 November 1914 and 30 January 1915, until he was granted sick leave. He overstayed this leave and, consequently was not permitted to return to the Unit. *Temp. Mss. 881-1-1-397*, Friends House Library, London.

¹⁵⁴ *The Friend*, 27 November 1914 pp.867-868 and 4 December 1914 pp.884-885.

¹⁵⁵ 24 November 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-3*, HNPBL.

¹⁵⁶ *The Friend*, 15 February 1915, p.122. A dispatch from Dr. Humphrey Nockolds, the Friends Ambulance Unit's Principal Medical Officer at Malo-les-Bains, mentioned Nevinson's job title and stated he would be "much missed."

¹⁵⁷ 19 December 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-4*. HNPBL.

¹⁵⁸ Dunkirk, and its environs, was bombed at least five times by aircraft and zeppelins while Nevinson was working at Malo-les-Bains. Over a hundred casualties were caused including, after the raid of 9 January 1915, the death of "a small, cheeky bakers lad" who visited the Friends hospital every morning with fresh loaves. *The Friend*, 30 December 1914, p.37 and *The Friend*, 22 January 1915, p.61 and p.64.

¹⁵⁹ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.101 and pp.103-104.

¹⁶⁰ Letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, dated 9 February 1915 and published 11 February 1915, 7311. 2A-83. TGA.

¹⁶¹ Boccioni's bust-sized *Fusion of a Head and Casement Window (Marinetti)* and *Abstract Voids and Solids of a Head* (both c.1912-13) were both exhibited at the Doré Galleries during April and May 1914. *Futurism*, Caroline Tisdall and Angelo Bozzoli, London, 1996, p.73.

¹⁶² *The Observer*, 14 February 1915, 7311.2A-80, TGA.

¹⁶³ Wyndham Lewis to the Editor of *T.P.'s Weekly*, 13 July 1914. 7311. 2A-65, TGA.

¹⁶⁴ 6 February 1915, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-4*. HNPBL.

¹⁶⁵ 31 October 1914, *Temp. Ms. 81-1-1-397*, Friends Library, London.

¹⁶⁶ *Daily Graphic*, 11 September 1915, 7311.2A-112a, TGA. An exhibition was held in the hospital's new recreation room, for the other ranks, of works of art by members of the staff. The exhibition opened on 7 September 1915.

¹⁶⁷ Nevinson retained an affection for the plaster bust, even after he categorically renounced the aesthetics of Futurism early in 1919. He exhibited a bronze cast from it, entitled *Machine Slave*, early in February 1933 at the National Society. A reference, in the *Sunday Referee*, 19 February 1933, to the bust as having been "executed when the artist was hiding his face behind the mask of Marinetti" was probably more perceptive than Nevinson would have wished. 7311.9B, TGA.

¹⁶⁸ The first version of this image, drawn in pen and ink, was reproduced in the April 1916 issue of the *Gazette of the Third London General Hospital* p.179. The version in oils was first exhibited with the London Group, early in June 1916.

¹⁶⁹ *The Glasgow Herald*, 3 June 1916, 7311.2B-169, TGA.

¹⁷⁰ *Modern War Paintings*, P.G. Konody, London, 1916, p.23.

¹⁷¹ *Paintings and Drawings of War by C.R.W. Nevinson (Late RAMC): Note by the Artist*. C.R.W. Nevinson, Leicester Galleries, London, 1916, p.7.

¹⁷² C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.111.

¹⁷³ *Daily Express*, 25 February 1915 and reply dated 25 February, published 26 February 1915, 7311. 2A-85-86, TGA.

¹⁷⁴ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.150.

¹⁷⁵ *The Friends Ambulance Unit: A Record 1914-1918*. Edited by Meabum Tatham and James E. Miles, London, 1920, p.9. During his brief stay at Woesten, it is possible, Nevinson encountered men from the French 87th Territorial Division still wearing red trousers as part of their field uniform.

¹⁷⁶ *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and The Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.72.

¹⁷⁷ *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age Volume Two: Synthesis and Decline*, Richard Cork, London, 1976 p.484. Cork's interpretation of these interviews is adopted by David Peters Corbett in *The Modernity of English Art: 1914-1930*, Manchester UK, 1997, p.47. More recently, the accuracy of Cork's view has been questioned in *C.R.W. Nevinson: This Cult of Violence*, Michael J.K. Walsh, London, 2002, p.118.

¹⁷⁸ *Daily Express*, 25 February 1915, 7311.2A-85, TGA. Nevinson went on to exhibit at the only Vorticist exhibition, held in June 1915, as a 'Futurist.' There is considerable evidence to suggest that he did not begin to distance himself from the label of 'Futurist' until early in the summer of 1916, when he may have suspected that his reputation as a Futurist had become an obstacle to an appointment as an official war artist. Letter from Nevinson's friend Douglas Fox-Pitt to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 June 1916, in which he stated: "I do not think Mr. Nevinson would describe himself as a 'Futurist'. He would, probably, be content to call himself a painter." 7311.2B-228, TGA.

¹⁷⁹ Apollonio, London, 1973, pp.21-23.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.* p.25. In the 1910 Manifesto, the same categories condemned by Nevinson in 1915 are singled out for scorn by Boccioni, Carra, Russolo and Severini as the flotsam of the "neurasthenic...hermaphrodite archaism" of nineteenth-century aestheticism.

¹⁸¹ *Vital English Art*, first published in *The Observer*, 7 June 1914, and reprinted in C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, pp.76-77.

¹⁸² *Daily Graphic*, 11 March 1915, 7311.2A-90, TGA.

¹⁸³ 28 May 1915, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.619-1*, HNPBL.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 1 June 1915. A relieved Henry Nevinson noted: "The Captain engaging him [C.R.W. Nevinson] said he should remain in this unit [at Wandsworth] and not go on foreign service."

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 13 October 1915: "Had a long conversation with Colonel Porter who said he was anxious to keep Richard and all the artists in England and there should be no fear of his being compelled to volunteer for the Front."

¹⁸⁶ *Happy, Though Wounded! The Book of The Third London General Hospital*, Edited by Ward Muir, London, 1917, p.20.

¹⁸⁷ 6 June 1915, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.619-1*, HNPBL.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 26 June 1916, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.619-1*, HNPBL.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 17 March 1917 and 10 April 1917, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.620-2*, HNPBL.

¹⁹⁰ C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.108.

¹⁹¹ *Observations of an Orderly: Some Glimpses of Life and Work in an English War Hospital*. Ward Muir, London, 1917, pp.33-35. H.W. Nevinson saw Muir and his son together, in the family home, a number of times during the Autumn of 1915: entries for 19 and 30 October 1915, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.619-2*, HNPBL.

¹⁹² *Happy, Though Wounded!* Ward Muir, London, 1917, p.95. The article, entitled "A Nursing Orderly's Day", was originally published in August 1915.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.* p.99.

¹⁹⁴ *Observations of an Orderly*, Ward Muir, London, 1917, pp.98-99. It is intriguing that Britain's first fully automated assembly line was inaugurated at the Ford Motor Company's plant at Trafford Park, Manchester, in September 1914. Earlier that year, the Editor of the magazine *American Engineering* described Henry Ford's first purpose-built factory, centred on a mechanised assembly line, as "a great productive machine in itself". *Henry Ford: Mass Production, Modernism and Design*, Ray Batchelor, Manchester UK, 1994, pp.72-73.

¹⁹⁵ *Happy, Though Wounded!* Edited Ward Muir, London, 1917, pp.63-64.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* p.64.

¹⁹⁷ *Observations of an Orderly*, Ward Muir, London, 1917, p.96.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* p.103.

¹⁹⁹ *The Manchester Guardian*, 13 February 1920, Press Clippings File, MCAG.

²⁰⁰ *Life's Fitful Fever*, Margaret Nevinson, London, 1926, p.168. The ANZAC soldier was the eldest son of her elder brother Mervyn, who had immigrated to Australia many years before the war.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* p.247.

²⁰² In his autobiography Nevinson wrote that he had painted *La Mitrailleuse* while feeling unwell "during the last two days of my honeymoon leave. C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.115. Nevinson's marriage was announced in the *Daily Mirror*, 2 November 1915, p.3 as 'A Futurists Wedding' that had taken place the previous day at Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill.

²⁰³ *The Burlington Magazine*, April 1916, 7311.2B-148, TGA.

²⁰⁴ Britain's first ever Military Service Act became law on 27 January 1916 and began to come into effect towards the end of March 1916. A second Military Service Act, introducing conscription for all married men aged between 19 and 41, became law at the end of May 1916. *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, Gerard J. de Groot, London, 1996, p.93.

²⁰⁵ A War-Office approved design for a British Army steel helmet did not go into full production until October 1915. The helmet soon became universally known, at the Front, as the 'tin hat.' It was not until the end of May 1916 that every front-line soldier in France had been equipped with an 'Adrian' steel helmet. *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914-1918*, Holgar H. Herwig, London, 1997, p.189.

²⁰⁶ *Daily Mirror*, 22 November 1915, p.9. *Daily Mirror*, 20 December 1915, p.1, '1915, not 1519: a modern-medieval man at arms'. This caption accompanied a photograph of an Italian combat engineer wearing a helmet with chain-mail face-protector, a breastplate, and iron-plated leggings.

²⁰⁷ *Evening News*, 16 March 1916, 7311.2A-145, TGA.

²⁰⁸ Herbert Furst, writing under the pseudonym of 'Tis' in *Colour*, February 1917, 7311.2B-3, TGA.

²⁰⁹ *The Ploughshare*, December 1916, 7311.2B-225, TGA.

²¹⁰ The conception of the French soldiers, in *La Mitrailleuse*, appears to have reminded *The Ploughshare's* anonymous reviewer of the stone Easter Island ancestor figure *Hoa-Haka-Nana-Ia* then on public display in the Ethnographic section of the British Museum. This figure greatly influenced Henri Gaudier-Brzeska in the carving of his stone *Hieratic Head of Ezra Pound* exhibited, alongside work by Nevinson, at the Whitechapel Art Gallery Art show in May 1914.

²¹¹ *Paintings and Drawings of War by C.R.W. Nevinson (Late Private RAMC)*, Artist's Note, Leicester Galleries. London, 1916, p.6.

²¹² *Modern War Paintings: C.R.W. Nevinson*, P.G. Konody, London, 1916, p.21.

²¹³ *The Observer*, 1 October 1916, 7311.2B-201, TGA.

²¹⁴ *The Times*, 29 September 1916, Nevinson Press Clippings File, MCAG.

²¹⁵ The Department of Information had been established in February 1917 and the eminent pre-war lithographer Ernest Jackson (1872-1945) was put in charge of the *Efforts and Ideals* project. *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth-century*, Susie and Meirion Harries, London, 1983, p.46.

²¹⁶ This very point was made by Sir Claude Phillips in the *Daily Telegraph*, 20 July 1917, 7311.2C-346, TGA.

²¹⁷ Nevinson had completed five of the six required lithographs, including *Making the Engine and Acetylene Welder*, by the third week of June 1917. Nevinson to Thomas Derrick, 21 June and 26 June 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226 A-6, IWM.

²¹⁸ Encomia were offered by the *Manchester Guardian*, 17 July 1917, 7311.2C-339, from one end of the political spectrum, and, from the other, by the *Morning Post*, 12 July 1917, 7311.2C-340, TGA.

²¹⁹ *Joseph Pennell's Pictures of War Work in England*, H.G. Wells, London 1916, Plates XIX (*The Shell Factory*) and Plate XX (*Finishing Shells*).

²²⁰ 'The Rambler' in *The Daily Mirror*, 18 October 1916, 7311.2B-219, TGA.

²²¹ *The Sunday Pictorial*, 31 December 1916, 7311.2B-257, TGA.

²²² Laurence Binyon in the *New Statesman*, 12 May 1917, 7311.2C-318, TGA.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Brock, in *The Times*, 20 May 1916 p.9, and Belloc in *Land and Water*, 2 August 1917, 7311.2C-351, TGA discussing Eric Kennington's *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* (1915).

²²⁵ Paul Fussell in *The Observer Review*, 4 October 1998, p.13.

Chapter Three.

²²⁶ *The Great War: Fourth Year* by C.R.W. Nevinson, J.E. Crawford-Fritch, London, 1918, p.14. He interpreted Nevinson's image of the British infantryman as that of: "simply the British working man in khaki..."

²²⁷ *The Great Push*, Patrick MacGill, London, 1916, p.250.

²²⁸ *Soldiers Three*, Rudyard Kipling, London, 1888 (1993) p.20 and p.177.

²²⁹ Ibid. p.ii.

²³⁰ *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*, H.G. Wells, London, 1916 (1985), p.302.

²³¹ Entry for 5 May 1916, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.619-4*, HNPBL.

²³² From a 20% sample of all British casualties sustained between 1916-20, or about one million men, only 0.3% were caused by the bayonet whereas 53% were the result of artillery and trench mortar fire, 35% by rifle or machine gun fire and 10% by various forms of poison gas such as chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas. *British Fighting Methods in the Great War*, edited by Paddy Griffith, London, 1996, p.101.

²³³ *The Observer*, 26 March 1916, 7311. 2A-145, TGA.

²³⁴ *The Ploughshare*, December 1916, 7311-2B-374, TGA.

²³⁵ *Modern War Paintings: C.R.W. Nevinson*, P.G. Konody, London, 1916, p.30.

²³⁶ *British Medical Journal*, 21 August 1915, p.310.

²³⁷ *The Times*, 6 June 1916, p.9.

²³⁸ War Diary of the 13th Battalion, the London Regiment ('The Kensingtons'), August 1914-July 1915, WO- 95-1730, PRO.

²³⁹ Kennington's discharge papers indicate he enlisted in the Kensingtons on 6 August 1914. *Army Form B.2067* (Discharge Papers of Private 1799 E.H. Kennington, 1 June 1916). C.J. Kennington Collection.

²⁴⁰ Eric Kennington to William Kennington, c. late February 1915, 193.d, KABL.

²⁴¹ 21-24 November 1914, War Diary of the 13th Battalion, the London Regiment, WO-95-1730, PRO.

²⁴² Ibid. 9 December 1914. Casualty returns for period 18 November to 10 December 1914 were: 3 officers wounded and 3 nco's wounded; 6 privates killed and 16 wounded.

²⁴³ *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914 By Ex-Private Eric H. Kennington. A Description*, London, 1916, p.9.

²⁴⁴ 'The Picture', p.5, notes made by Eric Kennington c. April 1916 concerning *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* (1915). Discovered at the back of Eric Kennington's Press Cuttings Book for 1924, C.J. Kennington Collection. Kennington circled the words "shake hands" and wrote at the side "exchange greetings" as a possible alternative. In the end, he decided to use neither formulation.

²⁴⁵ Many years later, in an unpublished memoir, Kennington expanded on his experience of 'The Christmas Truce'. He recalled that the lighting of candles and the singing of carols on Christmas Eve, 1914, had amazed all ranks in his battalion: "All this was unwarlike and unprecedented and our officers and sergeants seemed to have no clear line on proper action. At first dawn we [Kennington, Harvey and Wilson] acted for the dream remained real." The three men "advanced unarmed" and "three Bavarians shook their hands exactly half way across the 200 yards that was claimed by neither side. There was little language barrier. Our wealth came from Christmas parcels, theirs from a commandeered countryside. Pudding was exchanged for fruit, chocolate for Schnapps and laughter for laughter ... There is snowballing, then a feast of fire-cooked breakfast and ... what? We were not long in doubt. Digging, strengthening the entrenchments, clearing the drainage ... the war isn't finished."

Christmas Eve, 1914, notes by Eric Kennington, c. autumn of 1938, 238, pp.12-13, KABL.

²⁴⁶ *The First World War*, John Keegan, London, 1998, p.147.

²⁴⁷ Casualty returns for 18 November 1914 to 31 January 1915: 1 officer killed, 3 wounded; 5 nco's killed, 6 wounded; 23 privates killed and 36 wounded. WO-95-1730, PRO.

²⁴⁸ *The Kensingtons At Laventie: Winter 1914 By Ex-Private Eric H. Kennington. Descriptive Catalogue.* Exhibited by the Committee of the British Woman's Hospital in aid of the "Star and Garter" Building Fund, Goupil Gallery, 1916, p.10

²⁴⁹ *Bairnsfather: A Few Fragments From His Life*, Edited by Vivian Carter, London, 1916, p.52.

²⁵⁰ *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 December 1916, p.621.

²⁵¹ Casualty returns for the 13th Battalion, the London Regiment, 16 March 1915, WO-95-1730, PRO.

²⁵² *Ibid.* Casualty returns, 12 May 1915.

²⁵³ *The Kensingtons At Laventie: Winter 1914*, Eric Kennington, Goupil Gallery exhibition catalogue, London, 1916, p.10.

²⁵⁴ *A Farewell To Arms*, Ernest Hemingway, London, 1929, pp.120-121.

²⁵⁵ Eric Kennington, Goupil Gallery, London, 1916, p.11. Private McCafferty survived the war and. In May 1960, attended Kennington's own memorial service held at St. James's Piccadilly. *The Times*, 26 May 1960, p.15.

²⁵⁶ Quoted in *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-To-Face Killing in 20th Century Warfare*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1999, p.39.

²⁵⁷ Eric Kennington, Goupil Gallery, London, 1916, p.12.

²⁵⁸ A sample of one million British casualties, sustained between 1916 and 1920, indicated that, while 23, 626 men on the Western Front had been admitted to hospitals suffering from the effects of Chlorine, Phosgene and Mustard Gas, 55, 311 were treated for a combination of 'trench foot', bronchitis, pneumonia and chronic rheumatism. *British Fighting Methods in the Great War*, edited by Paddy Griffith, London, 1996, p.109.

²⁵⁹ *The Times*, 20 May 1916, p.9.

²⁶⁰ *The Saturday Review*, 7 October 1916, 7311 2.B-209, TGA.

²⁶¹ *Nottingham Guardian*, 2 June 1916, 7311 2.B-158, TGA.

²⁶² *The Evening News*, 27 September 1916, 7311 2.B-180, TGA.

²⁶³ *The Saturday Review*, 7 October 1916, 7311 2.B-209, TGA.

²⁶⁴ *The New Statesman*, 12 May 1917, 7311 2C-318, TGA.

²⁶⁵ Campbell Dodgson to C.F.G. Masterman, 4 April 1917, "He [Kennington] is down on [Thomas] Derrick's list to draw a series of six lithographs of 'The Making of a Soldier', no choice could be more fitting." Kennington WWI File (1917-1918), 245-(a)-6, IWM.

²⁶⁶ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries: 1915-1918*, edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, pp.59-60. Entry for 25 April 1915. 'The Kiss' was published in the *Cambridge Magazine*, 27 May 1916.

²⁶⁷ *Realities of War*, Philip Gibbs, London, 1920, pp.91-92.

²⁶⁸ *The Pity of War*, Niall Ferguson, London, 1998, pp.376-378

²⁶⁹ *A Private in the Guards*, Stephen Graham, London, 1919, pp.217-218.

²⁷⁰ *The War The Infantry Knew: 1914-1919*, Captain J.C.Dunn DSO, MC and Bar, DCM, London, 1938 (1989), p.407. Entry for 5 October 1917.

²⁷¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 20 July 1917, 7311 2.C-346, TGA.

²⁷² *Manchester Guardian*, 30 August 1917, 7311 2.C-373, TGA and 8 September 1917, from 'F.H.W.', 7311 2.C-385, TGA.

²⁷³ J.C. Dunn, London, 1989, p.304. Entry for 17 March 1917.

²⁷⁴ *The Graphic*, 5 May 1917, 7311 2C-314, TGA.

²⁷⁵ The poem was included in Studdert-Kennedy's first collection of verse, *Rough Rhymes of a Padre*, London, (February) 1918, p.31.

²⁷⁶ *Men, Women and Guns*, 'Sapper', London, 1916, p.247.

²⁷⁷ *Manchester Evening News*, 22 March 1920, Nevinson Press Cuttings File, MCAG.

²⁷⁸ *British Artists at the Front Volume IV: Eric H. Kennington, Campbell Dodgson and C.E. Montague*, London, 1918, Plate VIII.

²⁷⁹ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries: 1915-1918*, Edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, p.157. Entry for 17 April 1917.

²⁸⁰ Eric Kennington to C.F.G. Masterman, 7 April 1918, Kennington WWI File, (1917-1918), 245-(a)-6, IWM.

²⁸¹ Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. November 1917, 1148-823-101/9, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

²⁸² Eric Kennington to Campbell Dodgson, received 18 February 1918, Kennington WWI File, (1917-1918), 245-(a)-6, IWM.

²⁸³ *The British Soldier: An Exhibition of Pictures by Eric H. Kennington*. Preface by Robert Graves, Leicester Galleries, London (June-July) 1918, p.15

²⁸⁴ According to the war diary of the 3rd battalion, the Rifle Brigade, a party from that unit, consisting of 2 officers, 4 nco's and 42 other ranks were withdrawn from front-line positions on 15 January 1918 to train in the secure rear area of Hervilly, during 16-19 January 1918, for the raid. It is possible that Kennington drew the man, while he was in training and just before the artist set off for an appointment at GHQ in the town of Montreuil. The party from the Rifle Brigade spent about twenty minutes raiding a German trench on the morning of 20 January 1918. Five or six Germans were killed before the raiders retreated through 'No-Man's-Land' under heavy machine gun and rifle fire. Out of the 48 men who took part in the raid, 2 other ranks returned wounded while a Second Lieutenant and 10 other ranks were listed as missing presumed dead. The Brigadier noted that the raid had been carried out "with much dash and discipline", though it could have hardly been judged a great success since no German prisoners were taken and 13 of the raiders, or 28% of the attacking force, became casualties. War Diary of the 3rd Battalion, the Rifle Brigade, 17th Infantry Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, WO-95-2205, PRO.

²⁸⁵ *Realities of War*, Philip Gibbs, London, 1920, p.95.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p.107.

²⁸⁷ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries: 1915-1918*, Edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, p.65. Entry for 25 May 1916.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.* p.73. Entry for 4 June 1916.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.* p.82. Entry for June 30 1916.

²⁹⁰ *Cigarettes Are Sublime*, Richard Klein, London, 1993, pp.138-141. For an in depth analysis of the contribution smoking has made to defining and securing male camaraderie.

²⁹¹ *A Student In Arms: Volume Two*. Donald Hankey, London, 1917 pp.65-66. Hankey (1884-1916) was educated at a public school, then Oxford. He then became a regular officer in the Royal Garrison Artillery, resigning his commission while toying with the idea of taking holy orders in the Church of England. In August 1914 he enlisted in the 7th battalion of the Rifle Brigade and rose to the rank of sergeant, serving with that unit May to August 1915 when he was wounded. While convalescing he contributed articles about the war to *The Spectator* and *The Westminster Gazette* December 1915-March 1916. These were collected and published as *The Student In Arms: Volume One* on April 1916. In May 1916, Hankey was commissioned into Baimsfather's regiment, the Royal Warwicks. He was killed on the Somme in October 1916.

²⁹² *British Artists at the Front Volume IV: Eric Henri Kennington, Campbell Dodgson and C.E. Montague*, London, 1918, p.1

²⁹³ Siegfried Sassoon to Hamo Thornycroft, 4 July 1918, Department of Manuscripts, British Library, London. Sassoon stated that, from what he had seen of Kennington's war art, he thought his "soldier drawings ... excellent."

²⁹⁴ *The British Soldier: An Exhibition of Pictures by Eric H. Kennington*, Robert Graves, Leicester Galleries, London, June 1918, p.3.

²⁹⁵ Robert Graves to Edward Marsh, c. May 1918, Folder 8, 63B3470, Sir Edward Marsh Archive, NYPL.

²⁹⁶ Robert Nichols to Robert Ross, 9 June 1918. Quoted in *Robert Ross: Friend of Friends*, Edited by Margery Ross, London, 1952, p.330.

- ²⁹⁷ *New Statesman*, 13 July 1918, 7311. 3A-519, TGA.
²⁹⁸ *Town Topics*, 5 October 1918, 7311. 3B-359, TGA.
²⁹⁹ *Queen Magazine*, 1 February 1919, 7311. 3B-365, TGA.
³⁰⁰ *Disenchantment*, C.E. Montague, London, 1922, pp.151-152.

Chapter Four.

- ³⁰¹ *Morning Post*, 28 October 1929, 731-7C-385, TGA.
³⁰² *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.426 and pp.427-428. *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell, London, 1977, pp.218-219 and pp.264-265.
³⁰³ The figure of the traumatized officer recurs in: A.P. Herbert's *The Secret Battle* (1919), as Septimus Smith in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), in Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War* (1928), R.C. Sherriff's classic play *Journey's End* (1929), in Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero* (1929), in Robert Graves's iconoclastic *Good-bye To All That* (1929) and in Siegfried Sassoon's *Sherston's Progress* (1936).
³⁰⁴ *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture*, Elaine Showalter, London, 1997, p.73.
³⁰⁵ *Ibid.* p.68.
³⁰⁶ *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation*, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, London, 1997, pp.40-41.
³⁰⁷ The United States military officially adopted Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a clinical term in 1980. *Shell-Shock: A History of the Changing Attitudes to War Neurosis*, Anthony Babington, London, 1997, pp.167-168.
³⁰⁸ *The Treatment of Neurasthenia*, Dr. Paul Hartenbug, Berlin, 1912 (English Translation published 1914), pp.38-39.
³⁰⁹ *Ibid.* p.72.
³¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.84.
³¹¹ *Ibid.* pp.80-81.
³¹² *War Neuroses*, Dr. J.T. MacCurdy, Cambridge UK, 1918, p.36.
³¹³ Evidence of former RAMC regimental medical officer, Dr. A.F. Hurst. Published in: *The Report of the War Office Inquiry into* ", London, 1922, p.26.
³¹⁴ For evidence of highly selective approval, among Army doctors, for Freud's ideas and methods see: 'Functional Nerve Disease and the Shock of Battle', Dr. David Forsyth in *The Lancet*, 25 December 1915 p.1402 and Dr. W.H.R. Rivers 'Freud's Psychology of the Unconscious', initially read at the Edinburgh Pathological Club on 7 March 1917, and reprinted in *The Lancet*, 16 June 1917, pp.1912-1914.
³¹⁵ *The Penguin Freud Library Volume 12: Civilization, Society and Religion*, Sigmund Freud (Translated by James Strachey), London, 1991, p.42.
³¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.49. Nearly a decade later Freud was to argue that male homosexuals were more prone to nervous disorders as the product of a 'narcissism' characterized by hypochondria and an over-developed sense of self-preservation. 'On Narcissism: An Introduction' (dated March 1914) in *The Penguin Freud Library Volume 2: On Metapsychology – The Theory of Psychoanalysis*, Sigmund Freud, (translated by James Strachey), London, 1991, pp.65-66.
³¹⁷ *Sandows Magazine of Physical Culture*, 30 November 1905 quoted in *The Sculpture Machine: Physical Culture and Body Politics in the Age of Empire*, Michael A. Budd, London, 1997, p.88.
³¹⁸ *The Gazette of the Third London General Hospital*, Ward Muir, London, May 1919, pp.213-214.
³¹⁹ *The Lancet*, 13 February 1915, pp.316-320. 'A Contribution to the Study of 'Shell-Shock'. Dr. Charles S. Myers.
³²⁰ *The Lancet*, 23 January 1915, p.210.
³²¹ *Ibid.* pp210-211.
³²² *British Medical Journal*, 15 May 1915, pp.833-835. 'Remarks on Cases of Nervous and Mental Shock Observed in French Base Hospitals' by Dr. William Aldren Turner.
³²³ *War Neuroses*, Dr. J.T. MacCurdy, Cambridge UK, 1918, p.viii and 'War Neurosis and Military Training', Dr. W.H.R. Rivers in *Mental Hygiene*, October 1918 and

reprinted in *Instinct and The Unconscious: A Contribution to a Biological Theory of the Psycho-Neuroses*, Cambridge UK, 1920, pp.206-209 and p.218.

³²⁴ *The Lancet*, 25 December 1915, 'Functional Nerve Disease and the Shock of Battle' pp.1399-1402.

³²⁵ *From Mud To Mufti: With Old Bill On All Fronts*, Bruce Baimsfather, London, 1919, p.15.

³²⁶ *Ibid.* p.158.

³²⁷ *White Heat: The New Warfare 1914-1918*, John Terraine, London, 1992, p.95.

³²⁸ *More Fragments From France: Volume Two*, Vivian Carter, London, 1916, p.4.

³²⁹ *Ibid.* p.5.

³³⁰ *In Search of the Better 'Ole*, T. and V. Holt, Portsmouth UK, 1985, pp.47-48.

³³¹ *The Best of Fragments From France*, T. and V. Holt, Portsmouth UK, 1983, p.16.

³³² *The Lancet*, 5 February 1916, p.306. The Conference was held between 25 and 27 January 1916. *The Lancet*, 11 February 1916, p.331 reported on Mott's first lecture. *The Lancet*, 20 May 1916, p.1048 indicated that the RAMC now accepted 'shell-shock' as a term that could be used in the category of 'Diseases of Active Service'.

³³³ *The Lancet*, 18 March 1916, p.627. Editorial headed 'Neurasthenia and Shell-Shock.'

³³⁴ *The Lancet*, 11 March 1916, p.547.

³³⁵ *Daily Express*, 26 February 1915, 7311-2A-86, TGA.

³³⁶ Arthur Clutton Brock in *The Times*, 29 September 1916. Nevinson Press Clippings File, MCAG.

³³⁷ Entry for 30 June 1915, *Ms. Eng. Misc.e.619-1*, HNPBL.

³³⁸ *Paint and Prejudice*, C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.106.

³³⁹ *The Lancet*, 11 March 1916, p.552. Dr. Frederick Mott described 'the Dancing Tremor' as one of the most severe forms of 'Functional Paralysis' characterized by the sufferer walking "as if the legs were springs of coiled wire."

³⁴⁰ *Gazette of the Third London Hospital, Wandsworth*, Edited by Ward Muir, December 1915, p.63.

³⁴¹ *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c.1848-1918*, Daniel Pick, Cambridge UK, 1996, p.23.

³⁴² Entry for 17 January 1914, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.618-1*, HNPBL.

³⁴³ *The Impact of Modernism: The Visual Arts in Edwardian England*, S.K. Tillyard, London, 1988, p.91.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.119. Robert Ross in the *Morning Post*, 7 November 1910.

³⁴⁵ *Report of the War Office Committee Inquiry into "*, London, 1922, p.40, p.46 and p.76. Testimony by three former RAMC medical officers that they first saw mass incidence of shell-shock amongst combat troops in the British Army during the Battle of the Somme.

³⁴⁶ *The Yorkshire Post*, 26 September 1916, 7311-2B-179, TGA.

³⁴⁷ *The Nation*, 30 September 1916, p.814.

³⁴⁸ *Modern War: Paintings by C.R.W. Nevinson*, P.G. Konody, London, 1916, p.26.

³⁴⁹ *The Lancet*, 18 November 1916, p.681. 'The Psychology of Malingering and Functional Neurosis in Peace and War.'

³⁵⁰ *The Athenæum*, October 1916, p.489. Nevinson's mother mentions in her memoirs that, during a stay in Brussels before the war, she and her son visited the gallery devoted to the macabre oeuvre of Antoine Wiertz (1806-1865). *Life's Fitful Fever*, Margaret Nevinson, London, 1926, p.218.

³⁵¹ *The Spectator*, 24 March 1917, p.367.

³⁵² *Drawing*, August 1917, 7311. 2C-355, TGA.

³⁵³ *Observations of an Orderly*, Ward Muir, London, 1917, p.230.

³⁵⁴ *The Lancet*, 23 June 1917 p.693, published the text of a lecture, concerning the introduction of the diagnostic term 'Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous', given by the Government's Chief Medical Officer and President of the Board Investigating Nervous Disorders, Sir John Collie. The lecture was delivered at the Royal Institute of Health, 13 June 1917.

- ³⁵⁵ A.N. Yockney to C.F.G. Masterman, 4 December 1917 reporting a conversation he had with Captain Foster that afternoon. Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-129, IWM.
- ³⁵⁶ For the activities of MI7 and the content of DORA: *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, Gerard J. DeGroot, London, 1996, p.141.
- ³⁵⁷ Major A. Lee to C.F.G. Masterman, 29 November 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-137, IWM.
- ³⁵⁸ Unsent letter from C.R.W. Nevinson to Major A. Lee, c. November 1917. Enclosed with covering note to C.F.G. Masterman, 25 November 1917. Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-148-151, IWM.
- ³⁵⁹ *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1962, p.282.
- ³⁶⁰ *Adventures in London*, James Douglas, London, 1909, pp.113-114.
- ³⁶¹ *The Great War and The British People*, J.M. Winter, London, 1985, p.72.
- ³⁶² *Etchings and Lithographs by C.R.W. Nevinson*, Introduction by A.E.Gallatin, Frederick Keppel and Co, New York, May 1919, p.7.
- ³⁶³ Major A. Lee to C.F.G. Masterman, 13 December 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-124, IWM.
- ³⁶⁴ C.R.W. Nevinson to C.F.G. Masterman, 25 November 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-151, IWM.
- ³⁶⁵ Major A. Lee to A.N. Yockney, 23 March 1918, Yockney Papers, 724-13, TGA.
- ³⁶⁶ *The Nation*, 9 March 1918, 7311-3A-461, TGA.
- ³⁶⁷ *Weekly Dispatch*, 3 March 1918, 7311-2C-420, TGA.
- ³⁶⁸ *Glasgow Herald*, 19 March 1918, 7311-3A-466, TGA.
- ³⁶⁹ *Daily Express*, 7 March 1918, 7311-3A-447, TGA.
- ³⁷⁰ *Liverpool Courier*, 23 September 1918, 7311-3A-537, TGA. The reviewer was remarking upon *A Group of Soldiers* as reproduced in *The Great War: Fourth Year* by C.R.W. Nevinson, with a text by J.E. Crawford Fritch and published in September 1918.
- ³⁷¹ *Saturday Review*, 16 March 1918, 7311-3A-461, TGA.
- ³⁷² *The Great Push*, Patrick MacGill, London, 1916, p.77.
- ³⁷³ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries 1914-1918*, edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, pp.161-162. Entry for 24 April 1917.
- ³⁷⁴ *The Great War: The Fourth Year* by C.R.W. Nevinson, Introduction by J.E. Crawford Fritch, London, 1918, p.16.
- ³⁷⁵ *New York Evening Post*, 31 May 1919, 7311-4-788, TGA.
- ³⁷⁶ Eric Kennington to Catherine Kennington, postmarked 13 January 1944. C.D. Kennington Collection.
- ³⁷⁷ Eric Kennington to A.N. Yockney, 6 June 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.
- ³⁷⁸ Kennington later referred to the pastel, as 'the man lost in the trench'. Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. June 1918, *BMS. Eng. 1148-832-101/90*, HLHU.
- ³⁷⁹ Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein c. July 1918, *BMS. Eng. 1148-823-101/9*, HLHU.
- ³⁸⁰ Eric Kennington to A.N. Yockney, 11 June 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.
- ³⁸¹ *British Artists at the Front. Volume 4:Eric Kennington, Campbell Dodgson and C.E. Montague*, London, 1918, p.1.
- ³⁸² Eric Kennington to A.N. Yockney, 16 June 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.
- ³⁸³ Eric Kennington to A.N. Yockney, 6 June 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.
- ³⁸⁴ *Shell-Shock and Its Lessons*, Dr. G. Elliott-Smith and Dr. T.H. Pear (RAMC), London, 1917, p.87.
- ³⁸⁵ *Ibid.* p.97.
- ³⁸⁶ *Report of the War Office Enquiry into 'Shell-shock'*, London, 1922, p.62 and p.65.
- ³⁸⁷ Eric Kennington to C.F.G. Masterman, received 6 December 1917. The pastel itself was received by the Department of Information on 14 December 1917, Kennington WWI File, (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.

³⁸⁸ It is possible that the subject of *8th Queens Hero* was a Sergeant Johnson who possessed the medals Kennington specified and participated in a raid carried out by the battalion on the night of 19-20 November 1917. The raid was undertaken by 3 officers and 47 other ranks, and lasted for just over 30 minutes. Three German prisoners were taken, including one by Sergeant Johnson with a rugby tackle, for a cost of 3 other ranks killed. All three officers and 13 other ranks were wounded. War Diary of the 8th Battalion, Royal West Surrey Regiment ('The Queens'), 20-21 November 1917, WO-95-2211, PRO.

³⁸⁹ *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced*, edited by Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle, London, 1996, p.519.

³⁹⁰ *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.307.

³⁹¹ *Report of the War Office Committee of Inquiry Into "*, London, 1922, p.87. Submission of Major Pritchard Taylor (ex RAMC).

³⁹² *From Mud to Mufti: With 'Old Bill' On All Fronts*, Bruce Bairnsfather, London, 1919, p.134.

³⁹³ Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. December 1918, *BMS Eng. 1148-823-101/89*, HLHU.

³⁹⁴ Eric Kennington to Campbell Dodgson, c. December 1917, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM. Kennington was concerned that the official censor, Major Lee, had just incorrectly labeled a number of portraits of men from the 9th Royal Sussex he had recently drawn as belonging to another unit.

³⁹⁵ Eric Kennington to T.E. Lawrence, c. October 1921, C.J. Kennington Collection.

³⁹⁶ *Pilots, Workers, Machines*, Eric Kennington and J.B. Priestly, Luton UK, 1941, p.8.

³⁹⁷ Nevinson saw a 'Dr. Rackham' regularly during the spring of 1917, entry for 17 March 1917, *Ms. Eng. Misc. e.620-2*, HNPBL.

³⁹⁸ C.F.G. Masterman referred to Nevinson thus in a letter to John Buchan (Director of the Department of Information), 18 May 1917, Nevinson WWI File (1917-18), 22A-6-234, IWM.

³⁹⁹ C.R.W. Nevinson to C.F.G. Masterman, 10 March 1918, Nevinson WWI File (1917-18), 22A-6-69, IWM.

⁴⁰⁰ *Paint and Prejudice*, C.R.W. Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.150.

⁴⁰¹ *New York Evening Post*, 31 May 1919, 7311-4-781, TGA.

⁴⁰² Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. November 1917, *BMS Eng. 1148-823-101/4*, HLHU.

Chapter Five.

⁴⁰³ An article in *The Times*, 2 February 1917, described British wounded on the Somme as 'broken warriors'. The term itself seems to have been derived from a song first performed in the spring of 1916 that referred to a man who had lost an arm in France as "one of England's broken dolls." *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1996, p.58.

⁴⁰⁴ *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell, London, 1977 and *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992.

⁴⁰⁵ Bourke, London, 1996, pp.58-60.

⁴⁰⁶ *The Roses of 'No-Man's-Land'*, Lyn Macdonald, London, 1993, pp. 93-94.

⁴⁰⁷ *Shell-shock: Traumatic Neurosis and the British Soldiers of the First World War*, Peter Leese, Basingstoke UK, 2002, pp.24-26.

⁴⁰⁸ *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in the 20th Century*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1999, p.2.

⁴⁰⁹ *The Pity of War*, Niall Ferguson, London, 1998, p.295.

⁴¹⁰ *The First World War*, John Keegan, London, 1998, pp.6-7.

⁴¹¹ This rather misleading approach towards war art can be discerned in *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the 20th Century*, Susie and Mierion Harries, London, 1983 and, more recently, *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994.

⁴¹² *The Red Horizon*, Patrick MacGill, London, 1916, p.203.

- ⁴¹³ Ibid. p.191.
- ⁴¹⁴ Charles Sargeant Jagger to Violet Constance Smith, 18 November 1915, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁴¹⁵ MacGill, London, 1916, p.192.
- ⁴¹⁶ *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1996, p.56.
- ⁴¹⁷ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries: 1915-1918*, edited by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, p.159. Entry for 22 April 1917.
- ⁴¹⁸ *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, Modris Eksteins, London, 1990, p.224.
- ⁴¹⁹ *The Roses of 'No-Man's-Land'*, Lyn Macdonald, London, 1993, p.221.
- ⁴²⁰ For example: Wilfred Owen's *SIW* (written 1917-1918) in *The Poems of Wilfred Owen*, edited by Jon Stallworthy, London, 1990, pp.137-138.
- ⁴²¹ Eric Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. early June 1918, *BMS Eng. 1148-823-101/8*, HLHU.
- ⁴²² William Orpen to William Rothenstein, c. September 1917, *BMS Eng. 1148-823-1117*, HLHU.
- ⁴²³ *The Church of England and the First World War*, Alan Wilkinson, London, 1978, p.170.
- ⁴²⁴ *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced*, edited by Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle, London, 1996, p.496.
- ⁴²⁵ *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance*, Alex King, Oxford UK, 1998, p.130.
- ⁴²⁶ 'Early Paintings of the Great War' by Peter Harrington in the *Imperial War Museum Review*, No.7, London, 1997, p.49.
- ⁴²⁷ Ibid. pp.49-50. The Biblical quote comes from John 15.13.
- ⁴²⁸ Wilkinson, London, 1978, p.191.
- ⁴²⁹ *Rites of Spring: The Great War and The Birth of the Modern Age*, Modris Eksteins, London, 1990, p.251. Chaplain of the 14th Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders to Mrs. Peter McGregor, 15 September 1916.
- ⁴³⁰ Wilkinson, London, 1978 pp.191-192.
- ⁴³¹ Gordon Pym from *Papers from Picardy*, London, 1917 quoted in *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1996, p.212.
- ⁴³² *The Friend*, 20 December 1914, p.958.
- ⁴³³ Ibid. 23 April 1915, p.305.
- ⁴³⁴ Nevinson, New York, 1938, pp.105-106.
- ⁴³⁵ *The Happy Hospital*, Ward Muir, London, 1918, pp.101-102.
- ⁴³⁶ *Life's Fitful Fever: A Volume of Memories*, Margaret Wynne Nevinson, London, 1926, p. 247.
- ⁴³⁷ H.W. Nevinson to the Editor of *The Friend*, 6 November 1914. Published in *The Friend*, 13 November 1914, p.828.
- ⁴³⁸ *The First World War*, John Keegan, London, 1998, p.313
- ⁴³⁹ *Modern War: Paintings by C.R.W. Nevinson*, P.G. Konody, London, 1916, p.26.
- ⁴⁴⁰ *Sunday Times*, 4 June 1916, 7311.2B-158, TGA.
- ⁴⁴¹ *The Poems of Wilfred Owen*, edited by Jon Stallworthy, London, 1990, p.192.
- ⁴⁴² *Daily Chronicle*, 30 September 1916, 7311.2B-185, TGA.
- ⁴⁴³ *The British Architect*, October 1916, 7311.2B-213, TGA.
- ⁴⁴⁴ *New Witness*, 28 September 1916, 7311.2B-190, TGA.
- ⁴⁴⁵ *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.133. A small selection of these pastels was, eventually, displayed at the Royal College of Surgeons for a few weeks early in 1918. The exhibition was not well publicised and nor was the venue particularly accessible. *Country Life*, 2 March 1918, 7311.2C-429, TGA.
- ⁴⁴⁶ *Glasgow Herald*, 3 June 1916, 7311.2B-159, TGA.
- ⁴⁴⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 June 1916, 7311.2B-159, TGA.
- ⁴⁴⁸ *The Athenaeum*, October 1916, p.489.
- ⁴⁴⁹ *The Star*, 3 October 1916, 7311.2B-206, TGA.

- ⁴⁵⁰ Nevinson to Robert Ross, 11 June 1918 in *Robert Ross: Friend of Friends*, Margery Ross, London, 1952, pp.330-331.
- ⁴⁵¹ Nevinson to Edward Marsh, 1 April 1917, Berg Collection, NYPL.
- ⁴⁵² Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.138.
- ⁴⁵³ The Battle of Arras cost the British in the region of 159,000 casualties, a higher rate per day than had been the case on the Somme in 1916. *Stalemate: The Great Trench Warfare Battles of 1915-1917*, J.H. Johnson, London, 1995, p.119.
- ⁴⁵⁴ C.R.W. Nevinson to C.F.G. Masterman, 30 July 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-215, IWM.
- ⁴⁵⁵ *New York Evening Post*, 31 May 1919, 7311.4-787, TGA.
- ⁴⁵⁶ *Siegfried Sassoon Diaries: 1914-1918*, edited Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, p.154. Entry for 14 April 1917.
- ⁴⁵⁷ *Siegfried Sassoon: The War Poems*, arranged by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1983, p.105.
- ⁴⁵⁸ *Passchendaele in Perspective: The Third Battle of Ypres*, edited by Peter H. Liddle, London, 1997, pp.237-241. Hurley's diary entries for: 4 and 12 October 1917.
- ⁴⁵⁹ The work was first mentioned as *Dead Men* in a letter from Yockney to Nevinson, 24 November 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-154, IWM.
- ⁴⁶⁰ Yockney to Masterman, 4 December 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-129, IWM in which he discusses a meeting he had that afternoon with officers from the censorship section MI7 (a) who categorically forbade the exhibition of what was now entitled *Paths of Glory*. The ban on photographs depicting both Allied and German dead had only very recently been implemented. MI7 (a) formally wrote to the Press Section at GHQ on 5 December 1917 instructing it that film cameramen and still photographers based at the Press Chateau were no longer permitted to take images of the dead, HO-139-42, PRO.
- ⁴⁶¹ A.N. Yockney to C.F.G. Masterman, 6 December 1917, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-126, IWM.
- ⁴⁶² *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, Gerard J. de Groot, London, 1996, pp.141-142
- ⁴⁶³ *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.198.
- ⁴⁶⁴ *Passchendaele: The Untold Story*, Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, London, 1996, pp.95-97.
- ⁴⁶⁵ Nevinson, New York, 1938, pp.139-140.
- ⁴⁶⁶ *The First World War*, John Keegan, London, 1998, p.394.
- ⁴⁶⁷ A.N. Yockney to Major A. N. Lee, 5 December 1917, British War Memorials Committee Minutes, 460-a/10, IWM.
- ⁴⁶⁸ *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell, London, 1977, pp.235-239.
- ⁴⁶⁹ *The Church of England and the First World War*, Alan Wilkinson, London, 1978, p.193.
- ⁴⁷⁰ *The Oxford Book of English Verse 1250-1900*, Arthur Quiller-Couch, Oxford UK, 1900, p.517.
- ⁴⁷¹ *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell, Oxford UK, 1977, p.175.
- ⁴⁷² C.R.W. Nevinson to C.F.G. Masterman, 3 December 1917, 226-A6-130, TGA.
- ⁴⁷³ *The Pity of War*, Niall Ferguson, London, 1998, p.236.
- ⁴⁷⁴ *New Witness*, 21 December 1916, 7311.2B-256, TGA.
- ⁴⁷⁵ *Passchendaele in Perspective: The Third Battle of Ypres*, edited by Peter H. Liddle, London, 1997, p.375.
- ⁴⁷⁶ *Daily News*, 5 May 1917, 7311.2C-314, TGA.
- ⁴⁷⁷ A photograph of the painting, with the strip of paper placed diagonally across it, was reproduced in just one newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, 2 March 1918. On that day, Nevinson's exhibition as an official war artist opened to the public at the Leicester Galleries, London.
- ⁴⁷⁸ C.R.W. Nevinson to Robert Ross, 21 April 1918, 226-A6-56, IWM.
- ⁴⁷⁹ *New York Evening Post*, 31 May 1919, 7311.4-788, TGA.
- ⁴⁸⁰ Nevinson, New York, 1938, p.148.

- ⁴⁸¹ *Evening News*, 1 March 1918, which carried the headline "Paths of Glory. Blotted out by the Censor." 7311.3A-443, TGA.
- ⁴⁸² *The Nation*, 16 March 1918, 7311.3A-461, TGA.
- ⁴⁸³ Entry for 15 March 1918, e.620-3, HNPBL.
- ⁴⁸⁴ Nevinson, London, 1938, pp.148-149.
- ⁴⁸⁵ This was P.G. Konody's opinion in *The Observer*, 8 September 1918, 7311.3A-531, TGA.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Ross to Arnold Bennett, 23 April 1918, Memo for the British War Memorials Committee, 461-a/10, IWM.
- ⁴⁸⁷ Robert Nichols to Robert Ross, 9 June 1918 in *Robert Ross: Friend of Friends*, edited by Margery Ross, London, 1952, p.330.
- ⁴⁸⁸ *Britain and the First World War*, edited by John Turner, London, 1988 pp.121-122 and p.124. Between 1917 and 1918, Mustard Gas was responsible for 167,400 gas-related casualties on the Western Front.
- ⁴⁸⁹ *The Roses of No-Man's Land*, Lyn Macdonald, London, 1993, p.247.
- ⁴⁹⁰ Eric Kennington to Campbell Dodgson, received 18 February 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.
- ⁴⁹¹ Kennington to William Rothenstein, c. 12 June 1918, *BMS. Eng. 1148-823-101/9*, HLHU.
- ⁴⁹² *Realities of War*, Philip Gibbs, London, 1920, pp.267-269.
- ⁴⁹³ *British Artists at the Front. Volume IV: Eric Kennington, Campbell Dodgson and C.E. Montague*, London, 1918, p.1.
- ⁴⁹⁴ *The Observer*, 16 June 1918, Press Clippings, C.J. Kennington Collection.
- ⁴⁹⁵ John Salis in the *New Witness*, 12 July 1918, Press Clippings, C.J. Kennington.
- ⁴⁹⁶ Robert Graves to Siegfried Sassoon, 9 July 1918, NYPL.
- ⁴⁹⁷ In 1934 Kennington donated *Gassed and Wounded* to the art collection of the Imperial War Museum, describing it as "my best war picture". Eric Kennington to Ernest Blaikley, received 14 September 1934, Kennington File (1919-67), 245-(b)-6, IWM.
- ⁴⁹⁸ *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.213.
- ⁴⁹⁹ *The Imperial War Museum Book of 1918: Year of Victory*, Malcolm Brown, London, 1998, p.285.
- ⁵⁰⁰ *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-To-Face Killing in Twentieth-century Warfare*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1999, pp.366-367.
- ⁵⁰¹ C.S. Jagger to A.N.Yockney, 11 December 1918, Jagger WWI File, 240-6-31, IWM.
- ⁵⁰² *The Great Push: An Episode of the Great War*, Patrick MacGill, London, 1916, p.210
- ⁵⁰³ Testimony of Private A.W. Skipper, formerly of the Royal Naval Division, in *Defeat at Gallipoli*, Nigel Steel and Peter Hart, London, 1994, p.323.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Charles Sargeant Jagger to Violet Constance Smith, 16-17 October 1915, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵⁰⁵ Medical Board, Second Western General Hospital, Manchester, 13 June 1918, WO-339-4591, PRO.
- ⁵⁰⁶ *Poetry of the Great War: An Anthology*, edited by Dominic Hibberd and John Onions, London, 1986, p.112.
- ⁵⁰⁷ John Singer Sargent to A.N. Yockney, 12 January 1919. Jagger File, 240-6-46 and 47, IWM. At the time Sargent was living at No. 31 Tite Street while Jagger was next door at No. 33.
- ⁵⁰⁸ *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.239.
- ⁵⁰⁹ Charles Sargeant Jagger to Ernest Blaikley, 14 November 1933, Jagger File, 240-6-87/88, IWM.
- ⁵¹⁰ *The Listener*, 2 May 1985, p.38.
- ⁵¹¹ Interviewed in *The Sheffield Daily Independent*, 17 January 1936. Another of Jagger's favourite books was Jack London's *Call of the Wild*. G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵¹² *T.P.'s and Cassell's Weekly*, 12 March 1927, G. Jagger Collection.

⁵¹³ Letter from Sir George Frampton to the Chairman of the Bedford War Memorial Committee and printed in *The Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, 7 November 1919, Bedfordshire County Council Archive.

⁵¹⁴ *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, Gerard J. de Groot, London, 1996, p.ix and *The Pity of War*, Niall Ferguson, London, 1998, pp.447-449 for the argument that, despite the slaughter of the First World War, Late Victorian and Edwardian self-confidence and belief in Britain's Imperial mission remained tenaciously resilient.

⁵¹⁵ *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance*, Alex King, Oxford UK, 1998, pp.11-15.

Chapter Six

⁵¹⁶ *Fear!* Patrick MacGill. London 1921 p.181.

⁵¹⁷ *Disenchantment*, C.E. Montague, London, 1922, p.152.

⁵¹⁸ *Realities of War*, Philip Gibbs, London, 1920, p.434.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.* p.450.

⁵²⁰ Among the most informed and persuasive discussions of 'masculinity in crisis' are: *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, Kaja Silverman, London, 1992, p.326; *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation*, Abigail Solomon Godeau, London, 1997, pp.40-41 and *Unmasking the Masculine: Men and Identity in a Sceptical Age*, Alan Petersen, London, 1996, pp.11-20.

⁵²¹ Jagger read Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1886) and *Soldiers Three* (1888) in May 1918, while recovering from his wounds in a Manchester Military hospital. Charles Sargeant Jagger to Violet Constance Jagger, 7 May 1918, C. Jagger Collection. Later the same month, Kennington hoped Kipling might open his exhibition 'The British Soldier' at the Leicester Galleries in London. Eric Kennington to A.N. Yockney, 26 May 1918, Kennington WWI File (1917-18), 245-(a)-6, IWM.

⁵²² Eksteins, London, 1990, pp.369-371.

⁵²³ Nevinson to Robert Ross, 21 April 1918, Nevinson WWI File, 226-A6-56, IWM.

⁵²⁴ Minutes of the BWMC, 1 May 1918, IWM.

⁵²⁵ Nevinson spent 18-24 September 1918 in France. On his return to London he described it to his father as "disappointing". Entry for 24 September 1918, *Misc. Eng.* e.620-4, HNPBL.

⁵²⁶ Nevinson to Alfred Yockney, 7 March 1919, Nevinson File, (1919-1963), 226-B6-190, IWM.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.* Nevinson to Alfred Yockney, 14 March 1919, 226-B6-185, IWM.

⁵²⁸ Nevinson's display of *Harvest of Battle* began in his studio on 9 April 1919. *Evening Standard & St. James's Gazette*, 9 April 1919, 7311.3-B-617, TGA.

⁵²⁹ *Daily Express*, 28 March 1919, Nevinson Press Clippings, IWM.

⁵³⁰ *New York Evening Post*, 31 May 1919, 7311-4, TGA.

⁵³¹ Nevinson to Alfred Yockney, 11 June 1919, Nevinson File (1919-1963), 226-B6-170, IWM.

⁵³² In his autobiography Nevinson writes that he hitched a lift to Ypres from Arras. On arrival at Ypres he "wandered on up to the salient and obtained notes and rough sketches for my painting *Harvest of Battle*." *Paint and Prejudice*, New York, 1938, p.139.

⁵³³ *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.49.

⁵³⁴ 13 December 1919, *Misc. Eng.* e.621-1, HNPBL.

⁵³⁵ Ezra Pound as 'B.H. Dias' in the *New Age*, 1 January 1920 in *Ezra Pound and the Visual Arts*, edited by Harriet Zinnes, Toronto, Canada, 1980, p.129.

⁵³⁶ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 16 February 1920, Jagger Press Clippings, IWM.

⁵³⁷ *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 15 December 1919, Jagger Press Clippings, IWM.

⁵³⁸ The battalion had fought on the Western Front for three years, 1915-18, and earned itself a formidable fighting reputation. 5,653 men served with the unit during its existence. 1,626 of them were killed and 3,882 were wounded. Men from the battalion won a total of 358 decorations for bravery, including three Victoria Crosses. *The History*

of the 16th Battalion (The Canadian Scottish) Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War 1914-1918. Lieutenant-Colonel H.M. Urquart DSO MC., Toronto, Canada, 1932, pp.412-413.

⁵³⁹ Quoted by P.G. Konody in *The Observer*, 31 October 1920. Press Clipping Book, C.J. Kennington Collection. Konody was the art adviser to the Canadian War Memorials Scheme in London.

⁵⁴⁰ *To Win A War: 1918 The Year of Victory*, John Terraine, London, 2000 (1978), p.110.

⁵⁴¹ As stated by the critic Hector Charlesworth in: *Toronto Saturday Night*, 25 September 1920, Press Clippings Book, C.J. Kennington Collection.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

⁵⁴³ Percy Godenrath, a former Sergeant in the 16th Canadian Scottish, to P.G. Konody, 28 November 1920, quoting from *The Vancouver Province*, 17 July 1920.

Miscellaneous Konody Papers, 1918-20, IWM.

⁵⁴⁴ *Morning Post*, 23 October 1920. Press Clippings Book, C.J. Kennington Collection.

⁵⁴⁵ *The Nation*, 20 November 1920. Press Clippings Book, C.J. Kennington Collection.

⁵⁴⁶ Arthur Clutton Brock in *The Times*, 26 October 1920, p.15.

⁵⁴⁷ *Evening News*, 23 October 1920, 24th Division Memorial Folder, IWM.

⁵⁴⁸ *Daily Herald*, 26 October 1920.

⁵⁴⁹ Quoted in *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.278.

⁵⁵⁰ *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance*, Alex King, Oxford UK, 1998, pp.207-208.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.* pp.1-4.

⁵⁵² Ferguson, London, 1998, p.437.

⁵⁵³ Leonard V. Smith, 'Masculinity, Memory and the French First World War One Novel' in *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War*, edited by Frans Cocteau and Marilyn Shavin-Cocteau, Oxford UK, 1995, p.260.

⁵⁵⁴ *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Jay Winter, Cambridge UK, 1995, p.115.

⁵⁵⁵ King, Oxford UK, 1998, p.176.

⁵⁵⁶ *The Macclesfield Courier and Herald*, 31 May 1919, p.2.

⁵⁵⁷ It would appear that Millard was approached in the first place because he was a close friend of the Headmaster of the Macclesfield School of Art. Both had studied under Falguière in Paris in the 1890's. *Macclesfield Courier and Herald*, 15 November 1919, p.8.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 20 December 1919, p.6. The report quotes Alderman J.G. Frost, the memorial committee's chairman, speaking at the meeting on 12 November 1919, when Millard's original design was first inspected.

⁵⁵⁹ This view was articulated most forcefully by the Rev. H.E. Stevens, Vicar of the local Anglican Parish Church, in the *Macclesfield Courier and Herald*, 29 November 1919, p.6.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 13 December 1919, p.6.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.* 20 December 1919, p.6.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.* 24 September 1919, p.3. The newspaper's editor supplied a detailed description of how the figures on the memorial ought to be interpreted by his readers.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.* 24 September 1921, p.3.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 10 September 1921, p.5.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p.5. The man was one Douglas S. Potts and described as "a veteran of Gallipoli". He may have felt particularly aggrieved with the committee because it had recently refused to include on the memorial the name of a cousin of his who had committed suicide earlier in the year. Potts's cousin had served for three years on the Western Front as a corporal in the Royal Engineers. The dead man's wife was convinced he had been suffering from shell-shock while the coroner recorded he had "taken his own life while troubled by the nerve-shattering effects of heavy shell-fire." *Macclesfield Courier and Herald*, 30 April 1921, p.8.

⁵⁶⁶ The final cost of the memorial was £4,000. *Macclesfield Courier and Herald*, 29 November 1919, p.5.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 10 September 1921, p.8.

- ⁵⁶⁸ *Hoylake and West Kirby Advertiser*, 7 May 1920, and *Birkenhead News*, 9 May 1920, Birkenhead Public Library.
- ⁵⁶⁹ *Everybody's Weekly*, 10 December 1938, Press Clippings Book [PCB], G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵⁷⁰ *Daily Sketch*, 22 May 1935, PCB, G. Jagger Collection.
- ⁵⁷¹ *Fear!* Patrick MacGill, London, 1921, pp.69-70.
- ⁵⁷² Brown, London, 1998, p.96.
- ⁵⁷³ *Hoylake and West Kirby Advertiser*, 7 May 1920, Birkenhead Public Library.
- ⁵⁷⁴ Charles Sargeant Jagger to A.E. Bolter, Company Secretary, Great Western Railway, 22 October 1922. Minutes of the Great Western Railway Company War Memorial Committee, RAIL-258-447, PRO.
- ⁵⁷⁵ Quoted in the *Hoylake and West Kirby Advertiser*, 5 May 1921, Birkenhead Public Library.
- ⁵⁷⁶ *The Observer*, 7 May 1921, Press Clipping in Birkenhead Public Library.
- ⁵⁷⁷ *Male Fantasies: Volume Two*, Klaus Theweleit, Cambridge UK, 1978 (1989), pp.161-162.
- ⁵⁷⁸ Theweleit, Cambridge UK, 1978 (1989), p.149.
- ⁵⁷⁹ C.S. Jagger to the *Daily News*, 14 July 1921, quoted in: *A Bitter Truth: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War*, Richard Cork, London, 1994, p.282.
- ⁵⁸⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1934, p.13. Tatlock recalls a conversation he had with Jagger c. 1928.
- ⁵⁸¹ *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, George L. Mosse, Oxford UK, 1996, p.118.
- ⁵⁸² Hamilton quoted in the *Morning Post*, 20 October 1925, Jagger Press Clippings, IWM.
- ⁵⁸³ *Battle Tactics of the Western Front: The British Army's Art of Attack 1916-1918*, Paddy Griffith, London, 1994, pp.80-82. Griffith identifies the 24th Infantry Division as one among a dozen British divisions as successful in battle, and sometimes more so, than their Australian and Canadian equivalents.
- ⁵⁸⁴ It would appear the only formal payment Kennington accepted, after spending over two and a half years on the memorial, was an engraved silver cigarette case. *Daily Express*, 6 October 1924, p.5.
- ⁵⁸⁵ *Sunday Times*, 5 October 1924, p.15. A New Army division, such as the 24th, began about 12,000 men strong. With total casualties for the division of nearly 35, 000, it had essentially been wiped out almost three times over.
- ⁵⁸⁶ Notes made by Eric Kennington c. September 1924, 24th Infantry Division memorial File, IWM.
- ⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.* IWM.
- ⁵⁸⁸ *Robert Graves: The Assault Heroic 1895-1926*, Robert Percival Graves, London, 1986, p.367, note 71.
- ⁵⁸⁹ Lieutenant-Colonel M.V.D. Hill DSO MC, former commanding officer of the 9th Royal Sussex, to Vivienne Crawford, art curator of the IWM, 24 August 1981, 24th Infantry Division memorial File, IWM.
- ⁵⁹⁰ Kennington Notes, c. September 1924, IWM.
- ⁵⁹¹ Kennington had, initially, asked T.E. Lawrence to write an explanatory text for the memorial. Lawrence demurred, but recommended Monro, owner of the Poetry Bookshop in Holborn who had spent two years in the Royal Garrison Artillery. T.E. Lawrence to Eric Kennington, 19 July 1924, Ms. Res. d.56, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.
- ⁵⁹² *The War Memorial in Battersea Park*, Harold Monro, London, 1924, pp.2-3.
- ⁵⁹³ *Ibid.* p.4.
- ⁵⁹⁴ Eric Kennington to Adrian Bury, *Everybody's Weekly*, 4 March 1949, p.16. Kennington Press Clippings, IWM.
- ⁵⁹⁵ Monro, London, 1924, p.4.
- ⁵⁹⁶ Eric Kennington to Harold Monro, 19 August 1924, C.J. Kennington Collection
- ⁵⁹⁷ Monro, London, 1924, p.4.
- ⁵⁹⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 6 October 1924, Press Clippings Book [PCB], C.J. Kennington Collection.

- ⁵⁹⁹ *The Connoisseur*, November 1924, p.184.
- ⁶⁰⁰ *Daily Mirror*, 6 October 1924, pp.12-13.
- ⁶⁰¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 6 October 1924, Kennington Press Clippings, IWM.
- ⁶⁰² *The Sphere*, 6 October 1924, PCB, C.J. Kennington Collection.
- ⁶⁰³ *The Observer*, 5 October 1924, p.15.
- ⁶⁰⁴ *Daily News*, 3 October 1924, PCB, C.J. Kennington Collection.
- ⁶⁰⁵ *The Graphic*, 4 October 1924, p.549.
- ⁶⁰⁶ *Daily News*, 6 October 1924, p.12.
- ⁶⁰⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 6 October 1924, p.6.
- ⁶⁰⁸ Regarding the figure of Sergeant Woods taking the hand of the figure based on Trooper Thomas, Kennington could be referring to the common practice of men from the ranks shaking hands with those either side of them in a forward 'jumping off' trench immediately prior to clambering out and advancing behind the protective 'creeping' barrage into 'No-Man's-Land' and towards the waiting enemy. For references to the practice: *Her Privates We*, Frederic Manning, London, 1930 (1999 Edition), p.213 and *Footslogger*, Graham Seton Hutchison, London, 1931, p.266.
- ⁶⁰⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 20 October 1925, p.10.
- ⁶¹⁰ Colonel W.N. Lloyd to General Sir Hugh Sclater, 23 October 1920. Minutes of the Royal Artillery War Commemoration Fund Executive Committee [RAWCFC], IWM.
- ⁶¹¹ Major-General Sir Herbert Uniacke to General Sir Hugh Sclater, 28 October 1920. Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶¹² General Sir J.P. DuCann, 9 December 1920, Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶¹³ In 1925 the Regiment estimated that 49,076 of its men had been killed between August 1914 and November 1918; 6,689 were listed as still 'missing' and therefore presumed dead while 129,156 men had been wounded. The Regiment's total First World Casualties amounted to 184,921. *The Royal Artillery Memorial: A Description*, Major-General Sir Stanley von Donop, London, 1925, p.9.
- ⁶¹⁴ It is only relatively recently that military historians in the UK have concluded that the Royal Artillery enabled the British infantry to breach every German defensive position, however formidable, they encountered during the last three and a half months of the war in 1918. For analysis of the growth and huge improvement within the Royal Artillery during the First World War see: *Battle Tactics of the Western Front: The British Army's Art of Attack 1916-1918*, Paddy Griffith, London, 1994, pp.141-143 and *Forgotten Victory: The First World War Myth and Realities*, Gary Sheffield, London, 2001, pp.201-202.
- ⁶¹⁵ *The Royal Artillery Memorial: A Description*, Major-General Sir Stanley von Donop, London, 1925, pp.14-16.
- ⁶¹⁶ Jagger interviewed by the *Daily News*, 6 May 1923, recalling the circumstances in which he secured the Royal Artillery Memorial commission. Jagger Press Clippings, TGA.
- ⁶¹⁷ 22 July 1921, Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶¹⁸ Letter from Major-General Sir Herbert Uniacke, dated 5 August 1924 and read out on 12 November 1924. Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶¹⁹ Major-General Sir Stanley von Donop, 12 November 1924. Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶²⁰ 12 November 1924, Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶²¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶²² Noted by Sir Leslie Rundle, 1 May 1925, Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM
- ⁶²³ 12 November 1924, Minutes of the RAWCFC, IWM.
- ⁶²⁴ Letter to the *Daily Mail*, 16 October 1925, p.7.
- ⁶²⁵ *The Observer*, 18 October 1925, p.15.
- ⁶²⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 19 October 1925, p.10.
- ⁶²⁷ *Ibid.* 20 October 1925, p.10.
- ⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶²⁹ *Ibid.* 19 October 1925, p.10.
- ⁶³⁰ Letter from Major Macgregor Knox MC (formerly Royal Field Artillery), *The Times*, 20 October 1925, p.8.

Conclusion.

⁶³¹ Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Uniacke in *The Illustrated London News*, 14 November 1925, p.956.

⁶³² *The Pity of War*, Niall Ferguson, London, 1998, p.450. Ferguson anticipates Bond's argument that certain classic 'anti-war' texts on closer inspection prove to be far less negative in their attitude towards the experience of fighting the war than one might at first assume. *The Unquiet Western Front: Britain's Role in Literature and History*, Brian Bond, Cambridge UK, 2002, pp.13-14.

⁶³³ *The Times*, 22 October 1925, p.8.

⁶³⁴ Letter from Elizabeth Gillman ('ex-WAAC') in *The Times*, 27 October 1925, p.15. It should be noted that several newspapers commented on Jagger's impressive war record, as if to account for why the imagery on the memorial struck ex-servicemen at the unveiling as so pungently and convincingly authentic i.e. *The Manchester Guardian*, 19 October 1925, which described Jagger as someone who had been "wounded in the trenches" and far removed from the majority of memorial sculptors who "knew nothing about war and its realities", unlike Jagger.

⁶³⁵ *Morning Post*, 17 November 1934, Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶³⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1934, p.13

⁶³⁷ *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, Samuel Hynes, London, 1992, p.307. Hynes's definition of the 'anti-monument' is persuasive but he fails to leave sufficient room in his argument for patently talented artists, such as Kennington and Jagger, creating memorials that treat the First World War as a terrible, yet unavoidable, and even necessary event.

⁶³⁸ Between 1921 and 1925 Jagger completed war memorials for: Portsmouth City Council (two figures in stone, unveiled October 1921), Bedford Borough Council (one figure in stone, unveiled July 1922), S. and J. Watts Warehouse Company, Manchester (one bronze figure, unveiled August 1922), the Great Western Railway at Paddington Station (one bronze figure, unveiled November 1922), Hoylake and West Kirby District Council (two bronze figures, unveiled December 1922), and the Anglo-Belgian Fellowship Memorial in Brussels (two figures in stone and two stone low-reliefs, unveiled April 1923). If that work rate is not sufficiently impressive, in the spring of 1924 he was awarded a contract from the Imperial War Graves Commission to carve two over life-sized leopards for the Sinai Memorial to the Missing of the Indian Army. Jagger somehow found the time to have full-size plaster models of the leopards ready for dispatch to Egypt only a year later, even as he was putting the finishing touches to his low-relief carvings for the Royal Artillery Memorial. *War and Peace Sculpture: Charles Sargeant Jagger*, edited by Ann Compton, London, 1985, pp.102-103.

⁶³⁹ *Morning Post*, 19 July 1933, Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶⁴⁰ Eric Kennington to Celandine Kennington, c. August 1924, KABL.

⁶⁴¹ *The Times*, 23 April 1925, p.12 for the announcement that the Soissons commission had been awarded to the architects Gordon Herbert Holt (1892-1962) and Verner Owen Rees (1886-1966)

⁶⁴² *T.P. and Cassell's Weekly*, 12 March 1927, Jagger Press Clippings, IWM.

⁶⁴³ C.R.W. Nevinson to Alfred Yockney, 25 March 1920, Nevinson File (1919-1963), 226-B6-133/134, IWM.

⁶⁴⁴ *Daily Chronicle*, 26 October 1925, 7311.7A, TGA. Referring to *La Mitrailleuse*, Nevinson stated he was "ashamed of the picture and I never want anybody to look upon it again."

⁶⁴⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 11 December 1928, 7311.7C, TGA.

⁶⁴⁶ *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, George L. Mosse, Oxford UK, 1996, pp.3-4.

⁶⁴⁷ *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, Joanna Bourke, London, 1996, pp.22-23.

⁶⁴⁸ George L. Mosse, Oxford UK, 1996, p.109.

⁶⁴⁹ *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation*, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, London, 1997, pp.40-43.

⁶⁵⁰ *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture*, Elaine Showalter, London, 1997, p.73.

⁶⁵¹ George L. Mosse, Oxford UK, 1996, p.19.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.* p.15.

⁶⁵³ Mrs. Evelyn Jagger interviewed in the *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 17 January 1936. She mentions that her late husband "was extremely fond of Kipling. In the trenches ... and for years after he carried a volume of Kipling's poetry in his pocket." Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶⁵⁴ *Truth*, 4 February 1955, p.141. Kennington also appears to have subscribed to Kipling's idea that artistic creativity resulted from the artist being subjected to a kind of possession by a mysterious exterior force, which Kipling referred to as his 'Daemon'. Rather less dramatically, Kennington described himself being under the control of a "spiritual authority" while he carved a block of stone.

⁶⁵⁵ The following passage, from the end of Part One of *Pilgrim's Progress*, was recited immediately after the one minutes silence, and before the playing of reveille, during the unveiling ceremony in October 1924 "Now just as the Gates were opened to let in the men, I looked after them, and behold, the City shone like the sun: the streets also were paved with gold ... And after that, they shut up the Gates; which when I had seen, I wished myself among them." Two years earlier, in October 1922, one finds Kipling urging an admirer, Rupert Croft-Cooke, to read *Pilgrim's Progress* assiduously. *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling*, Harry Ricketts, London, 1999, p.357.

⁶⁵⁶ C.R.W. Nevinson to Edward Marsh, 17 April 1917, Marsh Papers, NYPL.

⁶⁵⁷ *The Graphic*, 19 April 1930, 7311.7C, TGA.

⁶⁵⁸ *The Island*, 15 September 1931, pp.113-114.

⁶⁵⁹ C.R.W. Nevinson to William Rothenstein, 24 April 1932, HLHU. Nevinson wrote plaintively, if melodramatically "I am now more or less dying, and under observation for tuberculosis, all due to that insane war when I was a private."

⁶⁶⁰ *Things to Come: Eric Kennington's 'War God'*, Sue Malvern, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 2001, pp.5-6.

⁶⁶¹ *Drawing the RAF: A Book of Portraits*, Introduction by Sir Ronald Storrs, Oxford UK, 1942, p.24.

⁶⁶² *Sermons by Artists*, Paul Nash, David Low, Robert Gibbings, Eric Kennington, Leon Underwood, Stanley Spencer, Edmund Sullivan, Roger Fry, Will Dyson and Percy Smith. London, 1934, p.29. Regretfully, Kennington reflects that "surely he [Man] must now know well that if man takes up the sword, he will perish by it ... Perhaps he knows no other course of action ... it is perhaps really a delight to kill his like and stride the impotent corpse?" p.30.

⁶⁶³ *The Times*, 10 July 1928, p.15.

⁶⁶⁴ Eric Kennington, notes for a lecture on sculpture c.1929, C.J. Kennington Collection. He describes the Easter Island figures as the "essence of PERMANENCE. TRANQUILLITY – undisturbed and perfectly controlled."

⁶⁶⁵ Storrs, Oxford UK, 1942, p.23.

⁶⁶⁶ *The British Soldier*, Preface by Robert Graves, Leicester Galleries, London, 1918, pp.3-4.

⁶⁶⁷ T.E. Lawrence to William Rothenstein, 14 April 1928 in *The Letters of T.E. Lawrence*, Edited by David Garnett, London, 1938, p.583.

⁶⁶⁸ *The Architectural Review*, June 1932, p.234. In the article, R.H. Wilenski writes of how Kennington utilized the time he took to carve the 24th Division memorial to communicate that: "the meaning of the war ... was the meaning of the spirit of the private soldier ... That meaning had to be drilled into [a] cylinder of Portland Stone ... I know of no other [war memorials] ... which was born of more intense and intimate communion with the men who suffered."

⁶⁶⁹ Fosten was identified by his son in *Military Illustrated: Past and Present*, No. 5, February/March 1987, p.20. Metcalfe was also one of Jagger's studio assistant's. His main duty, however, seems to have been the artist's sparring partner in a boxing ring that Jagger had put up in his studio to divert his frustrations if the details of a commission were proving difficult, *Evening Standard*, 5 February 1924.

⁶⁷⁰ *News Chronicle*, 17 November 1934, Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶⁷¹ Article by Robert Tatlock in the *Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1934, p.13.

⁶⁷² *The Daily Mirror*, 5 August 1933, p.7.

⁶⁷³ As early as 1930, Jagger's close friend, ex-Lieutenant-Colonel Graham Seton-Hutchison DSO MC, was convinced that the next war in Europe would be between France, Poland and Britain on one side and a revived Germany on the other.

Footslogger: An Autobiography, Graham Seton, London, 1931, pp.303-304.

⁶⁷⁴ *Morning Post*, 17 November 1934, Press Clippings File, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶⁷⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1934, p.15.

⁶⁷⁶ *Daily Express*, 17 November 1934, p.11.

⁶⁷⁷ Mrs. Evelyn Jagger, quoted in the *Leeds Mercury*, 29 June 1936, Press Clippings, G. Jagger Collection.

⁶⁷⁸ *Her Privates We*, Frederic Manning, London, 1930/1999, p.vii.

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APPENDIX I.

C.R.W. Nevinson's Wartime Print Output: 1916-1918.

It is highly likely that, from an early age, that Nevinson was familiar with drypoints and etchings. His father was interested in prints and was friendly with a number of prominent and influential printmakers such as Muirhead Bone (1876-1953), Francis Dodd and Professor Frank Brown (1851-1941). For example, in October 1910, H.W. Nevinson dined at the home of William Rothenstein alongside Dodd, Bone, Henry Tonks and the painter-etcher Augustus John. Nevinson's father seems to have encouraged him to look at prints. In February 1907 he took him to an exhibition of Whistler's etchings at the Whitechapel Art Gallery [23 February 1907, e. 614/1, HNPBL] and in March 1909 they both attended a lecture at the British Museum on Japanese prints given by Laurence Binyon, assistant keeper of Oriental Prints [24 March 1909, e.615/2, HNPBL]. In May 1911 H.W. Nevinson took his son and Mark Gertler to the home of Professor Michael Sadler in Weybridge to look at the Professor's collection of German Expressionist paintings and prints [21 May 1911, e.616/3, HNPBL]. He also encouraged his son to ask artist friends for advice on the techniques of drawing and painting i.e. Muirhead Bone in January 1913 [3 January 1913, e.617-3, HNPBL].

In his autobiography, admittedly written many years after the fact in 1937, Nevinson claimed that while he was studying at the St. John's School of Art (1907-8) Whistler was "one of my gods" while he also admired the painter-printmaker Albrecht Dürer. He also notes that, while he was at St. John's, his work was praised by the eminent etcher David Murray (1865-1952) [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.25] He states that he mainly went to the Slade because Augustus John had studied there while at one of the Camden Town Group exhibitions (May or December 1911) he was introduced to

the acclaimed painter-etcher Walter Richard Sickert. [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.29]. As he was about to leave the Slade he described himself as "obsessed by Goya, Daumier and Toulouse-Lautrec." [1938 p.50] It is also relevant that Nevinson was friendly with the one Futurist Gino Severini (1883-1966) who regularly produced prints c.1910-17 (first drypoints, and then linocuts). [*Severini Futurista 1912-1917*, Anne Coffin Hanson, Yale USA, 1995 p.137]

Early in May 1916 H.W. Nevinson visited the painter-printmaker Alfred Hartley (1855-1933) at his home in St. Ives, Cornwall. According to Nevinson senior, Hartley showed him "his process of etching and aquatint" and bought some examples. (6 May 1916, e. 619/4, HNPBL). One can only presume that, on returning to London, Nevinson senior showed them to Nevinson junior. During the summer of 1916 C.R.W. Nevinson was a founder member of the Decorative Art Group which contained a number of printmakers: Carlo Norway (linocuts); Frank Potter (etcher); Nancy Smith (lithographs for poster designs) and Ethelbert White (1891-1972, woodcuts and a friend from before the War. Indeed, White and his wife attended Nevinson's 12 June 1914 lecture on English Futurism at the Doré Galleries, e.618/1, HNPBL). The Group's inaugural exhibition opened 10 July 1916 at the Modern Gallery, Bond Street. It is also significant that, in May 1916, Nevinson met and befriended the printmaker/poster designer E. McKnight Kauffer (12 May 1916, e.619/4, HNPBL).

Nevinson's first prints were eleven drypoints, all executed between c. June 1916 and the middle of September 1916 (Nevinson's first solo show opened at the Leicester Galleries, London on 26 September 1916 and hanging for the show began on the 19th of that month). In 1925 Nevinson told the etcher Ernest Lumsden (1883-1948) "My drypoints are invariably traced on to the surface of a smoky liquid ground, cut through with a ruby point and then the ground cleaned off. After that, the ordinary working of a drypoint [with a burin to create the burr] a well-polished plate and a dirty finger of oil and charcoal to study the lines." [*The Art of Etching*, E. Lumsden, London, 1925, p.358.]

All the drypoints Nevinson created in 1916 were derived from oils, pastels and charcoal studies related to his experiences with the Friends Ambulance Unit and the RAMC, between November 1914 and January 1916. After leaving the RAMC, in January 1916, Nevinson found he could not afford a studio of his own, so he lived and worked at home, 4 Downside Crescent, Belsize Park. His 1916 drypoints were probably all executed there, in one of rooms on the top floor.

Key:

BG= Bourgeois Galleries, New York. BM= British Museum. HNPBL = Henry Nevinson Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. GG = Goupil Gallery, London. IWM= Imperial War Museum, London. KG = Keppel Galleries, New York. LG= Leicester Galleries, London. MCAG= Manchester City Art Gallery. NEAC= New English Art Club. PC= Private Collection. TG= Tate Gallery, London. V&A= Victoria and Albert Museum, London. WU= Whereabouts Unknown.

Drypoints 1916 (11)

1. *Returning to the Trenches*, 1916, 15 x 20 cm (6 x 7 ¾ inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited Third 'Masters of Modern Etching' LG October 1917 no.81.
Oil on canvas, 51 x 76 cm (20 x 30 inches), National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. First exhibited London Group, GG, March 1915, no.89.
Unfinished chalk and charcoal study, 14.5 x 20.5 cm (5 ¾ x 8 inches), TG.
Chalk study, 19.7 x 25.9 cm (7 ¾ x 10 ¼ inches), V&A.
Chalk and watercolour study, 14 x 20 cm (5 ½ x 8 inches), IWM.
Pen and ink drawing reproduced as *On the Way to the Trenches* in *Blast: War Number*, July 1915 p.89.

Note: the oil was owned in 1916 by Professor Sir Michael Sadler. The drypoint was one of the very few prints Nevinson executed in a Cubo-Futurist style.

2. *Ypres after the Second Bombardment*, 1916. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.32 as *Ypres after the First Bombardment*.

Oil on Canvas *Ypres after the Second Bombardment*, 1915, 76.2 x 102 cm (30 x 40 ½ inches), Sheffield Galleries and Museums. First exhibited London Group, March 1915, no.87.

3. *A Flooded Trench on the Yser*, 1916, 15.4 x 19 cm (6 ¼ x 7 ½ inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.27.

Oil on canvas *Deserted Trench*, 1915, 50 x 61 cm (19 ¾ x 24 inches), PC. First exhibited London Group, GG, November 1915, no.24.

Note: in *Paint and Prejudice* (New York 1938 p.110) Nevinson claimed to have painted this work and *La Mitrailieuse* during "the last two days of honeymoon leave". Nevinson married Kathleen Knowlman on 1 November 1915 and other ranks were usually given 5 days leave for that occasion. It is evident in the oil, and even more so in the starker drypoint, that the composition for this work is heavily informed by an awareness of nineteenth-century Japanese woodblock prints by Kitagawa Utamaro (1753-1806), Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858). Compare Nevinson's stylised treatment of rain with that of Hiroshige in his *The Fifty Posting Stations of the Tokaido* (1830-34). The influence of Japanese printmaking is also present in numbers 5, 6, and 7.

4. *Boesinghe Farm*, 1916, 22.8 x 16.5 cm (9 x 6 ½ inches), BM.

Pastel, 1916, 32 x 25.5 cm (12 ½ x 10 inches), V&A. First exhibited Friday Club, March 1916, no.127.

5. *A Dawn 1914*, 1916, 20.1 x 15 cm (8 x 6 inches), BM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.33.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 54.6 x 47 cm (21 ½ x 18 ½ inches), PC. First exhibited Friday Club, March 1916, no.19.

Pastel, 1916, exhibited NEAC, May 1916, no.120.

6. *On the Road to Ypres*, 1916, 12.5 x 22 cm (5 x 8 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.25.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 49 x 90 cm (19 ¼ x 35 ½ inches), PC. First exhibited, NEAC, May 1916, no.295.

7. *Southampton*, 1916, 8.5 x 9.7 cm (3 ½ x 3 ¾ inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.36.

Priced at £2, 2s at MCAG, July 1920, no.44.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 51 x 61 cm (20 ¼ x 24 inches), Southampton City Art Gallery. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.12.

8. *Troops Resting*, 1916, 21.2 x 26.2 cm (8 ¾ x 10 ¼ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.38.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 71.1 x 91.4 cm (28 x 36 inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.16.

9. *Column on the March*, 1916, 17.6 x 27.7 cm (7 x 11 inches), BM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.42.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 61 x 74.9 cm (24 x 29 ½ inches), Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.17.

Chalk and pencil study, 1916, 18.4 x 22.1 cm (7 ½ x 8 ¾ inches), Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford.

Chalk and watercolour study, 1916, 18.4 x 22.2 cm (7 ½ x 8 ¾ inches), IWM.

Note: the oil was bought in 1916 by Professor Sir Michael Sadler and then later by Lawrence J. Cadbury who had served in the Friends Ambulance Unit alongside Nevinson in 1914/15.

10. *Twilight*, 1916, 18.4 x 15.2 cm (7 ¼ x 6 inches), BM and IWM. First exhibited NEAC, November 1916, no.28. Edition of 75.

Oil on canvas, 1916, Winchester College. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.1.

Note: this print was used to market the luxury edition of *Modern War: Paintings by C.R.W. Nevinson* with 25 reproductions and a text by P.G. Konody (1872-1933) published by Grant Richards in January 1917. 1,125 copies at 10s 6d and 75 at 31s 6d signed by the artist and containing a signed "unpublished etching". The book was advertised in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 December 1916.

11. *The Doctor*, 1916, 20.3 x 15.2 cm (8 x 6 inches), BM. First exhibited NEAC, November 1916, no.25.

Oil on canvas, 1916, 57.1 x 41.2 cm (22 ½ x 16 ¼ inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, September 1916, no.21.

Note: the oil was purchased for the IWM by Robert Ross in June 1918.

1917-18 War-related Drypoints (7).

Nevinson was accepted as an official war artist with the Department of Information towards the end of May 1917 [C.F.G. Masterman to John Buchan, 18 May 1917, Nevinson IWM File]. He left for France on 6 July and returned to London on 5 August 1917 [e.620/2, HNPBL]. The majority of his official war art images were painted between September and December 1917. His exhibition as an official war artist opened at the Leicester Galleries, London on Saturday, 2 March 1918 and closed 6 April 1918. In April 1918 he was approached to paint a large canvas about the war for the British War Memorials Committee. Nevinson's final stint as an official war artist took place in France for a week in September 1918 [24 September 1918 e.620-4, HNPBL]

In December 1917 Nevinson wrote to C.F.G. Masterman with a proposal to execute a whole "series of lithographs, etchings and woodcuts of the War with a view to getting exhibits of my work abroad and in the provincial towns of England, Scotland etc (It is quite impossible nowadays to send paintings and drawings on voyages and also patrons object to loaning). Already my dealers can fix an exhibition of this kind in New York." [30 December 1917, Nevinson, IWM File]. In June 1918 he wrote to Masterman to remind him of his print series idea "last Christmas ... I rather fancy myself as an exponent of those mediums [etching and lithography] Printmaking helped him to "ward off my fits of melancholy which end in sleeplessness." [22 June 1918, Nevinson IWM File].

1. *Survivors at Arras*, 1917, 28.5 x 23.4 cm (11 ¼ x 9 ¼ inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.52.

Oil on canvas, 1917, WU. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.20 (Probably painted October 1917).

Note: Nevinson used the drypoint as the image on the invitation to his exhibition of prints at the KG, New York in April-May 1919.

2. *A Group of Soldiers*, 1917, 35.5 x 25 .5 cm (14 x 10 inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.34.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 91.4 x 60.9 cm (36 x 24 inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.13 (probably painted November 1917).

Note: The faces of these soldiers may have been influenced by a combination of Goya, Honoré Daumier and the French caricaturist Jean-Louis Forain (1852-1931). In a November 1917 letter to C.F.G. Masterman, Nevinson mentioned Goya and Forain as a model for war artists to emulate. [25 November 1917, Nevinson IWM File] In April 1918

he wrote to the editor of the *Saturday Review* that he had "just received news from an official in Paris that Forain has expressed great admiration for my work. I value his opinions as greatly as I despise petty personal polemics." [13 April 1918, 7311.3A, TGA] Later, in his autobiography, Nevinson wrote of how, at the Slade (1909-1912), he had been "obsessed by ... Goya, Daumier and Toulouse-Lautrec" while he "revered Degas". [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.50 and p.52] In April 1918 he had praised Goya as an example for present day war artists in a letter to Robert Ross [21 April 1918, Nevinson IWM File] The influence of Goya can also be detected in *The Mule Team* and *Hans and Fritz*.

3. *The Mule Team*, 1917, 17.8 x 24.8 cm (7 x 9 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.45.

Oil on canvas, 1917, IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.21 (probably painted December 1917).

Note: The face of the muleteer is reminiscent of those that appear in Goya's *Caprichos* of the late 1790's.

4. *Reclaimed Country*, 1917, 20 x 14 cm (8 x 5 ½ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.51.

Pastel, 1917, WU. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.2.

5. *That Curséd Wood*, 1918, 25 x 34.7 cm (9 ¾ x 13 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.55.

Oil on canvas, 1918, WU. Exhibited BG, New York, November 1920, no.67.

Note: unusually, the print of this was exhibited before the oil version. The print in the British Museum, donated by Nevinson, entered its collection on 19 February 1918. The title is derived from Siegfried Sassoon's poem *At Camoy* (dated 3 July 1916), which appeared in *The Old Huntsman*, published in May 1917. Nevinson could have been introduced to Sassoon's war poetry by the war poet Robert Nichols (who was friendly with both Sassoon and Robert Graves) whom Nevinson befriended in October 1917. The drypoint was priced at £8, 8s MCAG, July 1920, no.65,

6. *The Tank*, 1918, 15.2 x 20.3 cm (6 x 8 inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.36.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 44.5 x 59.7 cm (17 ½ x 23 ½ inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.23 (Probably painted December 1917).

Note: the oil replaced the controversial *Paths of Glory* when it was removed from the wall, middle of March 1918.

7. *Nerves of an Army*, 1918, 20 x 14.2 cm (8 x 5 ½ inches), BM. Edition of 100.

Oil on canvas, 1918, 105.5 x 69.9 cm (41 ½ x 27 ½ inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.22.

Note: The drypoint was used to market copies of *The Great War: Fourth Year* by C.R.W. Nevinson, text by J.E. Crawford Fritch and published by Grant Richards with 24 reproductions in September 1918. 900 copies were produced at 15s each while 100 copies of the luxury edition at 42s were signed by the artist and contained a signed print of *Nerves of an Army*. After these 100 copies had been sold, the plate of the drypoint would be destroyed [*Times Literary Supplement*, 19 September 1918, p.439.]

Drypoints Not related to the War 1918 (2)

1. *The Estuary* (also known as *Ebb Tide Rye*), 1918, 26 x 36.2 cm (10 ¼ x 14 ¼ inches) BM and PC. Edition of 25. Priced at £8, 8s MCAG, July 1920, no.72.

Oil on canvas exhibited Friday Club, April 1918.

2. *Greenwich*, 1918, WU. First exhibited LG 'Modern Masters of Etching', November 1918 no.27 and then KG, New York, May 1919, no.20. Edition of 40.

Mezzotints 1918 (3)

1. *From an Office Window*, 1918, 25.3 x 17.5 cm (10 x 7 inches), V&A and BM. First exhibited, KG, New York, May 1919, no.39. Priced at £3, 3s MCAG, July 1920, no.64. Watercolour exhibited London Group, November 1916 no.60.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 64.3 x 49 cm (25 ¼ x 19 ¼ inches), Sitwell Family. First exhibited Friday Club, London April 1917.

2. *Southwark* (also known as *Limehouse*), 1918, 22.5 x 15 cm (9 x 6 inches), BM. First exhibited KG, New York, May 1919, no.41. Priced at £3, 3s MCAG, July 1920, no.61.

3. *Wind*, 1918, 12.5 x 37.5 cm (5 x 14 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited KG, New York, May 1919, no.40. Edition of 25.

Oil on canvas, 1918, 50.8 x 61 cm (20 x 24 inches), PC. First exhibited NEAC, January 1918.

Woodcuts 1918 (2)

From 1912 Noel Rooke (1881-1953) taught wood engraving and poster design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, Southampton Row (opened 1908), where Nevinson may have studied for a short while after leaving the Slade in 1912. [*A History of British Wood Engraving*, Albert Garrett, London, 1986, p.115]

In the autumn of 1913 Edward Wadsworth (whom Nevinson knew since they met as students at the Slade in 1909) began to produce wood engravings, which are often incorrectly referred to as 'woodcuts'. [Garrett, 1986, p.164] Wadsworth's eye-catching *Newcastle* was reproduced in the first issue of *Blast* in July 1914. Nevinson may have been aware of an exhibition of German woodcuts, which opened at the 21 Gallery in London in March 1914 and included works by Max Pechstein, Kandinsky, Franz Marc and Ernest Ludwig Kirchner. In March 1919 Wadsworth held an exhibition of his 'Dazzleship' woodcuts (produced 1917-18 and inspired by the Cubist-influenced camouflage painted on ships to frustrate the efforts of U-Boat captains to aim at them) at the Adelphi Gallery in London. [Garrett, 1986, p.116].

1. *Ramming Home a Heavy Shell*, 1918, 23 x 30.6 cm (9 x 12 inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.48. Edition of 12.

Oil on canvas, 1917, PC. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.9.

2. *MT [Motor Transport]*, 1918, 21.7 x 28.5 cm (8 ½ x 11 ¼ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.39. Edition of 12. The print was presented to the BM, 19 February 1918.

Oil on canvas, 1918, 45.6 x 61 cm (18 x 24 inches), PC. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.28.

Lithographs 1917-18 (24)

In his autobiography Nevinson stated that he had first studied lithography in about 1912 under Ernest Jackson (1872-1945) at the "London County Council School on Southampton Row". [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.73.] He paid Jackson a handsome tribute "Of all the men I have met, who deal with the teaching of art, he is the finest and most erudite: a technician and an artist." In 1918 he told Campbell Dodgson (Curator of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum) that he had first tried his hand at lithography in 1912 [*British Artists at the Front Volume One*, London, 1918, p.4.] However, when in April 1912 Nevinson advised Dora Carrington to become proficient in all artistic mediums (such as oil, charcoal, watercolour, tempera, pastel and sculpture) he conspicuously made no reference to any form of printmaking. [*Carrington: A Life of Dora Carrington 1893-1932*, Gretchen Gerzina, Oxford UK, 1989, p.33]

Jackson began to teach lithography regularly at the Central School from 1906 onwards. In 1908 he published *The Neolith* entirely illustrated by lithographs of: Spencer Pryse, A.S. Hatrick, E.J. Sullivan, Frank Brangwyn, George Clausen, John Copley, Ethel Gabain and the leading exponent of transfer lithography (and Whistler admirer) Joseph Pennell. Later in 1908 Pennell and Jackson founded the Senefelder Club dedicated to raising the profile of lithography in Great Britain. The following year the Club held its first exhibition at the Goupil Gallery, London. In 1914 Pennell felt so optimistic about the future prospects of lithography in the country that he wrote "The most brilliant of the younger men are all now making remarkable lithographs and they are being encouraged by collectors and dealers to do so as well as by publishers ... there is a genuine renaissance of the art." [*Lithography and Lithographers*. Joseph Pennell and E. Robins Pennell, London, 1915, pp.157-158] Jackson would later mastermind a series of 66 propaganda lithographs, by 18 artists, on the theme of *Britain's Efforts and Ideals* for the Department of Information. The lithographs were to appeal to the home front, Americans and inhabitants of neutral countries and first went on public display in London in July 1917.

It is interesting that in 1914 Pennell noted the growing popularity of working directly on the stone with mezzotint rockers, penknives, scrapers and roulettes as opposed to the transfer method he championed. From his first lithographs, executed in January 1917, Nevinson much preferred to work directly on the stone, scraping away ink or chalk to create highlights, rather than the transfer process. In 1919 the champion of 'experimental' British printmaking, Malcolm C. Salaman, asserted that the most 'genuine' lithographers preferred to work directly on the stone rather than the tamer, less demanding transfer process. [*Modern Woodcuts and Lithographs*, London, 1919, p.121]

1. *Dawn at Southwark*, 1917, 34.3 x 44.8 cm (13 ½ x 17 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited Senefelder Club, LG January 1917 no.84. Edition of 50? (The maximum number allowed for those exhibiting with the Club).

The exhibition opened to the public on 23 January 1917.

Oil on canvas with the same title was exhibited at the Friday Club in April 1917.

2. *Loading the Ship*, 1917, 43.2 x 33.8 cm (17 x 13 ¼ inches), BM, V&A and Aberdeen Art Gallery. First exhibited Senefelder Club, LG January 1917 no.79. Edition of 25. Priced at £3, 3s MCAG, July 1920, no.45.

Note: composition for this is derived from a detail in the centre of the oil/drypoint *Southampton* exhibited September 1916.

3. *La Villette*, 1917, 38.5 x 30.3 cm (15 ¼ x 12 inches), BM. First exhibited Senefelder Club, LG January 1917. Edition of 50?

Oil on canvas exhibited Friday Club, February 1914, no.116. Also exhibited as *Canal at Ghent* at GG, November 1914, no.38 and with the Decorative Art Group, July 1916 no.23.

La Villette/Canal at Ghent reproduced in *Colour* magazine, February 1917, p.9.

4. *The Blue Wave*, 1917, 34 x 42.5 cm (13 ½ x 16 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited as *Breakers* at the Friday Club, April 1917, no.103. Priced at £10, 10s MCAG, July 1920, no.67

Oil on canvas, 1917, 40.8 x 50.8 cm (16 x 20 inches), Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven.

Note: this was Nevinson's first attempt at a colour lithograph. The Friday Club exhibition opened on 21 April 1917. The lithograph was first reproduced as *The Blue Wave* in the arts magazine *New Paths* edited by Michael Sadler's son and published in May 1918. The image obviously owes a debt to Japanese colour woodblock printing such as Hokusai's *The Hollow of the Deep Sea Wave off Kanagawa*, part of the *Thirty Six Views of Mount Fuji* (1823-1829). This particular image was reproduced in *Hokusai* by C.J.

Holmes (1899). Nevinson may have also been aware of Korin's seascapes, some of which were reproduced in Laurence Binyon's 1913 book *Painting in the Far East* [p.221]. One should not forget that Korin was 'blessed' in *Blast: War Number* (July 1915). No doubt Nevinson knew that Hokusai had been admired by two of his heroes: Courbet and Whistler. Interestingly, when this print was seen in New York in May 1919, one critic was immediately reminded of Hokusai, Courbet, 'the 1860's', and of J.A.M Whistler. [*New York Times*, 25 May 1919, p.12, 7311.4 TGA]

5. *Britain's Efforts and Ideals: Making Aircraft: Making the Engine*, 1917, 40.4 x 30.3 cm (16 x 12 inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited Fine Art Society, London, July 1917. Edition of 200. Priced at £2, 2s an impression or £10, 10s for the set of six.

Note: This and the next five lithographs were all executed using the transfer process from a charcoal drawing. Nevinson sent his last drawing for the series to the Department of Information on 21 June 1917. [Nevinson to Thomas Derrick, Nevinson IWM File] The Efforts and Ideals exhibition opened on 6 July 1917.

6. *Acetylene Welder*, 1917, 40.4 x 30.3 cm, IWM and BM

7. *Assembling Parts*, 1917, 40.3 x 31.8 cm (16 x 12 ½ inches), IWM and BM

8. *In the Air*, 1917, 40.3 x 31.8 cm (16 x 12 ½ inches), IWM and BM

Note: a plate in Goya's *Caprichos* may have influenced the composition.

9. *Banking at 4,000 Feet*, 1917, 40.2 x 30 cm (15 ¾ x 11 ¾ inches), IWM and BM

Oil on canvas, 1917, 75 x 59.7 cm (29 ½ x 23 ½ inches), PC. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.15

10. *Swooping Down on a Taube*, 1917, 40.2 x 30 cm, IWM and BM

Oil on Canvas *Swooping Down on a Hostile Plane*, 1917, 61 x 45.6 cm (24 x 18 inches), IWM

Note: Nevinson painted the oil in April 1917 for Sir Alfred Mond, prime mover behind the idea of establishing an Imperial War Museum.

11. *Inside Brigade Headquarters*, 1917, 35.4 x 25.4 cm (14 x 10 inches), BM

Oil on canvas, 1917, WU. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.3.

Note: The brigade could have belonged to the 4th Infantry Division with whom Nevinson stayed in July 1917. Nevinson's comments in a New York newspaper in May 1919 are germane to this image "Men were just creatures of routine. Everybody, from Generals to privates, was just a clerk ... There is hardly any excitement in war. It is routine and dullness and greed ... The charge gets written up and painted – not the tuning up of the great machine that is behind the charge." [*New York Times*, 25 May 1919, p.13]

12. *After a Push*, 1918, 48.5 x 38 cm (19 x 15 inches), BM and IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.43. Edition of 25. Priced at £5, 5s MCAG, July 1920, no.54.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 55 x 77 cm (21 ¾ x 30 ¼ inches), IWM. First exhibited L.G, March 1918, no.14 (Probably painted September 1917).

Note: inspired by the early stages of the Third Battle of Ypres or Passchendaele, which began on 31 July 1917.

13. *The Bomber*, 1918, 28.6 x 22.3 cm (11 ¼ x 8 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.54.

Oil on canvas, 1917 WU. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.5 (Probably painted September/October 1917).

14. *Reliefs at Dawn*, 1918, 28 x 35.5 cm (11 x 14 inches), BM and IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.31.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 71.1 x 91.4 cm (28 x 36 inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.18 (Probably painted October 1917).

15. *The Road from Arras to Bapaume*, 1918, 47.2 x 38.5 cm (18 ½ x 15 ¼ inches), BM and IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.46. The print in the BM was deposited on 19 February 1918.

Oil on canvas, 1917, 60.9 x 45.7 cm (24 x 18 inches), IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.16 (Probably painted October 1917).

Note: In his autobiography Nevinson writes that he returned to London from a trip to Cornwall to discover that "a bomb had fallen on the printing works where my lithographs were kept and that my stones were damaged. The reason for the extra ridge in *The Road from Arras to Bapaume* is because I had to put it in to cover the injury done to my original stone." [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.153] An entry in the diary of Nevinson's father suggests that the lithographic stone was damaged during an air raid on the evening of the 27 January 1918. H.W. Nevinson, the next day, noted that his son's lithographic printers in Holborn had been hit and "three of his stones [were] broken." [e.620/3, HNPBL] Thus, the BM print was deposited only about three weeks after the stone had been damaged.

16. *Over the Lines*, 1918, 38.7 x 32.4 cm (15 ¼ x 12 ¾ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.49. Priced at £5, 5s MCAG, July 1920, no.74. Deposited at the BM, 19 February 1918.

Oil on canvas, 1917, IWM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.6.

17. *Hans and Fritz*, 1918, 47 x 34.5 cm (18 ½ x 13 ½ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.40. Deposited at the BM on 19 February 1918.

Note: A remarkable image that looks back to the portrait tradition of Dürer and Holbein and anticipates the unsparing *Neue Sachlichkeit* manner developed by Otto Dix some three to four years later. Nevinson's two faces reminded one critic, Frank Maclean forcefully of Dürer. [*Everyman*, 9 March 1918, 7311-3A TGA] German prisoners of war were drawn by other official war artists such as William Orpen, William Rothenstein, Eric Kennington and Colin Gill. Nevinson may also have looked to the example of Goya's satirical etchings as a model for the two faces. In his autobiography, Nevinson wrote of the huge admiration he had felt throughout his life for the work of Goya. [*Paint and Prejudice*, 1938, p.163.]

18. *Hauling Down an Observation Balloon at Night*, 1918, 51.5 x 36.2 cm (20 ¼ x 14 ¼ inches), BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.37. Deposited at the BM on 19 February 1918. Reproduced in *Land and Water*, 28 February 1918.

Note: This was inspired by a visit Nevinson made in July 1917 to a Balloon unit at St. Nicholas near Arras commanded by Richmond Temple (1893-1958), a friend of Siegfried Sassoon. In December 1918 Temple wrote to a magazine claiming that Nevinson's war art, in terms of power and authenticity, was equal to the poetry of Sassoon and Graves and to the novel *Le Feu* (1916) by the Frenchman Henri Barbusse. [*The Nation*, 7 December 1918, 7311-3B TGA] In May 1919 Nevinson told the *New York Times* that he went up in a balloon "during the great British attack on Greenland Hill near Arras. When we were some distance up the officer in charge shouted to me 'Sit on the edge of the basket ... we're going to be shot down' [by a marauding German fighter reported in their sector] ... I strapped on my parachute and sat on the edge of the basket, while the German shells burst in the air above and below. 'I'll tell you when to jump' said the officer in charge [presumably Temple]. Thank God he never did. If he had, I know I could not have found the courage to jump off the balloon into the air. But, all the time, I was making shorthand sketches." [*New York Times*, 24 May 1919, p.13, 7311.4 TGA]

In April 1919 Eugene Gallatin described it as "a scene drawn in front of Arras of a balloon being put to roost after a night up spotting the flashes of enemy guns in order to observe their positions, often impossible to detect in daytime." [Keppel Gallery catalogue 1919 p.10] The treatment of the figures struggling to control the balloon suggests the influence of El Greco whom Nevinson singled out for praise in an article of

October 1919. He argued that El Greco had pioneered the "deliberate distortion of form either to overstate, for dramatic effect, or sometimes merely to create a unity, a cohesion of design, within the limits of the picture," [*The World*, 4 October 1919 7311-3C TGA]

19. *A German Observation Post, Mont St. Quentin*, 1918 WU. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.32

Note: Mont St. Quentin was a bitterly contested position due north of Arras.

20. *After a German Retreat: Bottles*, 1918, 43.8 x 51.4 cm (17 ¼ x 21 ¼ inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.44. Deposited at the BM on 19 February 1918. Priced at £2, 2s MCAG, July 1920, no.48.

Note: the first of two 'atrocities' propaganda prints (see 21) which anticipate the prints executed on a much larger scale later during the autumn of 1918 by the American artist George Bellows such as: *The Barricade* and *The Murder of Edith Cavell*. In the April-May 1919 New York exhibition catalogue it was described as presenting "the usual sight after a German retreat outside a German officers mess." [p.9] The sordid subject matter harks back to the visual exploration of urban degeneracy by Giacomo Balla, before he embraced Futurism i.e. *Bankruptcy* of 1902, and by members of the Camden Town Group immediately before the First World War.

21. *After a German Retreat: Looted Coffin at Rollincourt*, 1918, 20.6 x 29.2 cm (8 x 11 ½ inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.33. Deposited at the BM on 19 February 1918.

Note: Rollincourt was close to where the official British Press Château in France was situated. Nevinson stayed at the Château when he first arrived in France as an official war artist early in July 1917. In the April-May 1919 New York exhibition catalogue this work was described as depicting the "family vault of the Duc de Rollincourt desecrated by the Germans in the hope of finding rings and jewels in the coffins." [p.9]

22. *After a German Retreat: Labour Battalion making a road through a captured village*, 1918, 22.8 x 31.2 cm (9 x 12 ¼ inches), IWM and BM. First exhibited LG, March 1918, no.42. Deposited at the BM on 19 February 1918.

An oil on canvas was painted during the summer of 1918 and sent to the United States. Present whereabouts unknown. Exhibited BG, New York, November 1920, no.66.

Note: The central figure is derived from a working-class Londoner in the centre of Nevinson's earlier *East Ham Allotments*, painted c.1912 and exhibited at the Friday Club in January 1913. This image was described by Eugene Gallatin, in the April-May 1919 New York exhibition catalogue, as "Soldiers clearing up debris and remaking a road after a German retreat in order that transports may follow up the infantry with all speed." [p.9] Ironically, in April 1917 Nevinson had written to Edward Marsh of his fears that he would be conscripted and put to work in a Pioneer battalion. He found this prospect deeply depressing. [17 April 1917, NYPL]

23. *War: Pictures by Nevinson Official Artist on the Western Front*, 1918, 75 x 49.3 cm (29 ½ x 19 ½ inches), IWM and V&A. Red, white, black poster advertising Nevinson's March 1918 exhibition at the Leicester Galleries.

Note: One of the first posters Nevinson designed which has survived. Towards the end of February 1918 H.W. Nevinson noted in his diary that the "tubes" were "red" with his son's posters of "spiky bayonets." [25 February 1918, e.620/3, HNPBL] It is intriguing that a week earlier father and son had attended a meeting at which the representative of the Bolshevik government in the UK, Litvinov, was the guest speaker. Even then the Bolsheviks were known as 'reds' in the UK. [18 February 1918, e.620/3, HNPBL]. In May 1919, without first seeking the artist's permission, the government used the poster to sell bonds. [9 May 1919, e. 621/1, HNPBL]

24. *Cornish Landscape*, 1918?, 29.2 x 37.5 cm (10 ¾ x 14 ¾ inches), BM, Edition of 25. First exhibited as *Cornish Road* at the Senefelder Club in February 1921.

Oil on canvas with same title exhibited BG, New York, November 1920, no.33.
 Note: Possibly executed after Nevinson spent a fortnight at St. Ives in Cornwall during March-April 1918 as he attempted to recuperate from a nervous breakdown brought on by the pressures of mounting the Leicester Galleries exhibition. [Nevinson stayed in St. Ives from 18 March to 3 April 1918, e.620/3, HNPBL]

APPENDIX II.

Extracts from Correspondence from Eric H. Kennington to his elder brother, William, 1915.

Kennington Archive, Department of Modern Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

By Permission of Christopher Kennington.

193 a-1 (written c. late February-early March 1915).

"I never wrote to you at the Front for these reasons – I was always too tired or had no time. All our letters were read, so I could not tell you any truths and we were curtailed to 1 letter a week ... I expect you know that I had an accident and had to have a toe amputated. I was three weeks with it in Estaires (10 miles from La Bassée) and came here via Boulogne, Le Havre, Southampton, taking days over the journey and, as the toe was getting worse every day, [I] arrived here pretty feeble. I am fit now, but have to go through another slicing in a day or so. Am afraid I shall be here in bed for some weeks and, when I am well, shall have to prove that I did not do it on purpose, or shall get some nasty punishment. Then they will send me out again ... I saw heaps of Kitchener's troops arriving at [Le] Havre. They were all singing and cheering. We did when we went out, but this war takes all that out of you. People outside France have no idea what is going on there, as the papers are all lies, to get more recruits.

I had two months in the trenches, between La Bassée and Armentières, opposite a small town called Aubertin ... We went into the trenches for 3 days and came out for 2 or 3. One half of the Battn. relieving the other. It was at Estaires we first got the lice and they steadily increased. Every soldier in the war is covered with the beasts, which torture you unmercifully, day and night, and I never got a bath the whole time I was out! (3 months) and often not a wash for 10 days or [take] boots off for 7!

Estaires ... was all fatigue work [which] consisted of this: Reveillé, 5.30 [am] Try and take mud off [my] coat and trousers, clean ammunition pouches, clean billet. 7.30 [am], breakfast (bad tea, no sugar or milk, bacon, biscuit and a bit of French bread bought on the sly at a ruinous price), 8 [am], clean rifles and bayonets, 8.30 [am], parade them, 8.45 [am], clean them again if there was a speck of mud, 9.30 [am], Fall in – fatigue men for Transport work, coal shovelling at Gasworks or [railway] station. Lunch 12 noon, bully-beef stew. 1 [pm], march miles out and dig a trench somewhere, right on till 8 [pm]. Turn in and as likely [as] not be called up to take ammunition to a battalion in the firing line and so get no sleep at all. Convicts have an easy life compared to ours, really!

Our battalion took to trench work quickly and, for Terriers [Territorials] have shown lots of guts. The first night, the Germans attacked immediately we had crawled into the trench (They always know who is opposite them) with shells and rifle fire. [I] Was frightened out of my life for a time and we 'rapid-fired' long after we were ordered to cease. Troops always do that at first. We were divided into 3's, one man [as] observer,

two [allowed to] sleep. The observer, for 2 hours, looks out for anything happening in the G[erman] lines, which were sometimes 200 yards off, sometimes 50 [yards away] ... This way of having 2 hours observing and 4 hours sleeping would be all right, only sergeants and corporals keep on turning up wanting 8 men to dig a new latrine (in the rear), 10 men to help the engineers [dig a] sap forward, 1 man from each section to sharp-shoot the snipers, which were getting too hot near the machine guns, more men to repair Captain B's dugout, which had fallen in upon him ...

When we first got in[to the] trenches, it was dry and frosty. Shall not easily forget 'observing' in 20 degrees of frost [and] no fires allowed. Frozen feet were all over the place, but mine were not affected. One man got his feet frozen and another got his foot hit by a bullet, poor devil! Shan't forget the first death, though [I] have forgotten all sorts of things since. It was near me, a man hit in the head by [a] dum-dum [bullet] or [a] ricochet. All the back of his head went out. Bullets do the most extraordinary things!!! I was one of the firing party for his burial, which was a mile behind [our] fire trench. He was lucky, as there are 1000's of soldiers only just covered [with earth] all round the trenches with small crosses [made] from wooden boxes. [I] Have dug up legs when digging trenches. That is one reason why the Allies must advance in the spring, or there will be whole-sale typhoid, enteric and worse. Often, even now, the stink nearly kills you.

The Germans are a very different enemy to that which the [news]papers portray. Hand to hand, the average German is our inferior, as the English have never yet fled [in battle], but the best German troops, now well decimated, are magnificent in bravery, physique and skill. If we had not put our Guards against them at Mons and Ypres, I am sure Paris would have fallen in Oct[ober 1914] and France conquered by now. Not only have the British (in my version) saved France, but we have held Flanders all winter ... and fighting in Flanders in winter means perhaps standing in mud and ice up to your balls and, perhaps, in places up to your chest and not changing [any clothes] for [a] week after. Once we had 40% of the regt [regiment] sick with frozen feet, rheumatism and cold troubles, while the Middlesex (regulars) ... next to us ... had 90% [sick]

After a month in Estaires we went to empty cottages 10 miles behind [the] trenches, with the result that we turned in without candles and with our boots and puttees [still] on ... We had alarms each night such as a big kick and 'Fall in [at the] alarm post in 5 minutes [with your] rifle and equipment ... There's a German advance'. So you stand-to in the rain for 3 hours and there is no German advance at all. The day was spent digging shell trenches round the billets to rush into at the first arrival of shrapnel. It came and I collected shrapnel, bullets, shellcases and tops, time fuses etc and soon gave them away to trench civvies [civilians], which I regret now ... A Jack Johnson [a 5.9 inch shell] if it bursts near you, has a horrid effect of knocking your stomach into your chest, or somewhere it ought not to be!

The Germans are at their best in trenches ... The snipers are well organised and scientifically protected by good loopholes, steel plates etc., concrete foundations and schnapps to give their men a good heart for attacks. But as they have not got a good heart for anything, they always fail. Our soldiers are hopelessly careless. They will have their food, tea etc., and light large fires, which bring the bullets from everywhere. The earth flies all around and spoils the tea or bully stew and the soldiers say 'Fuck the bastards! Give 'em a few rounds.' Then they show themselves too much and one or two get their heads blown off. Then, when they are sent for rations (some farmhouse ½ a mile back), we are supposed to go in a party of a dozen or so, through the communication trenches but these are ... flooded. We ... should obey orders and wade ½ a mile through the 3 or 4 feet of wet mud [of a communication trench], but the

Regulars say 'Fuck that shit! Get up on the bank ... I'll show you the road.' The Germans have special listeners and promptly a machine gun is turned on those coming back [with the rations]. The result is awful. I have seen a man with 17 machine gun bullets through him and still alive. But [the] next ration of works party does just the same thing. Then the men get sick of loafing and freezing and their officers give permission to charge locally ... Sometimes they catch the Germans sleeping and bayonet them, but, generally, [they] charge through a hellish fire and have a sort of massacre in the trench. The Germans have splendid barbed wire, heaps of it and most scientific, but ours is hardly ever renewed and [is] shot to nothing; a blind man could walk over it!

Uncle G. called [at the hospital] and was [a] trump. [He] Gave me cigarettes and money ([I] Had not seen a halfpenny for a month). He is a d ... d good sort but was very amusing when he asked: 'Was it true the Tommies sing hymns in the trenches?' If I told him what they do sing, he would have gone slap through the roof!"

194 a-f (written from Camp Hill Convalescent Home, Wooton, Liverpool, c. late March 1915).

I think the war will go on for a long time and they will soon make use of me again ... possibly some sort of work at HQ. They have need of everyman out there [in France] though English people don't realise that. To go about Liverpool, as we do once a week in a motor, you would not realise that there was a war on. There is stupid laziness, idleness and drunkenness everywhere ...

I think the papers are all strictly censored. They make the war [seem like] a sort of sport where everyone is keen, cheery, good-natured and overfed. Perhaps this is to get a continual stream of recruits, as they would certainly be choked off if a tenth of the unpleasant truth leaked out. In time, I suppose everything will leak out ... The secrecy in England, and at the Front, is amazing ...

I think it [news of the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, 10-12 March 1915] was wonderful. In spite of the spies, the Germans were completely surprised. Even the man in the trenches would not know anything unusual was likely to happen till ½ an hour before hand when rifles, bayonets, and emergency rations would be expected and extra ammunition served out. Each man was probably carrying 200 rounds. The bomb-throwing section gets larger each time. In Dec[ember 1914], they were only experimenting and blowing themselves up instead.

The complete victory of the assault [at Neuve Chapelle] and repulse of the [German] counter-attacks were a proof of the mastery of the English in brains and courage ... I think the photos of the [British] wounded wearing the German helmets is v[er]y typical of rough and ready, dirty, English soldiers covered with mud [and] contrasted to the swank of the metal helmets (I have mislaid mine unfortunately) ...

'The Picture'.

Eric H. Kennington.

(Preparatory Notes Written by the Artist in Pen for the Catalogue Entry accompanying the exhibition of *The Kensingtons at Laventie: Winter 1914* at the Committee of British

Women's Hospital Charity Exhibition in Aid of the 'Star and Garter' Building Fund,
Goupil Gallery, London, April-May 1916.)

By permission of Christopher Kennington.

Platoon No.7, C. Comp[any] of the 'Kensingtons' has served in the fire-trench for four days and nights, enduring the piercing cold of 20 degrees of frost and almost continual snow. The weather, the watchful enemy in the opposite trenches and continual work has prevented sleep [added in pencil 'has made sleep well nigh impossible'], and the men are very tired. They have been relieved by the 1st Lincoln's and have struggled through the $\frac{1}{4}$ [$\frac{1}{3}$] mile of communication trench. In this there is an even greater depth of mud – from one to four feet – than in the fire-trench, and ice is floating on the surface. Every man has sink in the mud up to his thighs. The communication trench winds considerably to prevent enfilading fire and terminates in a ruined farmyard. The men climb to the level of the ground and pass through the courtyard.

They now form up as a battalion along the ruined village street, the remaining walls of which serve as a protection and screen them from machine gun and rifle-fire. There is a halt, during which each man finds his company and platoon and falls in. Corporal J. Kealey (No. 1246) is about to give the order "Fall in No. 7 Platoon", and will see that the men in his charge are correctly lined up in their fours.

The stragglers are helped to their places. The fit men support their exhausted comrades. The strong carry the rifles of the sick. Now will commence the march of 5 miles to a billet, which is out of the shelling area. Many will fall out, from exhaustion, frozen feet, rheumatism and other ailments and must wait by the roadside for the next motor-ambulance, or attempt to make their way slowly back to billet, hoping that the regiment is not marching to a fresh one. In the front four – reading from right to left – are Pte. Slade, resting with both hands on his rifle. L.Cpl. Wilson, Pte. Guy and Pte. McCafferty, who is turning to look at the other men falling in behind. He is hitching up his pack, by grasping the shoulder straps, and is carrying two rifles. One belonged to Pte. Perry, who was shot beside him by a sniper. No equipment or rifle is left behind in a trench. Tied to the cover of his entrenching-tool is a German pickle-Haube (?) Early in the campaign [Pte. A] McCafferty [No. 1954] received an injury while digging trenches at Estaires, a pick being driven through his hand and though he was given sick-leave, applied for permission to march with the Battn. to the trenches and fight with his arm in a sling. At Neuve Chapelle he stopped some shrapnel, being wounded in the eye and leg. He is now out again with the 1st, 13th Battn. in France.

Pte. D.A. Guy (No. 1636) was very small, and earned the name of "Good Little Guy" by his unfailing good nature and willingness. He never grouched or slacked, or went sick throughout the whole winter campaign. He is shouldering his rifle, and slung from his belt is a linen bag, a ration of tea and sugar for eight. ['The star on his sleeve shows 4 years service'] He received many dangerous wounds at Neuve Chapelle and at Aubers Ridge, but is now quite recovered and training with the 3rd, 13th in England.

L.Cpl. H. Wilson (No. 2117) was a giant and, as is ['according to'] the invariable custom with men of his name, was known as "Tug". His rifle is protected from mud by a scarf, which is tightly bound round the bolt and sights. He carries his fork and spoon in his puttee. He has now rejoined the 1st, 13th Battn., though still suffering at times from frozen feet. Pte. M. Slade (No. 1885) is debarred from further active service by the same ailment, and is now a lance corporal on duty at the Headquarters of the 13th at Kensington.

On the extreme left is Pte. H. Bristol (No. 1802) who is now training in England, having taken a commission. He was too young to stand the great strain of the winter of 1914. Many of these soldiers are under age.

Directly behind Guy, are two men in waterproof sheets. Pte. Kennington (No. 1799), in a blue trench-helmet, and ['big'] Pte. W. Harvey (No. 2049), who is now motorcycle orderly at Headquarters. "Big Harvey", "Tug" Wilson and Pte. Kennington were the first to cross 'No-Man's-Land' and shake hands ['exchange greetings'] with the German soldiers during the Xmas Truce 1914. Pte. Kennington had the ill luck to be the victim of an accident, by which he lost a toe, resulting in unfitness for further service abroad. Luckily, it was not the right hand, which suffered, or this record of the 13th would not have been painted.

On the ground is Pte. A. Todd (No. 3231) ['better known in the regiment as "Sweeney"']. He has fallen exhausted by continual sickness, hard work, lack of sleep, long hours of "standing-to" and observing. He is not concerned with the state of his mess-tin ['which is'] blackened by smoke from coke and wood fires, and yellow with mud. Nor is he troubled that his great-coat is not rolled and packed in his pack. He must be helped to his feet to attempt the march back. Pte. Todd is now discharged and has returned to his civilian work.

A soldier behind McCafferty has the number 77 stuck behind his cap-badge. Some few days after our arrival in France, we encountered on the march a regiment of French Territorials, whose caps bore that number. The 13th and the 77th exchanged greetings and cap-badges, many Kensingtons carrying the number 77 for months.

Many of these soldiers have rifle-covers. They are made of thin canvas and were issued to the regiment during the first week of service at the Front. Unhappily, these are easily lost in the trench mud and a substitute must be found, such as "Tug" Wilson's scarf, which will prevent the bright yellow clay from fouling the working parts of the rifle and rendering it useless save for a bayonet-attack. Platoon 7 is lining up before a French Inn, over the door of which remains the word Estaminet. The lower section of the building is painted a bright colour – a custom very prevalent in French and Belgian villages. The road is deep in snow and partly covered by the debris of wrecked houses; marching is impeded ['by the'] heaps of bricks, burnt wood, kitchen utensils and articles of furniture. Lying on the cartwheel is a spent shrapnel-shell. By the roadside is the village Crucifix, as yet unharmed by shells, bullets or fire.

E.H. Kennington
(Late Pte. No.1799, 13th L.D)

Christmas Eve 1914

Eric H. Kennington (unpublished memoir, written c. September 1938)

E.H. Kennington Archive, Department of Modern Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford University. By permission of Christopher Kennington.

*Conditions were bad on Christmas Eve 1914. We had endured trenches [which] had been dug under fire in the dry autumn. Our human enemy had held the ridges, we had taken cover in the ditches, dug and entrenched and now were them and finding our chief enemies were water, mud, sanitation and fatigue. We could not stand upright, nor lie down. The trench was too shallow as protection against rifle-fire; we could not lie down for the trench was a stream of moving water. On Christmas Eve frost followed rain and heavy snow fell on the frozen ground. The mild night became calm and still and the sniping and fusillade lessened, and in time ceased. Listeners reported a voice in mid 'No-Man's-Land', a loud shouting voice and we back in the trench could hear it clearly shouting in American: "Boys, I want to talk with you. I'm out of the trench. I'm on the top. I'm unarmed. Listen Boys, this is Christmas Eve, we're all Christians. We want

to stop fighting. We want some peace. So do you, Boys. Come out and talk with me. Come out and meet us. Don't bring your arms. We're coming out unarmed. Let's chat and be matey and enjoy ourselves – Can you hear me? Answer back!"

We strained to hear and called in answer. The Irish Guards, who were struggling through the ditch to new positions on our left, stopped incredulous. "Steady," said the sergeants, "Keep down, it's a trap". One of the Irish acted alone. He passed his rifle to a mate and crawled over the top into the black night. The 2 men met and we could hear Irish and American in conversation, heard their low voices, their laughter more clearly ... Our whole world seemed to change [and] there was no shot nearer than 10 miles. The stars were out and there was no wind. We kept to our trench but luxuriously stood upright, laughed and shouted. Lights, candle-lights, opposite appeared steady, seeming to light each other and travel right and left. Soon the line of bright spots joined both horizons [for] a dozen miles. The sharp frost carried the German songs and hymns. Some of us recognised 'Heilige Nacht'. We returned the song, but here our enemies easily defeated us. We were poor musicians. After about an hour the last candles flickered out, separated by black [and] both armies slept untroubled.

All this was unwarlike and unprecedented and our officers and sergeants seemed to have no clear line on proper action. At first dawn we acted, for the dream remained real. 3 from our platoon [~~crossed out~~] 3 of our company advanced unarmed and 3 Bavarians shook their hands exactly ½ way across the 200 yards that was claimed by neither side. There was little language barrier. Our wealth came from Christmas parcels, theirs from a conquered countryside – pudding was exchanged for fruit, chocolate for Schnapps and laughter for laughter. There was some banter. The Bavarian, with American tongue, said 'Hindenburg has 3 million men ready to take your island'. 'That's nothing' said our CSM* 'See that trench back there? There's a million Russians in it!' Enemy teases, British are awkward. Then snowballing, then a feast of fire-cooked breakfast and ... what?

We were not long in doubt. Digging, strengthening the entrenchments and clearing the drainage. But why isn't the war finished? GHQ said 'NO'. Sergeants said 'No leaving the trench.' Our forage parties and provisioners walked careless in the ruins behind the lines where the old women had their hens and slices of bacon and cider apples. 'Courage Madame, fait la Guerre, tout suit, revenir chez vous.' The old crones were scornful and spat 'Le Boshe n'est pas recule, pas finit, jamais finit.' But we were happy and laughed at their joylessness."

*Company Sergeant-Major.

APPENDIX III.

Extracts of Letters from Charles Sergeant Jagger to Violet Constance Smith, September-December 1915.

By Permission of Cedric Jagger.

(10) To Miss Connie Smith, 33 Tite Street, Chelsea, 23 September 1915.

"Well dearie, yesterday was really one of the greatest days I shall ever live to see. We had a most rousing send off [from Plymouth] ... as we passed out of the Sound, the air was simply rent with cheer upon cheer from the shore and other boats lying there ... There was something really magnificent about it ... well dear, we are just lazily dosing in the lap of luxury [on the troopship], living like Lords and doing far less ... in fact if you could just peep into any of the saloons you would never, for an instant, dream that such

a thing as war had ever been heard of ... When, occasionally, one remembers that, perhaps, within a few days we shall have exchanged our present paradise for the front-line trenches, it seems like a dream and all unreal."

(18) From the 4th Battalion, the Worcestershire Regiment, 5 October 1915 [The battalion was part of the 29th Infantry Division, serving at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli]

"We have our orders ... and [I] expect to be under fire within a few hours. You will see I have been posted to one of our line battalions, which is, of course, very satisfactory ... I hope to see some of my chums today ... it is very curious to watch the French native troops leaving for the firing line. As they sail past the British transports, they simply yell themselves hoarse."

(19) 'From the 4th Worcesters, 88th Brigade, 29th Division, 7 October 1915'

"Darling ... I am in the trenches and have been since the day I arrived ... At the moment of writing the fighting has nearly ceased but it is the first lull since I arrived. Yesterday morning there was a terrific cannonade as our warships were firing over our heads with their big guns and it was a real grand sight. Shells, from our own batteries and from the Turks, were flying just above us and with the 'ping-ping' of rifle bullets it was difficult to hear oneself speak during the height of the attack ... I am in command of a platoon and this afternoon I am going to take them farther down the line to try and complete some unfinished trenches. We have to dig them at night so far ... We do nearly everything at night here. I am perfectly well and have had only one narrow shave so far. I took some men down to the beach to wash and one of the Turk's shells dropped among us. No one takes the slightest notice of these things. In fact it is all treated with the most complete indifference. "

(20) 'Sunday, 11 October' [1915]

"Each day is like the preceding one. Shells – shells – shells! ... I have just been to morning service, which was held in a dugout. It was really an impressive sight. To hear 'Jesu Lover of My Soul', 'Fight the Good Fight', 'Rock of Ages' etc., with the boom of cannon and the hurtling of shells just overhead as an accompaniment, is a thing one will remember."

(21) '12 October' [1915]

"We are still happy and smiling under the circumstances. It is pretty hot still, in more ways than one, but my own fear is the responsibility, which I have and which I dread may bring disaster on my men, if I make a mistake. We are taking up new trenches tonight, much nearer the enemy lines."

(22) 'The Firing Line, 14 October' [1915]

"We are in our new trench. Came in last night ... not many casualties yet ... we got a few bombs amongst us and sniping, of course, without ceasing. This morning I was looking through a periscope at the enemy lines, only 40 yards away, and a shell from one of batteries dropped on the spot I was looking at and carried about 12 yards of it away. We are not at all nicely situated as the Turks are able to enfilade us from a hill on our left [flank] and they don't forget to use their machine guns on us ... Last night I was on duty from 3 to 6 pm and I thought I would never get warm again, but here I am a few hours later, just grizzling!"

(23) '16 or 17 October' [1915]

"I have been going through a little hell since I last wrote to you. I think I told you we were pushing out a new line 150 yards in front of our own firing line. Well, my Company

was told to do it. We commenced digging at night, out in the open, and by morning we were several feet down, but all night and day we were under incessant fire with no cover. Yesterday, I had two shot through the head within three minutes of each other. I had no sooner bandaged the first ... than my Platoon sergeant, to whom I was talking, got one through the head. He died in my arms, in two to three minutes. We have worked for two days and nights without sleep and all our hands are blistered and bleeding, including my own, with digging. The ground is almost as hard as concrete. Just over the front of my trench is a group of dead Turks and ... the stench is overpowering."

(24) '19 October' [1915]

"My Company is to move into the support trenches tonight for a much needed rest. We shall then be 100 yards behind the actual firing line ... We are all absolutely exhausted and I don't think that either officers or men could have stood it much longer. Last night, the order came down the line to 'stand to' and that the Turks were attacking. Immediately after came the command 'rapid fire!' and, in a second, burst forth the even rattle of musketry and the spit of machine guns ... Myself, with my platoon, occupied the point of a salient, which we had thrust forward close up to the enemy lines and, just in front of our position, one of our flares had set fire to the grass and brushwood in the rear of the enemy's front-line and in front of this terrific blaze we could see the black silhouettes of the Turks and I can tell you our chaps let them have it good and strong. The officers do not carry rifles [out] here, but I had donned the bandolier and rifle of one of my men who had gone down to base before the 'show' commenced ... but as soon as he heard the firing, he doubled back and I had to relinquish the weapon. However, I had my revolver and, in lieu of a bayonet, I armed myself with a sharpened shovel ... but the Turks did not fancy close-quarters and, eventually, the firing ceased ...

The other night I had to take out a 'Covering Party' of men and place them in the open in front of the enemy's [front] line, and to warn us of any surprises while we were engaged on certain work behind them. I can assure you it was not pleasant. Anyhow, I got back to our firing line without a scratch and was very thankful as I scrambled back over the parapet of my trench. I had the satisfaction of having several bullets pass me just too wide. This [covering parties] is the worst job we have to do.

Monday ... My Pal Greenway* was killed at dawn this morning and we cannot recover his body, although we can see it just beyond the barbed wire in front of our line. He was killed while in the act of carrying the wounded."

[* A Turkish sniper killed Second Lieutenant D.A.W Greenway on 17 October 1915, after he had rescued two wounded other ranks from the 4th Worcesters. His body was not recovered for another 48 hours. War Diary 4th Battalion, the Worcestershire Regiment (April 1915-February 1916), WO-95-4312, PRO. Jagger had trained for his commission as an infantry officer in the Worcesters with Greenway. They had shared a cabin on the troopship from Plymouth to Gallipoli and, en route, had explored Malta together.]

(27) 'Firing Line, 22 October [1915]

"I am quite well, 'tho very tired. We are being relieved, tomorrow, by another Regiment. We shall then be out of the actual firing line. We have been doing three weeks at a stretch and, in France, they only do three days! It is pretty awful, you know, but we shall see it through."

(28) 'Wednesday, 27 October' [1915]

"Well, dearest, we have been in reserve trenches since Saturday last and we are supposed to be having a rest. As a matter of fact we are doing much more actual work

than we were in the firing line ... this morning ... I was standing [with another officer] on the parapet of a trench in which my platoon was working. The Turks swiftly spotted us at work because they dropped three shells in quick succession. My friend and I heard them coming and just dropped in time; they must have passed within a foot or so above us because two of them struck the earth only five yards beyond us ... Yesterday, I was rather ill ... [with] ... some internal disorder. Everyone here is ill, more or less ... it is an absolutely stinking climate and there is not a man on the Peninsula who has been here a month and not been ill ... If only we had a picture theatre, or something of the kind, it would be a veritable Godsend and would help to make life just a little more bearable. We have got many men who have fought in France and I believe they would sell their soul almost to get back to Flanders ... you people at home have no idea what sort of Hell this is. It strikes me as being the home of the damned. I suppose I have just got the pip this afternoon, dearie, so you must not take too much notice of what I say. But all the same, I shall be heartily glad when it's all over ... [Bulgaria has entered the war on the side of Germany] ... we may just as well scrap with them as with anyone else ... I think I would give several years of my life just to be able to stroll along old Chelsea tonight, along the Embankment and to all the old haunts you and I know so well."

(30) '4 November' [1915]

"Am still in the firing line [since 31 October] and shall be here another eight to ten days before we are relieved ... In this envelope you will find a few prickly things which grow out here ... For the last five nights I have been working in front of our firing line, either taking a patrol out or else digging a new sap out to the enemy's [front] line or fixing [our] barbed wire and every night I come back covered with these things which stick to one's clothes. So you now know that these little 'chaps' ... I enclose ... were grown in 'No-Man's-Land'. It is pretty hazardous work, especially when the Turks hear you prowling about near their lines, but one gets used to it after a while."

(31) 'The Donaldson Line, on board RMS [Royal Mail Ship] Letitia, 6 November 1915'

"Darling ... Don't be alarmed. I am quite all right, merely shot through [my] right shoulder. The bullet came out the back. Can only write [with] my left hand. Don't worry."

(32) 'Blue Sisters Hospital, Sliema, Malta, 18 November [1915]

"My wound was quite clean, fortunately, and no serious damage has been done to my shoulder. I have yet, however, to be 'X-Rayed' as there is some doubt as to whether the bone has been hit or not. I was knocked out on the 5th of November, about midnight ... We had a 'do' and I was in front of the 'do'. Well, darling, I would have loved to come home for a bit, whilst I am [a] convalescent, but I fear it cannot be done. I shall be here for some time yet I suppose, as I am naturally very weak ... I have been in this hospital five days and have not been outside the gates yet, although I can walk alright. The place was put in quarantine the day we arrived because fever had broken out in it."

(34) 'Blue Sisters Hospital, Sliema, Malta, 20 November [1915]

"Have just received your cable. I cannot tell you what feelings of joy I had when it arrived. Do you know, lovie, it is the first word I have had from home since I came out ... Well darling, I am afraid there is no chance of my coming home. I would give anything on earth to get back for a bit, but is very few they send home from here unless they get something which will take months to recover from ... I have bought a sketch book and conté pencils, so I am going to spend my time working now that I can use my hand again a bit ... I think you would, perhaps, like to know what I was doing when I was knocked out. Well, it was on the night of the 5th of November, at a place known to us by the name of 'Lone Tree Gully'. The head of the gully finishes some 200 yards in front of our line. Well, on the night of the 4th [November], the Newfoundlanders had seized the ridge at the head of the gully but had to be reinforced by my regiment ... you

must understand there is no soil or earth in that part ... so it was impossible to dig trenches. The only thing to do was to fill sandbags down in the bottom [of the gully] and carry them to the top and so, build solid breastworks ...

I was in one of a number of 'Detached Posts', placed at intervals, along the top of the gully, but entirely independent of each other. In the post I was with six men ... and an NCO (Corporal) ... I had just been to all the Detached Posts along the ridge, to make a list of the number of sandbags each post wanted, but I found that so many were required that with the small number of men at my disposal, it would be impossible to get sufficient bags filled and carried up the side of the gully before daybreak ... and I had received orders that the positions must be consolidated before dawn. I saw something would have to be done and the idea struck me that, perhaps, there may be some earth a little way in front of the post I was in ... the men could crawl out, under cover of darkness, and fill their bags. So, during a lull in the firing, I went out over the top of the low breastwork we had already made, in search of soil or sand. I had just stepped out ... into the open when I saw several flashes, not more than 20 yards in front of me ... and down I went with a bullet through the right shoulder. Then commenced the very devil of a scrap!

I had ... dropped outside my Post and was naturally exposed to all the fire. The Turks hurled bombs and things at us ... I had [the] sense to yell at my men to give them raid fire, which they did with a vengeance, and also to chuck bombs and, in about fifteen minutes, we had driven them back. I can tell you it was a narrow thing! Three times, as I lay there, glued to the ground, I felt the scorching air from bombs [exploding nearby] on my face, splinters of stone kept hitting me and my pocket was torn away, by a piece of bomb I presume ... also my pipe was smashed in two by either a bullet or a piece of bomb ... although my Corporal had crawled out to me, the firing was so hot that he could not raise his head to bandage me for fifteen minutes or so. I then managed to crawl in [to the Post] and he [the Corporal] cut my clothes away and bandaged me up. I then picked my way down to the dressing station, along with one of the Newfoundlanders, who was shot through the eye the same time as myself ... Next morning I was on board a hospital ship en-route for Malta. I am the last of the four officers [still alive] who left Mudros for Suvla [Bay] together, two months ago ... keep up a good heart, darling, your boy is always thinking of you. You might let Mater know I am all right."

(36) Letter postmarked 'Sliema, Malta, 1 December 1915'

"Yesterday, I received two letters from you ... Do you know dearie, these are the first of your letters which have reached me since I left home. Well, dearie, I must tell you, now that my wound is well on towards recovery, I have also got another little complaint ... jaundice, but it is not very bad ... Do you know anything of my manly brother? [Jagger's younger brother, David who was of military age but had not yet volunteered] You know that I am disappointed in him, dearie, and simply could not write [to] him all the time I have been out [at Gallipoli] ... What that great hulking lout in my mother's shop must feel like, I don't know. You can show him this [letter] if you like, it might touch some latent spark of chivalry in his overfed body. Who knows?"

(37) 'Blue Sisters Hospital, Sliema, Malta, 8 December 1915'

"I have been 'boarded' for England. My wound is giving me very little trouble, bit I have been very ill with jaundice ... and also they don't like my old chest trouble [at first the doctors had suspected Jagger had TB], so they are sending me home to a sanatorium ... Your story about ... 'Conscientious Objection' amused me very much. I am getting very 'fed up', dear, and as I am booked for home, I wish to heaven they would fetch us"

(39) Telegram, 18 December 1915

Sailing for England, today, Jagger.*

***On 6 March 1916, Jagger married Violet Constance Smith at Chelsea Registry Office. They had one son, Cedric, in 1920, and were divorced in 1924.**

