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“I Deny Your Authority to Try My Conscience:”  
Conscription and Conscientious Objectors  
In Britain During the Great War

An Honors Thesis for the Department of History

By Albert William Wetter

Bowdoin College, 2019

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## **Dedication**

*To my Grandpa Frank Portman, who was a self-taught and a self-made man. His love for history was tangible, as he collected volumes of Harmsworth History of the World, Winston Churchill's Wartime Records from the Second World War, and countless other historical publications. His formal education ended following the crash of 1929, as he helped his father in the family business throughout the Great Depression in San Francisco. Fueled by a life-long love of learning he encouraged his eight children and 30 grandchildren to pursue successful lives through education. I am his youngest grandchild and deeply grateful to his continued presence and inspiration.*

*This Honors Thesis is written in your honor, Grandpa.*

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Ever since I was little, I loved History. Learning how the past informs the present and impacts the future continues to intrigue me to this day and will remain my passion for the rest of my life. Looking back after working on this Honors Thesis for an entire year, it was such an invigorating and thought-provoking intellectual experience that it will go down as one of my highlights of my time here at Bowdoin College. I am grateful for everyone who helped me develop, formulate, articulate, and write a year-long study on Britain and the Great War.

This Honors Thesis was borne out of coincidences that I am eternally grateful for. My passion for Britain's experience in the Great War germinated in a History class during my Sophomore year at Stuart Hall High School in San Francisco, California. Thanks to the amazing teaching abilities of Mr. Michael Buckley, who continues to be a mentor in life, I embraced the topic. Personifying Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith in the class-wide role play simulation exposed me to the complexities of international relations in historical space and time, and how personalities are important factors to consider when trying to understand why certain events in history happened. During that simulation, I learned that personalities mattered during historical events and had consequences on how events—such as the Great War—panned out in reality. After that unit on the Great War and taking A.P. European History with Mr. Buckley, I knew I wanted to be a History Major in college. Mr. Buckley's love for History was contagious, and I am grateful to him for my first exposure on Britain and the Great War. Thank you, Mr. Buckley!

A little over four years later when I was a Junior at Bowdoin College studying abroad with the Bath, England-based program Advanced Studies in England, I was fortunate to participate in a classic, one-on-one tutorial with Calum White, who was a DPhil candidate at the time, at Balliol College at the University of Oxford. The tutorial was a custom-made one on Britain and the First World War. What made my time at Balliol a major historical coincidence for me was that it was the alma mater of Prime Minister Asquith, the same man who I role-played as a High School Sophomore. During the exhilarating tutorial, Calum helped and encouraged me to make historical and argumentative connections I did not think I could make. Finally, and on a slightly tangential note, if I had not met Calum, I probably would not have heard of (or read) Professor Adrian Gregory of the University of Oxford and his authoritative study *Britain and the Last Great War*. Though we have not met in person, I wanted to thank Professor Gregory for corresponding with me via email making recommendations for my archival trip to Britain over January 2019, especially his endorsement of the Liddle Personal Collection at the University of Leeds. Though I found wonderful and insightful material at the Imperial War Museum in London, if I did not go to the University of Leeds archives, my Honors Thesis would not be the same as I would not have found the two case studies upon which I built my second chapter. Lastly, I am grateful for Professor Gregory for recommending the Pearce Register, the database on conscientious objectors in Britain during the Great War, as it was a massive help for my Thesis. Thank you, Professor Gregory, and thank you Calum for introducing me to his work and again for your encouragement.

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Similarly, Professor Mohandesi, you were a valued member of my Committee. Your recommendation for me to consider whether or not there was a “smoking gun” of conscription to helping me formulate my thesis with the theories of the imagined community and the emotional community. The way my Honors Thesis manifested in its final stages is because of your insight, your perspective, and your cognizance of historical context and what an event, like the Great War, can both tell and not tell historians. So, thank you, Professor Mohandesi, for all of your help during this process.

Last but not least, Javier, thank you so much for making my final year at Bowdoin so memorable. From watching your presentation last Spring on Patagonia to chatting with you during lunch. Though not directly applicable to my Honors Thesis, your class on Race & Belonging in Latin America helped me shape my analysis on how a national myth and shapes national identity over historical time and space. Your insight proved invaluable during the writing process, and I am grateful you were selected as my Fourth Reader.

Writing this Honors Thesis would not have been possible without archival material from Britain. It is because of this undeniable fact that I am grateful for the Bowdoin History Department for granting me the newly-extended Nyhus Grant to travel to Britain and visit the archives at the Imperial War Museum and at the University of Leeds. The opportunity to handle private papers contemporary to the time I was studying was a breathtaking and emotional experience. Thank you, Professor David Hecht and Professor Roberts, for bestowing me the Nyhus Grant!

As Professor Matthew Klinge’s axiom goes, “Writing is revision and revision is writing,” this Honors Thesis would not be in its current state without the insight from my fellow peers from the Bowdoin College Writing Project, Phoebe Zipper ’19 and Dakota Griffin ’19, both of whom helped me eliminate redundancies, and enhance my analysis. Their insight during

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## **Introduction: The Transformation of Britain’s Imagined and Emotional Community**

In his September 13, 1915 letter, Colonel J.C. Petherick asserted disdain towards those slackers who had not volunteered: “It makes me boil to think of things like the armstrip [sic.] of youth, still loafing about St. Austell, but I can see that some sort of compulsory service must come soon.”<sup>1</sup> When Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914 following the Germans’ brutal invasion of neutral Belgium, the British Army consisted of a small contingent of active duty professional soldiers—the British Expeditionary Force (BEF)—and volunteer reservists. This “sacred principle” of volunteerism was a central tenet of British Liberalism, defined by the natural rights of individuals and personal liberties without the presence and “reach of state control.”<sup>2</sup> However, conscription threatened these liberal values, eroded individual agency, and altered the relationship between British citizens and the state.<sup>3</sup> When the realities of the war on the Western Front exposed the limitations of the BEF and the deficiencies of volunteerism, the debate on conscription gained traction in Parliament, forcing the passage of the Military Service Act.<sup>4</sup>

## **Historiographical Status Quo on Conscription and Conscientious Objectors**

In a 1989 essay, Dr. Ian F.W. Beckett observed that volunteers who enlisted on the basis of free-will were “accorded more with that ideal of unstinting sacrifice so manifestly cultivated

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<sup>1</sup> Letter by J.C. Petherick, "Private Papers of Colonel J.C. Petherick," September 6, 1916, 33709, Imperial War Museum, London.

<sup>2</sup> José Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain, 1870-1914* (London: Penguin, 1994), 181;183.

<sup>3</sup> John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-45* (Harmondsworth, United Kingdom: Penguin, 1988), 6.

<sup>4</sup> The Military Service Act was first passed in January 1916 by Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith (and gained Royal Assent, the final bureaucratic step in the British political system for a piece of legislation to become law, on January 27, 1916), for unmarried men from 18-41; however, under further pressure, a May extension included married men up to the age of 51.

before the war,” exposing a clear ideological distinction between volunteerism and conscription.<sup>5</sup> In Beckett’s view, the sacrifice of volunteers “devoted to the perceived flowering of voluntary spirit in August and September 1914 and its apotheosis in the tragic drama of the Somme,” differed from the conscripts’ limited commitment to the war effort. Therefore, though most of the historiography has been focused on extolling the virtues of the volunteers, Beckett modified that position a little bit by acknowledging the importance of conscripts and their contribution to “the achievement of final victory” in Britain’s war effort during the Great War.<sup>6</sup>

Conscientious objectors, who were also an integral part of the war, have not been central to the historical narrative and remain marginalized within British Great War historiography. Two exceptions to this are Thomas Kennedy and Lois Bibbings, who analyze how conscientious objectors’ experiences were defined by the tension between volunteerism and conscription. In his 1981 monograph *The Hound of Conscience: A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919*, Kennedy discusses the role the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF) played in helping conscientious objectors during the war, and how conscientious objectors did not follow the “dogs of war” but rather were “pursued by the hound of conscience.”<sup>7</sup> He offers insight to how the NCF helped and incorporated members of the “despised minority” of conscientious objectors. While acknowledging the efforts of Quaker MPs such as Arnold Rowntree for co-sponsoring the conscientious objection exemption, he concludes that conscientious objectors were at odds with the Military Service Act and mocked for not conforming to the ideal mold of the British citizen.<sup>8</sup> This traditional perspective praised volunteerism and later valued conscription’s pragmatic

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<sup>5</sup> Beckett, “The Real Unknown Army,” 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas C. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience: A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship (1914-1919)* (Fayetteville, AR.: University of Arkansas Press, 1981), 27.

<sup>8</sup> Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience*, 85-88.

contribution to a British victory while suggesting anyone who were opposed to fighting existed on the perimeter of the nation.

Pushing back against Kennedy’s traditional position and further complicating Beckett’s position on the volunteer-conscript dichotomy, British legal historian Lois Bibbings’s 2009 publication *Telling Tales About Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service During the Great War* exposes experiences of British conscientious objectors during the Great War. Bibbings explores through six chapters “a particular cluster of ideas that were associated with objectors during the war, including their conception as cowardly, unmanly, deviant, conscientious, devout, and heroic.”<sup>9</sup> Although she does not cite Beckett, Bibbings echoes that conscientious objectors were members of this unknown army of conscripts, and their stories on the Home Front are as important as those stories of the conscripts who fought and perished on the Western Front. Bibbings uncovers the multifaceted nature of the conscientious objector experience in the Great War. Ultimately, Bibbings employs an analytical configuration that results in the “production of a number of tales about these men; each of the main chapters, through examining different notions of the objectors, effectively represents a version of this narrative, with a discrete thematic focus and tone.”<sup>10</sup>

### **The Complicating Contribution**

This thesis elaborates on how the experiences of conscientious objectors are understood in relation with conscription during the Great War. Building off Lois Bibbings’ six-part historiographic structure, this thesis aims to further nuance and complicate the discussion on conscientious objectors through the field of history of emotions. Specifically, it expands

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<sup>9</sup> Lois Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service during the First World War*(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men*, 4.

Bibbings’ analysis on British conscientious objectors by focusing on the individual case studies of David Blelloch and Norman Gaudie. This thesis engages with an emotional analysis of these two conscientious objectors’ wartime experience. Consequently, this thesis offers an individual-level and emotional analysis of two conscientious objectors’ experiences in Britain during the Great War, with a focus on love and pride.

## **Methodology**

This thesis employs two analytical threads: Benedict Anderson’s theory of the nation as an imagined community and Barbara Rosenwein’s theory of an emotional community. The imagined community theory gives this thesis an analytical lens through which to investigate how the British state was imagined before the war (pre-August 4, 1914) compared to after the war (post-November 11, 1918). The first historiographical thread is the idea of an imagined community, which was coined by the Irish anthropologist Benedict Anderson. Discussed in his groundbreaking 1983 work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Anderson redefined how historians thought about nationalism and citizenship.<sup>11</sup> He contends that nationalism is imagined as a limited sovereign community.<sup>12</sup> As “the great religiously imagined communities ...waned steadily after the late middle ages [,] unselfconscious coherence” gradually shifted through the secular idea of nationalism.”<sup>13</sup> Anderson explains that “the convergence of capitalism and print technology” created new forms of imagined communities.<sup>14</sup> Printing books in vernacular languages, newspapers and literature shaped

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<sup>11</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (1983; repr., London: Verso, 2006), 5-7.

<sup>12</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

modern communities and nations. People came to believe they were part of something greater than himself or herself, a community with shared histories and a common nationality.

Print culture disseminated an image for the populace to imagine and create a strong sense of nationalism. Nationalism, Anderson asserts, was a “fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.”<sup>15</sup> This

“horizontal comradeship” required sacrifice.<sup>16</sup> Anderson describes this willingness to sacrifice one’s life for one’s nation or “imagined community,” as a social, emotional, political process that captures an individual’s collective bond of patriotism. The British state fabricated the perception of war through the press and propaganda posters, to captivate the hearts and minds of Britons to evoke loyalty and their nation’s call to duty. “Lord Kitchener Wants YOU”

(Figure 1) remains the most famous propaganda poster in British Great War



Figure 1: “Lord Kitchener Wants YOU!” Officially known as, “Britons, Join Your Country’s Army!” Courtesy of Alfred Leate, *Britons, Join Your Country’s Army*, 1914, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16577>. ©IWM Art.IWM PST 2734

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 7.

history.<sup>17</sup> Kitchener's central composition and intimidating index finger pointed to the personal obligation of the male viewer to do his duty and sign up. Ultimately, this thesis explores how the British nation was imagined and how conscriptionists and conscientious objectors challenged that imagined ideal.

Anderson claims the identity of the British Empire was often conflated with the identity of the British state, highlighting an emotional tension within the British imagined community: fear of other versus self-love: "[T]o insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love."<sup>18</sup> What emotions are at play here, especially within the concept of "self-sacrificing love"? Love is one obvious emotion. And though "sacrifice" is not an emotion per se, it is an action constituted with several emotions. At the basic psychological level, "[t]o sacrifice is to give up something precious in order to gain or maintain...a worthy cause," connoting compassion and sympathy as a consequence.<sup>19</sup> Anderson connotes that dying for one's nation "draws its grandeur from the degree to which it is felt to be something fundamentally pure," including the love individuals have for one another, resulting in the sacrifice of their life for their nation.<sup>20</sup> However, this

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<sup>17</sup> Although produced privately by Alfred Leate, it fit seamlessly with the state's narrative to recruit the population. Cited from Alfred Leate, *Britons, Join Your Country's Army*, 1914, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16577>.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>19</sup> Aaron Ben-Zeev, "Does Love Involve Sacrifice or Compromise?," PsychologyToday.com, last modified September 25, 2010, accessed April 27, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/in-the-name-love/201009/does-love-involve-sacrifice-or-compromise>.

<sup>20</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 144.

inspiration of “self-sacrificing love” is accompanied by a “fear and hatred of Others,” a blending of emotions that strengthens the idea of the imagined community.

This inspirational, “self-sacrificing love” is often manifested within the visceral emotion of patriotism. “[T]he great wars of this century are extraordinary,” Benedict Anderson concludes, “[because of the] colossal numbers persuaded to lay down their lives. It is not certain that the numbers of those killed vastly exceeded those who killed[.] The idea of the ultimate sacrifice comes only with an idea of purity, through fatality.”<sup>21</sup> Clearly, imagined communities are constituted by emotions, especially loyalty, courage, optimism, love, and pride.

Reinforcing Anderson’s idea of the imagined community and its conduit for sacrifice is political scientist Simon Koschut, who discusses the relationship between emotions and war within a national polity.<sup>22</sup> Koschut asks, “Why do individuals sacrifice themselves to defend a nation-state?”<sup>23</sup> He explains that it is “an expression of sociocultural order that defines the parameters for the worthiness of sacrificing human life of political communities.”<sup>24</sup> When an individual embraces the “cultural script” of a local or national community, their “emotions provide a socio-psychological mechanism by which culture moves people to defend a nation-state.”<sup>25</sup> Koschut’s view on the relationship between emotions and war complements Benedict Anderson’s view of Britain’s devoted nationalism.

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<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 144.

<sup>22</sup> Simon Koschut, “The Structure of Feeling--Emotion Culture and National Self Sacrifice in World Politics,” *Journal of International Studies* 45, no. 2 (2016): 174.

<sup>23</sup> Koschut, “The Structure of Feeling,” 174.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

### The History of Emotions and the Emotional Community

While Benedict Anderson explores the origins of nationalism as an imagined community, Barbara Rosenwein contributes to the study of emotional communities.<sup>26</sup> In her 2002 essay “Worrying about Emotions in History,” Rosenwein asserts that emotional communities “are precisely the same as social communities—families, neighborhoods, parliaments, guilds, monasteries, parish church memberships—but the researcher looking at them seeks above all to uncover systems of feeling: what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore.”<sup>27</sup> Later in 2007 in her study *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, she adds that “emotional communities” consist of groups of people who “adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value—or—devalue the same or related emotions or related emotions,” interests, values, and emotional styles.<sup>28</sup> By claiming that emotions can be historicized over time and space, Rosenwein offers

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<sup>26</sup> Some prominent historians from the History of Emotions field that helped shape my understanding of the field as a whole are Barbara Rosenwein, who coined the phrase “emotional community,” in her book *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), William Reddy and his idea of an “emotional regime” in his study *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010), 113; Thomas Dodman’s historicizing of nostalgia as a feeling and emotion in his monograph *What Nostalgia Was: War, Empire, and the Time of a Deadly Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 2; and Thomas Dixon, who combatted of the assumption that shedding tears was “unBritish” because of a culmination of national emotional feelings that climaxed in the mid-twentieth century as Britain emerged from a time period dominated by imperialism and militarism in his *Weeping Britannia: Portrait of a Nation in Tears* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 18.

<sup>27</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *American Historical Review* 107 (2002): 842.

<sup>28</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), 2.



alternative forms analysis to understand the emotions aroused by an event at a certain place during a specific period of historical time.

### Constructing an Imagined British Community

During the Great War, the state actively constructed the notion of an imagined British nation in war and through words and images deliberately drew on the emotions of its populace. At the outbreak of the war, the state propagated the idea that every emotional community in Britain pointed to volunteerism. The most quintessential propaganda poster aimed to stir emotions within the hearts of British men was the famed 1915 recruitment poster depicting a girl asking her father “Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War” (Figure 2). Published by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, the poster was designed to spur more male volunteers.<sup>29</sup> Arthur Gunn, the director of



Figure 2: *Daddy, What did YOU do in the Great War?*  
Courtesy of: John, Riddle, and Co., *Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17053>.  
© IWM (Art. IWM PST 0311)

<sup>29</sup> John, Riddle, and Co., *Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17053>. Cited from the illustration’s digital label on the Imperial War Museum’s website.

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John, Riddle, and Co., the publisher of the poster, conceived of the image from his “own feelings of guilt at not having volunteered himself.”<sup>30</sup> The poster gained an infamous reputation for employing “emotional blackmail to urge men to enlist with the British Army” and buy into the emotional community bounded by patriotism and created by the state.<sup>31</sup>

The poster propagated duty to the state. Textually speaking, the explication of the “Great War” was the first time the state articulated this conflict, increasing the magnitude of duty. The father’s pensive pose, chin resting on his fingers suggests regretful reflection for not serving in the Great War, which would expose shame and embarrass his children. The message communicates mutual shame felt by the father for his cowardice, and by his children’s disappointment, suggesting a real father would fight for the *bigger family* of Britain. Though it is evident that the poster provokes shame, fear and guilt are also emotions at play. While shame is the dominantly displayed emotion, fear is also suggested, which would solicit greater humiliation for not living up to the heroic image of the family patriarch.

However, feelings of affection must have stirred in the hearts of fathers and future fathers, as some would not want to leave their families. The poster cleverly shifts the man’s sense of duty from the state to the family by substituting the more fragile emotion—loyalty to the state—with a more enduring one—loyalty to one’s children or family. As the pulse of volunteerism weakened, the state drew from family loyalties and shifting them to the state. However, the poster suggested the opposite and depicts that despite the fact the father has to abandon his family, he is supposed to think he is going off to war for them. Familial love was in conflict with national love, pitting duty to the family in conflict with duty to the state.

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<sup>30</sup> John, Riddle, and Co., *Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

British historian Peter Clarke explained the poster’s aim and relevance: “It was an appeal to an idea of a Great War imagined, not a reflection of the immediate experience in the trenches.”<sup>32</sup> Though scholars, such as Peter Clarke and those at the Imperial War Museum, acknowledge “the persuasive potential of a child’s awkward questions to a shirking father in peacetime,” the poster contains more emotional potency.<sup>33</sup> The idea that a daughter wants her father to fight and would be ashamed if he did not was intended as a challenge to the male psyche and culturally constructed ideas about fatherhood. The poster contributes to the narrative that all of patriotic sentiment pointed to volunteerism. However, not every man wanted to enlist to serve and potentially die for the state.

## **Structure**

Influenced by these studies on imagined communities and emotional communities, this thesis focuses on how the British emotional community was created by the state during the Great War, and the extent to which people participated in them or were excluded from them. Chapter one, titled ““What is the Sacred Principle?’ Volunteerism vs. Conscription,” is structured in a thematic manner, as it discusses the political and popular debates surrounding conscription, exploring the tension that existed on the floor of Parliament in Westminster, in the contemporary press, and within academic circles between the start of the war and the introduction of the Military Service Act. The sources that were consulted for this chapter range from parliamentary transcripts from the House of Commons, newspaper clippings, to an assemblage of accounts from the Fabian Society. Though the political versus popular distinction is rudimentary, it exposes the debates occurring within political parties and in the halls of Parliament, and how

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<sup>32</sup> Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain, 1900-2000*, 78.

<sup>33</sup> John, Riddle, and Co., *Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?*”

they conflicted with the ideas resonating amongst the general population. These distinctions between Parliamentary debates and popular resonances are noteworthy as they reveal political tensions in the House of Commons and an un-unified British public. Moreover, while the MPs are elected to represent their constituents as representatives in a Liberal democracy, their decision to introduce conscription further displays the empowerment of the state and the disempowering of the populace over the course of the war. This chapter will utilize transcripts of House of Commons debates, newspaper articles, archival material from the Imperial War Museum in London, and propaganda posters.

Chapter two, entitled “‘I Am Prepared to Suffer For My...Convictions:’ Conscientious Objectors’ Case Studies,” explores the experiences of David Blelloch, a 20-year-old Oxford student, and Norman Gaudie, a 29-year-old reserve Sunderland A.F.C. footballer turned railroad clerk, two conscientious objectors whose stories exemplify how the imagined national community versus the “emotional community” in Britain were not the same while acknowledging how multiple emotional communities can overlap and conflict.<sup>34</sup> While neither Blelloch nor Gaudie fit the image of the ideal citizen central to the imagined national community molded by the state, their experiences disprove the assumption that conscientious objectors were isolated by society and the publicly derided as outcasts. This chapter will consider: Why Blelloch and Gaudie were not ostracized within their respective communities? What emotions did they share with their respective communities that competed with the larger emotional patriotic society? And where do these social nuances overlap and diverge? In order to analyze this convergence and divergence of social and emotional experiences, this chapter will employ

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<sup>34</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions in History," *American Historical Review* 107 (2002): 842; Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), 2.

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archival sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, and memoirs, from the Imperial War Museum in London and the Liddle Personal Collection at the University of Leeds, as well as newspaper articles and debate transcripts from the House of Commons.

Finally, the epilogue, titled “‘The Peace Begins A New Epoch:’ An Epilogue,” focuses on the immediate post-war period in Britain and how conscientious objectors were excluded within the new imagined British state. The epilogue explores how the demobilization process was an extension—or continuation—of the social and political ostracization conscientious objectors experienced during the Great War. Specifically, the discrimination they faced during the re-employment schemes in post-war Britain and their disenfranchisement by a clause in the Representation of the People Act of 1918 will be analyzed to prove the inherent ideological tensions regarding individualism and duty to the state. The epilogue exposes lingering, unresolved issues from the Great War, explaining why the relationship between conscientious objectors and the British state points to the tension at the heart of a liberal democracy: What is the duty of the individual to the state, and where is the line between freedom and duty? This section employs Fabian Society publications, debate transcripts from the House of Lords, and newspaper articles.

**“I Deny Your Authority to Try My Conscience”**

Just sixteen months into the war on January 27, 1916, the Military Service Act introduced conscription to Britain, as Parliament had recognized that the imagined community of Britain failed to fuel sufficient numbers of soldiers to fight on the Western Front. Volunteerism was dismantled and conscription instituted which resulted in a massive transformation in the relationship between the individual and the state. During the Great War there was a shift in how the nation was imagined, correlating citizenship with duty to the state. Though individual

citizens who exercised their conscientious objection to participate in the war imagined themselves to be British, they were viewed as non-British by the state because they did not live up to the ideal emotional standards of the imagined British community. Weaving the imagined community and the emotional community threads into Britain's Great War tapestry, this thesis contends that the British nation was imagined differently before the war than it was after the war because of the introduction of conscription.

At the beginning of the Great War, the British nation was imagined as a bastion of Liberalism, where individuals volunteered through a free-willed social contract model to defend the nation. However, after conscription was introduced, the British nation was imagined more through the concept of the state and duties to the state. Thus, the introduction of conscription in Britain resulted in the consolidation of the nation state, resulting in the transfer of agency from the individual to the state. The emergence of conscientious objectors further exposed the inherent contradiction imbedded within conscription. Conscription eroded the moral legitimacy of the state, as it had argued that Britain was more righteous than Germany because it lacked militarism. Though both the state and conscientious objectors laid claim to moral standing, conscription ceded the monopoly of morality from the state to conscientious objectors. Ultimately, though conscientious objectors exposed the inherent contradictions of conscription and redefined citizenship and military service in Britain, their wartime experiences and *exclusion* in the post-war period evidenced a transformation in how Britain was imagined as a state after the Great War.

This thesis asserts that the assumption that *both* the imagined and emotional communities in Britain were forged into a single unit was false. Patriotism, which is the emotional component of nationalism, is central to the British emotional community. The outbreak of the Great War and

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Britain's entrance in August 1914 resulted in the union of the imagined community and the emotional community of Britain, yet almost immediately the union disintegrated, and the periphery of the emotional community began to fray. By analyzing the case studies of David Belloch and Norman Gaudie, this thesis maintains that because conscientious objectors were a part of multiple emotional communities, there was no one monolithic British emotional community during the Great War.

## 1. "What Is The Sacred Principle?" Volunteerism vs. Conscription

*[D]oubt exists everywhere as to the courage of any  
Government to introduce a measure which may cost votes,  
but which has become absolutely necessary for the security  
of the Empire.<sup>35</sup>*

"Conscription is the facile weapon of tyranny," barked Member of Parliament (MP) Sir William Byles, a dyed in the wool Victorian Liberal, on the House of Commons floor on January 5, 1916. "I can forecast a future in English history when we may have a tyrant King on the throne or an unscrupulous Minister standing at that box. If he is fortified with a conscript Army at his back who looks to him for payment, what price is liberty then?"<sup>36</sup> Sir Byles' speech laid bare the traditional Liberal opposition to conscription, as it threatened to dismantle a cornerstone of British Liberalism: volunteerism. However, Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, a Conservative MP, rebuked, "[How are] we going to get the men to keep up the divisions at their proper strength, and, if we cannot get the men by voluntary means, ought we to get them by compulsory measures?"<sup>37</sup> Counterpointing Byles' sentiments against Griffith-Boscawen's exposed the ideological tension that emerged within Parliament and Britain as a whole when the Military Service Act was introduced in January of 1916. Conscription raised stark issues: the consolidation and empowerment of the British state, the necessity to mobilize more men and resources for war purposes, and the remodeling of the state's relationship with society.

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<sup>35</sup> Alfred E. Turner, "The Necessity for Compulsory Service," *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art* (London), May 29, 1915.

<sup>36</sup> William Byles, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>37</sup> Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.



Through the lens of conscription, this chapter examines how the Great War shattered pre-war assumptions and resulted in the passage of the Military Service Act of 1916 by Parliament, which dismantled the volunteerism tenet of British Liberalism, replaced it with conscription, and redefined military service and what it meant to be a British citizen. When the Great War began, the British state assumed that a unified, imagined nation would propel every military-aged male citizen into a patriotic call to duty. However, this assumption proved to be inadequate given the escalating needs of the mechanized butchery of the Western Front. Conscription became the pragmatic default, presuming that conscripts would still buy into the patriotic emotions and common sense of duty to the state. Following a historical backdrop surrounding the debate between volunteerism and conscription, this chapter illuminates the lack of an ideological and emotional consensus amongst Members of Parliament (MPs), and the populace regarding the individual’s relationship to the state. The chapter concludes with an articulation of the four types of exemptions allowed by the Military Service Act followed by information on conscientious objectors.

### **Historical Backdrop**

When Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914, the period of “splendid isolation” was over. After Germany violated Belgium’s neutrality on August 3, 1914, Sir Edward Grey, the Liberal Foreign Secretary, stated on the floor of the House of Commons that if Britain ran away from her “obligations of honour [sic.] and interests,” Britain would lose her moral capital.<sup>38</sup> Grey considered this responsibility not over a “scrap of paper”—the Treaty of London

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<sup>38</sup> Edward Grey, "Statement by Sir Edward Grey," speech, August 3, 1914, World War I Document Archive, last modified June 30, 2009, accessed November 17, 2018, [https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Sir\\_Edward\\_Grey%27s\\_Speech\\_Before\\_Parliament](https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Sir_Edward_Grey%27s_Speech_Before_Parliament). Originally cited from *Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. LXV, 1914, columns 1809 - 1834*.

of 1839—promising to protect Belgium’s neutrality, but the honor of that promise and their moral duty to defend both Belgium and France.

Discussing the importance of volunteerism, Sir Edward Grey explained that the British army “relied upon the willingness of its citizens to come forward without direct compulsion to join the armed forces.”<sup>39</sup> Though it remained unspoken, Grey left the door open for conscription. Grey and the British society *imagined* the war would be short—corroborated by the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and the Boer War (1899-1902)—and would bring glory to Britain and pride to its individual citizens while maintaining the state’s moral integrity. In a September 6, 1915 letter, Colonel J.C. Petherick noted that “it [was] the duty of every able-bodied man to do his bit, and family ties must [out] of necessity be only a... consideration, however hard it is for those left behind” [underline original].<sup>40</sup> These imagined ideals shaped the initial British perceptions of the war, if the war was short duration, then only a small number of soldiers would be required. Thomas Hannan, however, armed with a Titanic metaphor, suggested in December 1915 in the *Fortnightly Review* that the war had already obliterated “unreasoning optimism,” and shattered the British politicians’ and citizens’ preconceived expectations of the war: “A great ship was declared ‘unsinkable’ and a great war was henceforth ‘unthinkable.’ Yet the ‘unsinkable’ ship went down in its first voyage and the ‘unthinkable’ war is consuming Europe.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-45* (Harmondsworth, United Kingdom: Penguin, 1988), 47.

<sup>40</sup> Letter by J.C. Petherick, "Private Papers of Colonel J.C. Petherick," September 6, 1916, 33709, Imperial War Museum, London.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Hannan, "National Cadet Corps as the Basis of Our Future Army," *Fortnightly Review* 98, no. 588 (December 1915).

When Britain declared war on Germany, the state needed to solicit recruits and implemented eight categories of propaganda.<sup>42</sup> According to German-American political scientist Alice Goldfarb Marquis, the British state 1) stereotyped bull-necked Prussian officers; 2) utilized pejorative names such as Huns and Boches rather than Germans; 3) redefined evacuations as “rectifications of the line” and left retreats unmentioned; 4) exploited atrocity stories such as the Rape of Belgium; 5) initiated slogans to justify the war, such as the “war to end all wars,”; 6) described one-sided assertions, “inflated minor victories and censored large defeats;” 7) pinpointed the enemy as German militarists; and 8) propagated the emotional, bandwagon effect, as suggested by the phrase “all patriotic people join the army.”<sup>43</sup>

As the British state centralized propaganda and regulated the dissemination of wartime information, the propagation of atrocity stories were the most pronounced.<sup>44</sup> Stories of German barbarism were psychologically vivid and emotionally potent, as evidenced by The Bryce Report and Edith Cavell’s trial and execution in Germany.<sup>45</sup> Atrocity stories filled three basic wartime needs: 1) They overrode people’s natural repugnance to killing, 2) added descriptive and visual facts to justify Britain’s role in the Great War, and 3) equated to a regression of primitive human behavior, giving civilians an outlet for primitive feelings.<sup>46</sup>

The British state justified its entry into with the Great War by chivalrously exploiting the Rape of Belgium. The rape terminology was intentionally employed to shape a public perception that the “Germans were capable of the grossest behaviour [sic.] imaginable.”<sup>47</sup> The

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<sup>42</sup> Alice Goldfarb Marquis, "Words as Weapons: Propaganda in Britain and Germany during the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 3 (July 1978): 468.

<sup>43</sup> Marquis, "Words as Weapons," 468.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* 488.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 487.

documentation of German brutality reached its height when the Bryce Report—officially the Committee on Alleged German Outrages—published copious accounts of German brutality in 1915, a year after Germany invaded Belgium. The Bryce Report was sensationalized official propaganda by the British state to further justify entering the war.

While the Bryce Report was compiled as atrocity propaganda, the coverage of Edith Cavell's case and subsequent death in Germany was a clear example of how the British incited a visceral emotional response amongst the populace to fabricate an imagined national community's righteousness against evil. Edith Cavell, the British nurse who helped French and British prisoners-of-war (POWs) escape to the neutral Netherlands, was convicted under German law, her actions—saving POWs from the evil Germans—were morally justifiable in the eyes of the British state. Cavell became the symbol of Britain's place in the war. She became a victim of German brutality and a martyr for the British cause. Consequently, Britain was wronged, resulting in a war effort geared towards fighting on Cavell's behalf, and the other women they were going to save. Britain employed propaganda to justify its fight against German immorality while protecting its honorable image and high moral standing.

### The Logic and Practice of Volunteerism

Prior to the Great War, Britons were proud of their Liberal values, and their preservation of volunteerism. For instance, during the Napoleonic Wars, the British regiments were filled through enlistment by moral pressure and alcohol coercion.<sup>48</sup> Even under Napoleon's threat, Britain never imposed conscription. This avoidance was partially achieved because MPs "worried that removing the purchase of commissions (a mainstay of the Enlightenment focus on

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<sup>48</sup> Deborah Avant, "From Mercenary to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War," *International Organization* 54, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 56-58.

merit) would open the way for the crown to use the army against Parliament's wishes."<sup>49</sup> Thus, at the dawn of Victorian Liberalism there were ideological and political reservations against conscription.

At the outbreak of the Great War, the British Army consisted of three sectors: the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), the reservists, and the territorials. The BEF was Britain's small professional army, the regular regimental forces. These men were trained, active duty soldiers who could be deployed immediately to battle. As unprecedented casualties escalated on the Western Front, volunteer reservists, who had served their time and remained on muster rolls, were tailed by the territorials (e.g. Australians and Indians). However, with the surge of casualties, especially after the First Battle of Ypres (October 19-November 30, 1914) and the Battle of Loos (September 15-October 8, 1915), the need for recruits was immediate.

The Derby Scheme emerged as a possible remedy, encouraging "pals" of towns and boroughs to enlist together to fight for the state. Lord Kitchener's brainchild, the Derby Scheme was designed as a recruiting campaign to stave off conscription while hoping to increase recruitment for the British Army. Men between the ages of 18 and 41 were encouraged to voluntarily enlist and were ensured an assignment with their fellow pals. The Derby Scheme solicited moral duty through social and emotional pressures. It elicited emotions of trust, love, and pride. Imbedded in the Derby Scheme was a loyalty and commitment to the bonds of friendship and to the imagined community of Britain. Pals would enlist together under the banner of patriotism and protect each other on the battlefield. The scheme solicited love of friendships and prideful love for Britain.

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<sup>49</sup> Avant, "From Mercenary to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War," 58.

However, the Derby Scheme failed to procure sufficient numbers of volunteers, resulting in the passage of the Military Service Act on January 27, 1916 conscripting unmarried men aged 18-41. The initial exemption of married men from conscription resulted in a schism within the Liberal Party. Traditional Liberals loyal to Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith argued that the preservation of volunteerism was paramount for the defense of British liberties.<sup>50</sup> Conversely, the Conservatives and mutinying Liberals led by David Lloyd George contended that the practical need for more soldiers on the front outweighed the preservation of volunteerism.<sup>51</sup> This tension between volunteerism and conscription fueled a heated political and popular debate. The result was the contingent introduction of conscription. Though conscription was viewed as a temporary measure, it marked a permanent change in society and how the British nation was imagined.

### **Political and Popular Debate on Conscription**

The introduction of conscription restructured the British state’s relationship with its citizenry. While Liberals and Conservatives argued their competing positions on the means, they agreed that the war must be won. While traditional, pro-Asquith Liberals viewed conscription as a betrayal of the principles they were fighting for, the Conservatives and mutinous Liberals supporting David Lloyd George viewed conscription as necessary to win the war. Though a handful of Labour and Irish MPs expressed their disdain for compulsory military service, the debate on conscription was dominated by the Liberal and Conservative dichotomy. Ultimately, the necessities of the war promoted conscription’s pragmatism, requiring the redefinition of British citizenship and provoking greater parliamentary friction surrounding this debate.

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<sup>50</sup> Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain, 1900-2000*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 2004), 25-88.

<sup>51</sup> Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 25-88.

### Political Opponents of Conscription

The Military Service Act ignited contention, resulting in a maelstrom of opposition from classic Liberals and Labour MPs. On January 5, 1916, opponents of conscription unleashed verbal salvos on the floor of the House of Commons in Westminster. The rhetorical weapon of choice was anaphora, which was employed by British politicians during their “war of words” against Germany, as the repetition intended to provoke passion from the audience.<sup>52</sup> “We believe that the War has been the most splendid vindication of the voluntary system,” asserted John Whitehouse, a Liberal MP. “We believe that the results attained so far could not have been attained under any other system. We believe that the country has met every demand upon it and is willing to meet every just demand upon it.”<sup>53</sup> Sir John Simon, the Liberal Home Secretary, reinforced Whitehouse’s affirmation of volunteerism through anaphora, berating his compatriots not to imitate “the most hateful of its institutions.”<sup>54</sup> Secretary Simon condemned conscription and equated it to Prussian militarism and shamed his fellow Liberal, Conservative, Labour, and Irish MPs from considering conscription, as he believed it should be avoided at all costs. Whitehouse and Simon intended to scuttle the implementation of the Military Service Act because they believed it was an affront to Britain’s volunteerism.

Similarly, Asquithian Liberals denounced conscription by emphasizing the pragmatism of volunteerism, exposing conscription’s similarities to Prussian militarism, and illuminating the threat it posed on individual agency, personal liberty, and British society as a whole. Differently,

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<sup>52</sup> Marquis, “Words as Weapons,” 467.

<sup>53</sup> John Whitehouse, “Military Service (No. 2) Bill,” speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>54</sup> John Simon, “Military Service (No. 2) Bill,” speech, Hansard 1803-2005. accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

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Labour denounced conscription on the premise of equality for national war participation regardless of class. John Dillon, an Irish Nationalist MP, also rebuked the irrational termination of volunteerism:

But here are we asked to undo and depart from the unbroken tradition of 200 years of English history on which the whole basis and structure of our social system has been erected, which has made [our country] the envy of the world... We are asked to depart from our voluntary system... without a single shred of reason given to the House of Commons.<sup>55</sup>

The debate of conscription stirred discordant opinions in the House of Commons, exposing a lack of political consensus.

Furthermore, Liberal opponents of conscription believed conscription was tyrannical and endangered the personal liberties vested in British society. MP Byles offered the most concise articulation of these fears: "[M]y strongest reason against Conscription is that it is a violation of England's traditions of liberty."<sup>56</sup> Not only did Byles believe that conscription imperiled the agency of British men, he also contended that if the Germans invaded Britain's shores, nobody, regardless if they were married or single, would question "[hurling] them back again" to defend the motherland.<sup>57</sup> Volunteerism, according to Byles, was an implicit facet imbedded within the ideal of British citizenship.

Moreover, Liberals feared that the introduction of conscription would restructure British state in what Secretary Simon called "an immense change in the fundamental structure of our society."<sup>58</sup> His statement, given on the House of Commons floor on January 5, 1916, highlighted

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<sup>55</sup> John Dillon, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>56</sup> Byles, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Simon, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.



the major societal changes conscription would bring to Britain. Though the various Liberal reservations against conscription were grounded in violations of liberty, Labour MPs also loathed conscription. Representing Labour’s position was MP John Hodge, who alerted the issue of class inequity in the mobilization process. He contended, “[I]f you are going to compel men you ought to compel wealth in exactly the same way.”<sup>59</sup> Hodge championed class equity in the drafting process and did not want the state to order individual men to serve on the basis of class. Clearly, there was vociferous opposition to the introduction of conscription in Britain during the Great War.

### Political Supporters of Conscription

As the debate intensified, the Conservative and mutinous Liberal MPs contended that conscription was necessary and offered the practical means to meet the escalating need for soldiers on the Western Front. Conscription was framed as a fulfillment of Prime Minister Asquith’s pledge for a million more men. Conservatives and breakaway Liberals were geared to crush German militarism, redefining British citizenship and military service. Though not a proponent of conscription, Asquith described that when every man “recognizes...their duty as a matter of moral and national obligation in the time of greatest stress in all our history,” they will buy into the emotional community and answer the call to arms.<sup>60</sup>

Contributing to the support of conscription was Brigadier General John Edward Bernard (J.E.B.) Seely, who on January 5, 1916 shouted on the floor of the House of Commons:

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<sup>59</sup> John Hodge, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>60</sup> Herbert Henry Asquith, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005. accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

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When the ‘Lusitania’ was sunk, when for the first-time poisonous gases were turned out, when not hundreds, but thousands of innocent lives, in defiance of every law of war and humanity, were destroyed, when the overwhelming mass of our countrymen rise in horror and say: ‘We will not be bound down by Prussian despotism and tyranny! [T]hen you are going to appeal to liberty—liberty that you may send another man to fight!’<sup>61</sup>

While Seely, a Liberal general, endorsed conscription, he also attempted to influence Britain’s emotional community. Seely was different from the die-hard Liberals who were against conscription, exhibited by his passionate description of fear, horror, love, and pride for liberty and for patriotism. Unlike the opponents of conscription, who nostalgically savoured volunteerism, Seely exploited the fear of German militarism through the use of Prussian metonymy to muster emotional support for conscription. Moreover, he exposed the horror of men, women, and children perishing aboard the torpedoed Lusitania, contributing to the narrative of German brutality and framing the introduction of conscription as an “appeal to liberty” in order to protect British women, children and their beloved nation. This prideful love for one’s family and the imagined British nation was ample impetus to introduce conscription.

Seely’s inference to Prussian militarism also connoted the social, and cultural cohesion of German society. Though lined with disdain, many British politicians, especially the Conservative Tories, looked at Germany with awe in pre-war years for its stout Prussian military tradition, instilling honor in the hearts and minds of its men to serve their fatherland, a concept of national service foreign to British ideologies.<sup>62</sup> While the majority of the Junkers in the Reichstag were war veterans, the majority of MPs in Westminster had never performed military service.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> John Edward Bernard Seely, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005. accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>62</sup> French, *British Economic and Strategic Planning, 1905-1915*, 38-60.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

Moreover, paramilitary scouts were entrenched in Germany, grooming the next generation of national warriors and germinating the belief that every man was bound to serve his nation—and potentially sacrifice his life—which defined ideal male citizenship. This notion of a youthful Prussian warrior exposed the contrast to the image of the British father being shamed into fighting, as seen in the poster “*What Did YOU Do During the War, Daddy*” (Figure 2). Though Britain employed Scouts and some OTC—Officer Training Corps—in some public schools, they did not train, influence and impart national military values as did their German counterparts.<sup>64</sup> While repelling German imposed ideologies and practices, there was a desire to gain some social and military cohesion in Britain.

The Conservative MPs expressed a pragmatism towards conscription, exposing how the realities of the war shifted the debate from ideological bickering to practical discussions on mobilization for war purposes. MP Griffith-Boscawen, for instance, argued that he was never a conscriptionist before the war and opposed it becoming “a permanent institution;” yet, he acknowledged, through his experience leading a reserve battalion, that “we cannot keep up the strength of our Army as we ought to do without resorting to some measure of compulsion.”<sup>65</sup> Griffith-Boscawen’s statement highlighted the practical view of conscription shared by Conservatives following the failure of the Derby Scheme, and the limits of Lord Kitchener’s campaign to acquire over a million recruits. Secretary of State for the Colonies Bonar Law reinforced Griffith-Boscawen’s stance by contending that the Military Service Act “was the

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<sup>64</sup> In Britain, the term “public school” carries the same connotations as a “private school” in the United States.

<sup>65</sup> Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, “Military Service (No. 2) Bill,” speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

pledge of the Prime Minister, and if [conscription] was not a national necessity there was no reason why [it] should be introduced”<sup>66</sup> Law asserted that the immense casualties on the Western Front necessitated more men to fill in the depleted ranks, and it was up to the current Liberal administration under Asquith to orchestrate the mobilization of a million men. Law reminded the MPs to keep their promises to their electorate, asserting that the Military Service Act was Asquith’s “honourable fulfilment” of his pledge to help hasten the war’s conclusion.<sup>67</sup>

While MP Law saw a political benefit to the Military Service Act in January 1916, Colonel Hamar Greenwood saw a military benefit.<sup>68</sup> From a strictly military standpoint, Colonel Greenwood’s answer was simple: conscription was a practical military necessity. Making his position plain, Colonel Greenwood explained that though some detractors “would treat [Asquith’s] word as if it were a scrap of paper,” one thing was essential:

I submit this is the view of every soldier I ever met at home or abroad, is to make clear to the enemy, or any would-be enemy who may be tempted by our own hesitancy to come against us, that this Government, this House and this country, will spend every sovereign, will arm and put into the field every man, before it will give in and before it will consider any questions of peace whatsoever.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Bonar Law, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>67</sup> Law, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>68</sup> Hamar Greenwood, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, January 5, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>; Another military officer who shared similar views on the practicality of conscription was J.C. Petherick, jotted in blunt terms in a May 1915 journal entry the practical necessity of conscription: “[A]nnoyed to hear about ‘slackers and loafers’ who wouldn’t join up. Conscription should happen.” From his *Personal Journal*, May 1915, 33709, Private Papers of Colonel J.C. Petherick, Imperial War Museum, London.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

Emotionally, Colonel Greenwood’s call to arms was filled with the visceral, patriotic feelings of duty and British exceptionalism. It also contributed to the imagined community of Britain because of the underlying assumption that “every man” would support this national effort against the Germans. Colonel Greenwood further exposed a major source of contention regarding voluntary enlistment and the establishment of conscription: “Remember that those of you who are vehemently opposing this Bill at the moment have been the most vigorous persons in persuading others to go to the front and fight. Do not forget that.”<sup>70</sup> Justifying conscription in patriotic terms while shaming detractors in moral terms, Colonel Greenwood contended that if the House of Commons refused to pass the Military Service Act, the MPs would be deserting the men they “encouraged to go” to the Western Front.<sup>71</sup> Marching rhetoric into battle, Colonel Greenwood bolstered the British emotional community—British patriotism—fabricated by the state through emphasizing national pride and anger for the German rape of Belgium, and hope for the liberation of smaller European nations: “[W]e would never sheathe the sword until Belgium was free of the enemy, until the integrity of small nationalities was assured, and until we marched to triumphant victory.”<sup>72</sup> According to Colonel Greenwood, conscription was essential to the larger British emotional community, that is, patriotism, and to the larger imagined British community’s war effort.

Returning to the podium, Seely admitted “that a voluntary Army,” which consisted of men who “had their [hearts] in the job” and was more dedicated to the cause of fighting for the state “than an Army of which any considerable proportion are unwilling [to fight]”.<sup>73</sup> Volunteers

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Seely, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

were emotionally driven by prideful love for Britain as compared to conscripts, and Seely further acknowledged, “[H]ow dangerous [it would be] to dilute [an army of volunteers] with unwilling men.”<sup>74</sup> This psychological and emotional point was important to recognize because on the battlefield, generals wanted soldiers committed to the ideals they are protecting and willing to give it their all. Though Seely expressed a preference for “voluntary service because it wins battles,” he questioned “the sacred principle” involved in the debate.<sup>75</sup> Ultimately, Seely acknowledged the escalated butchery of the Western Front ruptured the ideal guarded in the “sacred principle” and necessitated conscription.<sup>76</sup>

Continuing his defense of conscription, Seely offered an apocalyptic perspective of what true citizenship meant in times of war: “The very fact that this War is a terrible War...the measure of the obligation laid upon every one of us, if we do appeal to liberty, to freedom, and to all those things for which we know we are fighting, then we must be prepared to sacrifice ourselves.”<sup>77</sup> Seely emphasized the imperative relationship between the nature of this war and the need for full participation in it. While imposing pragmatism, he suggested an altered idealism: The obligation of duty to the values of the imagined British nation. Seely also offered a new, unfiltered interpretation on the meaning of citizenship that when the chips are down, it is the responsibility of every man who is a full citizen to serve and sacrifice the ultimate.

“This is a temporary expedient,” declared Seely, “I do not for the moment say that we shall have Conscription after the [Great] War,” exposing his belief that conscription would be

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Seely, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

ephemeral rather than permanent.<sup>78</sup> During his speech on the floor of the House of Commons, Seely elaborated that Parliament should “use the whole power of the State to crush Prussian militarism.”<sup>79</sup> Seely further maintained that conscription would send a brave message of solidarity to Britain’s fellow Entente Allies—France and Russia—and show them that Britain was willing “to suffer all in order to win the War with them, and that we surrender ourselves body and soul for our country, and for her righteous cause.”<sup>80</sup>

Seely’s full-throated endorsement of conscription for the British war effort proved he was a pivotal figure in driving the practicality argument home. Politically, he was the natural bridge, though he seemed to underplay the resistance of the greater British community, who embraced the sacred principle of volunteerism, wanted to maintain the status quo, or did not want to fight. Echoing the patriotic sentiment Sir Grey shared with his famous parliamentary speech that brought Britain into the war, Seely harnessed that same fervor to implore the British politicians’ hearts to support the cause and fully support the war that was consuming Europe.

#### Unmarried Men vs. Married Men

Those attempting to strike a compromise regarding conscription suggested that married men should be exempted from conscription until every unmarried man stepped forward, regardless of the realities of the war. Arguably the most consequential compromiser in Parliament at the time was Asquith, who was a reluctant conductor for conscription. Speaking in

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.; Given the inadequate nature of British volunteerism, an increased state presence was required in reshuffling the organization of military forces in Britain during the remainder of the war. More information on this topic and Lord Kitchener’s role can be gathered from Margaret Levi, “The Institution of Conscription,” *Social Science History* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 137-140.

<sup>80</sup> Seely, “Military Service (No. 2) Bill,” speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

the House of Commons on January 5, 1916, Asquith acknowledged that there had been “considerable controversy” in their debates in the previous fall regarding “persevering [the] Voluntary System...or by the introduction, in some form, of general Compulsion.”<sup>81</sup> He explained that given his pledge to conjure up a million more men for the Derby Scheme was insufficient, and the Military Service Act bill was not an endorsement of “general Compulsion,” but rather the fulfillment of a promise made to the House of Commons back in November 1915.<sup>82</sup> The Prime Minister claimed the Act was not an example of total conscription, reassuring MP J.H. Thomas of Labour that unmarried men would be drafted before married men. Asquith attempted to assuage fears amongst Labour MPs and secure votes for the bill, especially considering the frosty opposition from his own, die-hard Victorian Liberals. He agreed to introduce and pass the Military Service Act under political pressure from his Conservative-backed Secretary of State of War, David Lloyd George.<sup>83</sup> Clearly, the unmarried men vs. married men dichotomy stirred much controversy, resulting in the development of a political middle ground. Ultimately, the tension ruptured the schism of the Liberal Party as Asquith was ousted by Prime Minister by David Lloyd George, his Secretary of War. Lloyd George, buoyed by the Conservatives and mutinous Liberals, thwarted the opposition and increased conscription to include married men between the ages of 18 and 51.

### The Military Service Act of 1916

Though their vocal defense resulted in impressive performances of political rhetoric, the proponents of volunteerism were defeated and, after much debate, conscription was made law on

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<sup>81</sup> Asquith, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War: Britain and the Great War, 1914-1918*, 213.



January 27, 1916 after the Military Service Act (Figure 4) was approved by 383 votes in the House of Commons and gained royal ascent.<sup>84</sup> Regarding the votes against conscription, 30 of the 36 dissenting votes were die-hard, classic Liberals.<sup>85</sup> Astonishingly, though the Labour Party initially objected, the majority of the party capitulated.<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, the 60 Irish Nationalist MPs abstained after reassurance that conscription would not be introduced in Ireland.<sup>87</sup> Clearly, the pragmatic necessity of conscription won over the idealism of volunteerism given the realities of the war.

## **Public Resonances on Conscription**

### Varieties of Volunteerism

The tension that remained within the British political landscape regarding volunteerism and conscription was also seen in the popular landscape. Only a few months after the Military Service Act was enacted, conscription sparked a public outcry and in April 1916 over 200,000 people demonstrated against it in Trafalgar Square.<sup>88</sup> After the war broke out over the summer of 1914, the mechanism of acquiring men was not limited to the binary of volunteerism and conscription. Several differing views of voluntary modes of enlistment, and the idea of National Service reverberated around Britain. British class dimensions heightened complexities of this debate. Before the Military Service Act was even considered, the idea of compulsory military service entered the public lexicon. In March 29, 1915, grocers and their assistants from

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<sup>84</sup> Caroline Moorehead, *Troublesome People: The Warriors of Pacifism* (Bethesda, Ind.: Adler & Adler, 1987), 5.

<sup>85</sup> Moorehead, *Troublesome People*, 5.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> UK Parliament, ed., "Conscription: The First World War," [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk), accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/yourcountry/overview/conscription/>.

Birmingham debated in *The Times* who should enlist and on what terms. Grocery owners encouraged their employees to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country.<sup>89</sup> Mr. A.T. Giles, the Secretary of the Grocer's Federation of Great Britain, appealed to employers to encourage their assistants to help the Government fill the enlistment stocks.<sup>90</sup> This view that subordinate grocery assistants should step-up to serve the country exposed employer-employee tension and raised the question: Who had the luxury to volunteer?

This tension suggested a difference regarding the view of the British imagined community. The grocery assistants noted that if military service was necessitated, the introduction of conscription would be a fairer approach compared to voluntary enlistment. "The responsibility of sending men to privation and possible death should be upon the Government," proclaimed Mr. J.M. Allen, the General Secretary of the National Association of Grocers' Assistants, "and I hope employers in the trade will decline to allow it to be shifted on to them."<sup>91</sup> Allen maintained that owners held an unfair expectation of their assistants, imposing pressure on their subordinates to enlist and risk their lives and threatening to terminate their contracts upon enlistment. He further emphasized that it should be the role of Westminster to compel male citizens to serve the state, exposing the possibility of a reorientation of the state's relationship with British citizens.<sup>92</sup> The Grocer's Debate exposed a conflict within the emotional community between the Grocers and the Grocer's Assistants. Volunteerism was perceived to respect the relationship between the individual and the state. Thus, for an employer to impose pressure on its employees violated this principle. Grocery Assistants were concerned about their family and job

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<sup>89</sup> "Recruiting Appeal to Grocers," *The Times* (London, England), March 29, 1915.

<sup>90</sup> "Recruiting Appeal to Grocers."

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

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security, which seemed more legitimate to them rather than the larger British patriotism. Moreover, the opinion exposed a class differentiation in that members of the working class should be willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice before members of the upper-class. An attempt to counter this view is illustrated in the 1915 propaganda poster “Step Into Your Place” (Figure 3). Sponsored by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, the poster depicted men from varying social classes marching together, merging into men in uniform.<sup>93</sup> Designed to represent a collective purpose, the poster suggests that enlistment protocol was not discriminatory on the basis of social class as men of all ranks—judges, farmers, gentlemen, and chauffeurs—marched shoulder to shoulder as citizens and soldiers. Emotionally speaking, the poster aimed to portray the national pride of every man, regardless of rank and station in society, each willing to do his bit and serve the state. The poster oversimplified the mobilization process and misled the populace, as the enlistment process discriminated on the basis of social class. While implying mobilization equity, the poster’s message was problematic as members of the upper echelons of British



Figure 3: *Step Into Your Place*  
Courtesy of: David Allen and Sons, *Step Into Place*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 12, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27750>.  
© IWM (Art. IWM PST 0318)

<sup>93</sup> David Allen and Sons, *Step Into Your Place*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 12, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27750>.

society would want their subordinates to enlist before they did, as evidenced by the Grocer's Debate. The Grocer's Assistants knew the process was discriminatory, as it reflected in their opposition of enlisting before their managers. Though this propaganda poster fostered a sense of national cohesion, the tensions between personal and institutional relationships emerged and formed emotional fault lines within the British polity.

The debate surrounding volunteerism and conscription was not limited to political or industrial sectors, as members of the Catholic Church freely expressed dissatisfaction with slackers failing to enlist. On May 3, 1915, *The Times* editors commented a Roman Catholic Bishop contended that a Christian shirker was no better than a non-religious shirker, connoting that Britons who subscribed to Christianity had a universal duty to God and to the state to fight in the war.<sup>94</sup> The priest offered an unorthodox definition of "voluntary," thereby implying a moral argument for serving one's nation as a model citizen, connecting volunteerism with citizenship.

While the bishop's verbal volley encouraged enlistment in moral and patriotic terms, so too did discussions for creating a Volunteer Training Corps to spur recruits to Britain's call to arms. The premise behind the Volunteer Training Corps was discussed in a October 1915 journal article from *The Review of Reviews*: "[T]he love one bears for the homeland is not a matter of years; the steady fires of patriotism burn brighter through all, and the hazards of the present time evoke its passionate expression in all classes."<sup>95</sup> The Corps was formed by men who were too old for military service who still wanted to do their bit to contribute to the British war effort, manifesting their support for the idealized, British emotional community.<sup>96</sup> The "steady fires"

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<sup>94</sup> "The Citizen's Duty: A Roman Catholic Bishop on Conscription," *The Times* (London, England), May 3, 1915.

<sup>95</sup> "Our Citizen Army," *The Review of Reviews* 52 (October 1915): 292.

<sup>96</sup> "Our Citizen Army," 292.

implied a constant form of national pride—that is, patriotism—which would fill the British Army's ranks. Clearly, the assumptions at work from *The Review of Reviews* are the same as the ones rooted in the "Step Into Your Place" poster. However, the article's argument about the benefit of the Volunteer Corps lacked an explication of the source of patriotism. The authors assumed that the Great War would inspire an ideal response of the eligible male-populace, an army of all male civilians, ready to take up arms for the state.

These views of volunteerism led to the discussion of a national service mechanism, which was neither volunteerism nor conscription. Though it was called different names—such as the National Service and the National Cadet Corps—the premise was the same: The introduction of military service for military-aged men for a specific period of time in order to procure a constant supply of soldiers for the front.<sup>97</sup> Though it made sense in theory, as smaller European nations like Sweden and Switzerland had similar methods in place, it did not in practice. Thomas Hannan's December 1915 article for the *Fortnightly Review* elucidated "the controversy between voluntary service and conscription."<sup>98</sup> Though the unthinkable war led some British leaders to believe it would be the war to end all wars, Hannan observed that Germans, such as the writer Anton Fendrich, believed that investment in militarism was a necessity for posterity.<sup>99</sup> Hannan suggested that Britain's "citizen army" was achievable by forming a National Cadet Corps. The Corps would require the participation of all boys schools to ensure a constant supply of cadets

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<sup>97</sup> Thomas Hannan, "National Cadet Corps as the Basis of Our Future Army," *Fortnightly Review* 98, no. 588 (December 1915): 1138; Joseph Thorp, "Thoughts on National Service and National Unity," *The Athenaeum*, November 1916, 521.

<sup>98</sup> Hannan, "National Cadet Corps as the Basis of Our Future Army," 1138.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

for the Western Front.<sup>100</sup> Participation in the Corps would act as national service, potentially solving the debate between volunteerism and conscription.

The debate surrounding National Service in Britain stirred a significant amount of controversy amongst the social classes because at its core the debate was centered on the idea of a mass citizen army and its relationship with industrial workers, reinforcing class reservations expressed in the Grocer’s Debate. On one hand, the upper-class—the elites, industry owners, etc., who were most likely constituents to the Liberals and Conservatives—thought their employees, who were members of the working class, should enlist before their managers. Conversely, Labour and their constituents argued that any form of National Service should not be directly correlated to the industrial positions, but rather be a social equalizer. Moreover, they argued that the basis of serving the state was grounded on the principle of civic duty and should not be entangled with class relations. Thus, if the mobilization process was not tainted with class biases and if every able-bodied man stepped forward, the implementation of National Service would not only be more efficacious, but it would equitably reinforce the relationship between national duty and citizenship.

While the Grocer’s position proved the privileged point of view the social elite held towards their subordinates, journalist Joseph Thorp’s November 1916 article for the magazine *Athenaeum* was a clear expression of the Labour Party’s position, and the preferences of their constituents. In his article, Thorp encouraged Britain “to trace the outline of a system of National Service” by building on the “basis of civic patriotism.”<sup>101</sup> “The practical problem,” asserted

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Joseph Thorp, "Thoughts on National Service and National Unity," *The Athenaeum*, November 1916, 522.

Thorp, “is how to contrive that the military organization which we all agree to be necessary shall be free from the evils of German militarism.”<sup>102</sup> Thorp’s detestation of German militarism connoted a new standard against which to define “voluntary,” as in a mechanism that is *not* related to militarism. Though he did not use the word “conscription” explicitly, Thorp implied that conscription represented the detestable facets of the German war machine. However, he also suggested class tensions in the relationship between the working class and the elites, maintaining that while upper-class British mothers might find it unfavorable to see their sons fight “on equal terms” with underprivileged fellows, a divine maxim governed them all: “He that loseth his life shall save it.”<sup>103</sup>

Nevertheless, even if spiritual salvation is achieved equally, the classes would not fight on “equal terms” as one would be an officer—from the upper-class—and the other a low-ranked soldier—from the working-class. Contention surrounded the subject of national service, revealing that the definition of ideal citizenship differed amongst different classes and exposed contrasting views on how the state should interact with the British populace. Prominent industrialists and elites believed that ideal citizenship required their employees to enlist for National Service. However, Thorp oversimplified the elites’ position as it was believed that a wealthy man could stay at home and run his war supply production factory, which was considered his duty. Conversely, members of the working class, represented by their Labour Party in Westminster, believed that ideal citizenship was grounded not on social standing but rather on a citizen’s role in the machinations of a greater, national cause orchestrated fairly by the government.

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<sup>102</sup> Thorp, “Thoughts on National Service and National Unity,” 551.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 522.

### Academic Opposition Against Conscription

Further complicating the popular landscape was the Fabian Society’s opposition of conscription. Originally founded in London in 1844 by elite intellectuals and academics, the Fabian Society was the most prominent socialist institution in Britain in the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century.<sup>104</sup> The Fabians’ social reform platform centered on the idea that the state was responsible for providing sufficient social services to its individual constituents, exposing the antecedents of a British welfare state. In *The History of the Fabian Society*, Edward R. Pease articulated that Fabians believed in employing their welfare socialist principles to precipitate socio-economic reform and promote the teaching of political science. Sixteen years before the Military Service Act gained royal ascent, Bernard Shaw wrote his “Fabianism and the Empire” pamphlet explaining the rationale of replacing the reserve-based system with the small professional army supplemented by volunteers with an alternative that did not require conscription.<sup>105</sup> Shaw exposed how the debates of the sacred principle of volunteerism predated the Great War, contending that the present structure of the British Army should be replaced with a system of universal male national service without removing individuals from civilian life, making conscription unnecessary.<sup>106</sup> He believed this new system of national service would be more attractive by implementing “full civil rights, a living wage, adequate superannuation after long service, and salaries for officers on the civil scale.”<sup>107</sup> Bernard Shaw exposed the prevailing

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<sup>104</sup> Mark Bevir, *The Making of British Socialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 1-25.

<sup>105</sup> Edward R. Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1916), 235.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-138.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*.



opinion that conscription would never be needed in Britain as long as volunteerism was maintained.

### Civilian Support For Conscription

Though elite academics opposed conscription, some regular civilians expressed support for it. A woman from the Manchester area wrote a letter asserting that she was a Liberal yet agreed with the military authorities that a "small and temporary measure of compulsion" was necessary "if our end is to be attained."<sup>108</sup> She expressed conviction for "the truest Liberalism to go forward, at whatever cost in the work of freeing Europe from Prussian domination, or to place every obstacle in the way of that enterprise[.] The liberty of Englishmen will not be worth much if Germany is victorious."<sup>109</sup> While her endorsement echoed similar fears of German militarism, she seemed to champion Sir Edward Grey's heroic tune, espousing the courageous nature of war and how it was just to defend Britain and Europe from the pervasive German heathen. She believed conscription was a sensible and pragmatic course of action.

Bolstering the necessity for conscription was Alderlev Park of Sheffield. In his Letter to the Editor in *The Manchester Guardian* from Jan 8, 1916, Park offered a full-throated endorsement of conscription. He supported its implementation to conjure up a million more men, but rebuked selectivity in the drafting process: "When a fire is raging the authorities can compel every man to lend a hand to the pumps, and when all of Europe is in a blaze shall we be the only country that dares to say, 'Those who like may help to put out the fire; the rest may look on?'"<sup>110</sup> Park offers a useful fire analogy to expose how conscription would impact society. He argued

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<sup>108</sup> English Woman, "Military Service Bill: Views for and against," *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester), January 8, 1916

<sup>109</sup> Woman, "Military Service Bill: Views for and against."

<sup>110</sup> Alderlev Park, "Military Service Bill: Views for and against," *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester), January 8, 1916.

that the compulsion for men to fight leaves them no more personal agency than if their city was on fire. Park was also protested the exemptions of married men during the initial stages of the Military Service Act, which made the selection process more tiered and selective. Finally, his metaphor also connoted equity in mobilization, which was not the case in reality, as men in the working class, like himself, would be conscripted, either militarily or industrially. Clearly, draft-eligible men were not treated equally when called “to lend a hand to the pumps.”

### Contentious Exemptions

“The institution of conscription,” commented historian Margaret Levi, “significantly extends the obligations of male citizens and the reach of the state.”<sup>111</sup> The Military Service Act empowered the state at the expense of the populace, consolidated the state in the name of pragmatism, and extended more state interference into British society during the Great War. Moreover, the exemptions in the Military Service Act added to the complexity of the debate and further reinforced the extension of state influence in the public sphere. Four exemptions will be analyzed, including a brief explanation of how they were defined in the Military Service Act, followed by an analysis of the ramifications they would bring to British society.<sup>112</sup> Though the exemptions initially seemed to preserve aspects of volunteerism, they actually contributed to altering individual experiences for both men and women on the warfront and Home Front.

The first exemption enumerated in the Military Service Act of 1916 excused individuals whose job was deemed essential to “the national interest.”<sup>113</sup> The Act stipulated draft-eligible men would be exempted “on the ground that it is expedient in the national interest that he should,

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<sup>111</sup> Margaret Levi, “The Institution of Conscription,” *Social Science History* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 133.

<sup>112</sup> Military Service Act, ch. 104, 5&6 Stat. 12 (Jan. 27, 1916).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

instead of being employed in military service, be engaged in other work in which he is habitually engaged or in which he wished to be engaged or, if he is being educated or trained for any work, that he should continue to be so educated or trained.”<sup>114</sup> But what are the engagements or trainings deemed necessary for national interest during a time of war? A partial answer to this question was offered by the editors of *The Manchester Guardian*, who expressed apprehension towards the implementation of “industrial conscription” during the initial stages of the debate. On January 8, 1916, *The Manchester Guardian* article titled “Industrial Compulsion” noted that the Military Service Act of 1916 was both “ample in scope and far-reaching in effect,” which exposed an alteration in the relationship between the British state and society.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, while the Military Service Act was deemed to “have no direct bearing on the freedom of the workman,” the implications laced within this exemption proved otherwise.<sup>116</sup> Though the Act “was alleged to be purely military” it all “but establish[ed] beyond doubt the victory of German ideas over England.”<sup>117</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*’s editors—and Labour sympathetic readership—view conscription not only as an unfair burden on their social class, but also as a concession to Prussian militarism, echoing sentiments from the “Opposition for Conscription” section. Evidently, the first exemption brought more confusion than clarity to British society.

Contributing confusion regarding the first exemption was interpretation, as the certificate of exemption distributed by the Military Tribunal to single men who did not want to be drafted, “may be ‘absolute, temporary, or conditional,’ as the authority ‘thinks best suited to the case.’”<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Military Service Act, (Jan. 27, 1916).

<sup>115</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, “Industrial Compulsion,” *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester), January 8, 1916

<sup>116</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, “Industrial Compulsion.”

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> Military Service Act, (Jan. 27, 1916).

Though most applicants were not citing conscientious exemption, according to *The Manchester Guardian*, the subjectivity of the first exemption exposed that it was not really an exemption, but rather a temporary delay for the conscripting of married men. Individuals exempted under this criterion faced a tenuous position and could be drafted at a moment's notice. Clearly, there was contention surrounding the first exemption.

The second exemption was equally contentious. It exempted individuals from military service "on the grounds that serious hardship would ensue, if the man were called up for Army Service, owing to his exceptional financial or business obligations or domestic position."<sup>119</sup> Exemptions under this category implied some individuals were more valuable to the state's war effort than others and again exposed subjectivity. Writing to the editors of *The Manchester Guardian* in January 1916, Wilfried M. Leadman of Derby critiqued the government's exemption for "single men with ties."<sup>120</sup> Leadman questioned the ambiguity of exemptions for single men of status claiming "serious domestic responsibilities."<sup>121</sup> Yet, if he was "an attested married man" with a widowed mother, Leadman acknowledged the man would be applicable to claim exemption under the Derby Scheme.<sup>122</sup>

The second exemption in the Military Service Act clearly favored landed business owners and industrial managers compared to their subordinate, wage-earning employees. Though there is little information regarding inter-class relations with respects to the specific exemptions in a business setting, a report by the Bristol branch of the *Western Daily Press* on September 28,

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Wilfried M. Leadman, "Military Service Bill: Views for and against," *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester), January 8, 1916.

<sup>121</sup> Leadman, "Military Service Bill: Views for and against."

<sup>122</sup> The Courier, "Exemptions from Enlistment," *Dundee Courier* (Dundee, Scotland), January 14, 1916.

1916, a tribunal in Hull announced "that the Port Advisory Committee were revising all exemptions granted to transport workers and were refusing further exemptions to single men up to 41 and married men up to 30."<sup>123</sup> Transportation may be viewed essential to the national cause and therefore transportation workers may have qualified for a "national expediency" exemption; however, the initial exemptions point appeared to favor business owners. The burden of lost revenue was considered under the corporate exemption clause, not to protect the drivers, mechanics, or other laborers, but rather to protect the managing partners.

Conversely, an exemption perceived as just was noted by the *Western Times* in Exeter on February 20, 1917, as it gave some teachers and students a draft bye.<sup>124</sup> While this exemption seemed reasonable, it was not equitable, as a select group of individuals participating in institutions of higher learning were exempted, including colleges such as Eton, Rugby, Westminster, and Winchester, as well as the universities at Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>125</sup> Though these institutions offered OTC programs to produce quality officers for the British Army, pupils and their tutors could apply for exemptions, illuminating a clear class division in the education sector.<sup>126</sup> Because the second exemption appeared to protect the privileged elite, contention emerged over its application.

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<sup>123</sup> Western Daily Press, "Transport Workers and Exemptions," *Western Daily Press* (Bristol), September 28, 1916.

<sup>124</sup> Western Times, "Teaching Profession and Exemptions," *Western Times* (Exeter, England), February 20, 1917.

<sup>125</sup> The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, ed., "Public School: British Education," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed January 10, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-school>.

<sup>126</sup> As the war dragged on and stocks of quality OTC applicants from top-tier Oxbridge-quality institutions declined, resulting in the British Army to explore other institutions for OTC applicants, such as Jesuit schools, which were well-regarded but not as respected as the top Public Schools.

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The third exemption raised in the Military Service Act was warranted “on the ground of ill-health or infirmity.” At the beginning of the war, the War Department posted posters, such as the “Men Ineligible For Military Service URGENTLY NEEDED In All War Areas As Hut Workers For the YMCA [Young Men’s Christian Association]” (Figure 5) appeared throughout Britain, encouraging men who were deemed medically unfit for regular infantry regiments to serve in other capacities. The poster “appeals for men to staff [the YMCA’s] huts behind the front line” to provide “food, non-alcoholic drinks and entertainment for soldiers, as well as free writing paper and envelopes so they could write home.”<sup>127</sup> The YMCA provided a closer proximity between the Home Front and War Front and communication channels were taken advantage of by literate recruits and conscripts. The men employed in these huts were serving the state in a non-combatant capacity.

The health of the average soldier was also of paramount importance to the British Army. There was a significant deterioration in the fitness of the British male population, as exposed by the Boer War in South Africa, where between “forty and sixty percent of recruits for the British Army were turned down as physically unfit for service.”<sup>128</sup> Consequently, during the pre-war period, the British government called for “the establishment of a “permanent Anthropometric Survey’ to settle the question of physical deterioration once and for all.”<sup>129</sup> The survey proved effective until there was a need for more men, which shifted the state’s aim.

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<sup>127</sup> *Men Ineligible For Military Service URGENTLY NEEDED In All War Areas As Hut Workers For the YMCA*, Your Country Needs You, descriptive plaque, Imperial War Museum, London, UK. Viewed on January 5, 2019.

<sup>128</sup> Jay Winter, "Military Fitness and Civilian Health in Britain during the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 2 (April 1980): 211.

<sup>129</sup> Winter, "Military Fitness and Civilian Health in Britain during the First World War," 211.

However, as the war continued on, this exemption was eliminated as pragmatism entered the political debate. By 1917 debates brewed in Parliament and the House of Commons to discuss revisions of the medical exemptions.<sup>130</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer Bonar Law, a Conservative, according to *The Cornishman and the Cornish Telegraph* on April 5, 1917, stated, "Every fit man must be in the fighting line unless his services are required for the national needs at home."<sup>131</sup> Law added, "Casualties this year have been less than the estimate, but in the fighting in prospect the casualties will be terrible, and the strength of the fighting force must be maintained."<sup>132</sup> Military necessity outweighed the physical—or mental—health of age-eligible men. Ultimately, the medical exemption was axed, at least partially, for pragmatic purposes.

The fourth and final exemption in the Military Service Act was grounded upon "conscientious objection to the undertaking of combatant service."<sup>133</sup> According to historian Martin Ceadel, the idea of conscientious objection originated from "sects such as the Society of Friends (whose members were better known as the 'Quakers') who refused to bear arms on account of their distinctive religious scruples."<sup>134</sup> The fourth exemption was co-sponsored by three Liberal Quaker MPs: Arnold Stephenson Rowntree (York), Thomas Edmund Harvey (Leeds), and Sir John Barlow (Frome), as a legal avenue for genuine conscientious objectors to apply for an absolute exemption from combatant duties.<sup>135</sup> Three days after conscription was

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<sup>130</sup> *The Cornishman and the Cornish Telegraph*, "More Men for the Army," *The Cornishman and the Cornish Telegraph* (Cornwall, England), April 5, 1917.

<sup>131</sup> *The Cornishman and the Cornish Telegraph*, "More Men for the Army."

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Military Service Act, ch. 104, 5&6 Stat. 12 (Jan. 27, 1916).

<sup>134</sup> Martin Ceadel, "Pacifism and Conscientious Objection," British Library, last modified January 29, 2014, accessed January 10, 2019, <https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/pacifism>.

<sup>135</sup> Society of Friends, "The conscience of the nation: the work of three Quaker MPs during World War I," Quaker Strongrooms: A blog from the Library of the Society of Friends, last

introduced, the Quaker’s London Yearly Meeting issued a statement: “We regard the central conception of the [Military Service Act] as imperiling the liberty of the individual conscience—which is the main hope of human progress—and as entrenching more deeply that militarism from which we all desire the world to be freed.”<sup>136</sup> Obviously, this “progress” conveyed a different meaning than Britain’s advancement or achievement, including industrial progress, which had brought Britain into the Great War.

This clause was intended to provide men who held conscientious objections to war a legal avenue to apply for an absolute exemption from military service. However, a handful of historians, most notably Bert den Boggende, posit that the clause was poorly written by the Quaker MPs, resulting in the Military Tribunals handing out conditional or combatant-only exemptions rather than absolute exemptions.<sup>137</sup> According to Boggende, Arnold Rowntree and his fellow Liberal Quaker MPs’ amendment of the Military Service Act permitting exemption standards on the grounds of conscience “caused considerable debate” in Parliament; however,

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modified February 3, 2016, accessed February 16, 2019, <https://quakerstrongrooms.org/2016/03/02/the-conscience-of-the-nation-the-work-of-three-quaker-mps-during-world-war-i/>; Society of Friends, ed., "Matter of Conscience: Quakers and Conscription," Quaker.Org.UK, last modified 2016, accessed February 24, 2019, <http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/exhibitions/conscription>.

<sup>136</sup> Cited from “Conscription Timeline” tab in Society of Friends, "Matter of Conscience," Quaker.Org.UK.

<sup>137</sup> Rebecca Wynter discusses the relationship between the ‘conscience clause’ and the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), and the political concessions involved within the fourth exemption in her article "Conscription, Conscience and Controversy," *Quaker Studies* 21, no. 2 (2016): 219. She references Bert Den Boggende, "Reluctant Absolutist: Malcom Sparkes' Conscientious Objections to World War I," *Quaker Studies* 10, no. 1 (2005): 69. Other historians that discuss the historical importance of the Quakers in early twentieth century British politics are Thomas C. Kennedy, "The Quaker Renaissance and the Origins of the Modern British Peace Movement, 1895-1920," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1984): 265-267; and Jonathan S. Davies and Mark Freeman, "A Case for Political Philanthropy: The Rowntree Family and the Campaign for Democratic Reform," *Quaker Studies* 9, no. 1 (2005): 99-112.



“the inclusion of non-religious [objectors]” attracted the most rhetorical heat.<sup>138</sup> Boggende posits that Rowntree and his fellow Quakers intended to exempt COs from all military service, but the adopted amendment stated, “[A] certificate of exemption may be absolute, conditional, or temporary.”<sup>139</sup> This inconclusive wording lead Military Tribunals across Britain to construe the legislation differently.<sup>140</sup> Consequently, no official absolute exemptions were granted by Military Tribunals as originally intended by Rowntree and his Quaker MPs.<sup>141</sup>

Conscientious objectors irked many people in Britain who viewed them as slackers, almost not worthy of British citizenship. This belief was bluntly obvious when Reverend A.J. Waldron of Brixton lambasted “that civilisation [sic.] required sacrifices from its citizens, and those who on alleged conscientious grounds refused to take part in the war ought to leave the country.”<sup>142</sup> Reverend A.J. Waldron further emasculated men by offering a biting critique of conscientious objection: “Men who do not defend the women and children were not human, but were either cowards, fools, or criminals.”<sup>143</sup> Though this popular view of men who conscientiously objected to becoming wartime combatants reinforced the correlation between citizenship and military service, the exemption was implemented within the Military Service Act.

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<sup>138</sup> Bert Den Boggende, "Reluctant Absolutist: Malcom Sparkes' Conscientious Objections to World War I," *Quaker Studies* 10, no. 1 (2005): 69.

<sup>139</sup> Boggende, "Reluctant Absolutist," 69.

<sup>140</sup> Boggende, "Reluctant Absolutist," 69. This point by Boggende was first exposed to me in Wynter's article "Conscription, Conscience and Controversy," 219, as she cited him.

<sup>141</sup> Boggende, "Reluctant Absolutist," 69; Cyril Pearce, ed., "Pearce Register," *Lives of the First World War*, last modified 2015, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://search.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/search/world-records/conscientious-objectors-register-1914-1918>.

<sup>142</sup> The Western Times, "Cowards, Fools, or Criminals," *The Western Times* (Exeter, England), April 4, 1916.

<sup>143</sup> The Western Times, "Cowards, Fools, or Criminals."

When the Great War erupted and conscription was introduced in 1916, military service tribunals hounded “conchies,” the derogatory name given to conscientious objectors.<sup>144</sup> “This led to tribunal proceedings,” historian Adrian Gregory summarized, “were a strange mixture of *viva voce* in scriptural knowledge and the Spanish Inquisition, with the significant difference that a genuine heresiarch was likely to be spared.”<sup>145</sup> In total, there were between 14,000 and 16,000 conscientious objectors who felt it was their duty as British citizens not to fight for the state. Although 6,000 conscientious objectors were eventually granted conditional, combatant-only exemptions and served non-combatant roles of “national importance under a new Home Office scheme,” 985 absolutist objectors stood firm and “held out against any type of alternative service; yet they attracted disproportionate public attention.”<sup>146</sup> The fourth exemption, while arguably the most liberal of the four, was the most contentious of all.<sup>147</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The Great War redefined what it meant to be a British citizen by correlating ideal citizenship with dedication to military service and restructured the state’s relationship with the polity by introducing conscription. Though conscription was considered a temporary expediency, it manifested from a highly contingent political environment that resulted in a massive transformation in the construction of British society and a shift in how individuals interacted with the state. When the Military Service Act passed and gained royal ascent on January 27, 1916, the relationship between state and society was reconfigured. Nobody articulated this massive remodeling of the state’s relationship with society better than John Stevenson, a British

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<sup>144</sup> Ceadel, “Pacifism and Conscientious Objection,” British Library.

<sup>145</sup> Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 155.

<sup>146</sup> Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 155.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

social historian: “With the introduction of conscription the state had undoubtedly crossed a new threshold in its relationship with ordinary citizens. No less significant, however, was the willing acceptance of the majority opinion that conscription was the appropriate means to fill the ranks of the armed forces, once the initial wave of patriotic enthusiasm was past.”<sup>148</sup>

The British state fabricated an emotional community defined by patriotism and an individual’s duty to the state. “The working-out of an economy of sacrifice,” historian Adrian Gregory asserted, “was at the heart of the [Great War].”<sup>149</sup> This “economy of sacrifice” pulled at the core of the conscription debate in Britain. Though the sacrifice of the volunteers was never ignored, the introduction of conscription raised the stakes of sacrifice as the “sacred principle” of volunteerism was dismantled. While there were alternatives to the volunteerism-conscription dichotomy, such as the Volunteering Training Corps, the National Cadet Corps, and National Service, those alternatives were buried under the enormity of need at the Western Front, so conscription was introduced and enacted by the Military Service Act of 1916. The heated political and popular debates illuminated how the ideals of British citizenship and the state’s relationship with society were redefined, and how the emotional community at the national level differed from the emotional community at the local level. Specifically, the continuous friction between personal and institutional relationships affected an individual’s experiences with the state during the war. This incongruence of emotional consensus showed how in Britain, an emotional community did not constitute a group of people associated by shared emotions, but rather varying emotions.

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<sup>148</sup> Stevenson, *British Society 1914-45*, 64.

<sup>149</sup> Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 111.

*"I Deny Your Authority to Try My Conscience:"  
Conscription and Conscientious Objectors in Britain during the Great War*

Though the introduction of conscription with the passage of the Military Service Act of 1916 resulted in a shift in the way the British nation was imagined, this event was not a deliberately conscious political process. Rather, as this chapter shows and wants to emphasize, the debate on conscription emerged in a highly contingent manner. The transition in how the British nation was imagined happened not out of the conscious decisions of MPs but rather as a result of a convergence of unforeseen factors, such as the Irish non-involvement, some Conservatives admiring the military cohesion of Germany, some Liberals worrying about manpower shortages, and Labour supporting conscription for social levelling. In a polarized debate that was dominated by competing voices, conflicting emotional communities and interests, it cohered into a major, yet unexpected, transformation of British society. The combined, but unexpected result was a major shift. Though conscription was implemented as a temporary expediency, it marked a permanent change in British society, and the relationship an individual had with the state.

## **2. “I Am Prepared to Suffer For My...Convictions:” Conscientious Objectors’ Case Studies**

It’s very easy to sit in Parliament and say ‘Let’s go to war,’” Martyn Gaudie, a conscientious objector of the Second World War, reflected on January 8, 1991, “but they’re not the fellows who are going to kill people.”<sup>150</sup> Martyn, who followed in the footsteps of his father, Norman Gaudie (Figure 6), a conscientious objector during the Great War (1914-1918), pointedly illuminated the tension between the parliamentary rhetoric on military mobilization and the realities soldiers faced on the battlefield. While MPs in Westminster made legislative decisions regarding going to war, volunteer and later conscript soldiers were the individuals tasked “to stick our bayonets in the bellies of great fat, ugly, greasy Germans,” as David Habershon Hamilton Belloch (Figure 7), another Great War conscientious objector, sarcastically recollected in his 1978 unpublished memoir.<sup>151</sup> Not every military-aged man in Britain wanted to take up arms for the state and end another person’s life. There was clear push back against the propagated emotional community of Britain, where the underlying assumptions of the imagined community was defined by a united populace bonded by patriotism. This tension between parliamentary decision making and the realities of war was mediated by a tenuous statute in the Military Service Act of 1916: The fourth exemption, known as the “conscience clause,” permitted individual exemptions from combatant military service, and therefore conscription, on

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<sup>150</sup> Chris Holt, "Prepared to Die...But Not to Kill," *Echoes* (London), January 8, 1991. Discovered amongst Norman Gaudie’s files at the Liddle Personal Collection at the University of Leeds. Box code: CO/FAU Gaudie, N. CO 038 Box 1-2, Files 1-2.

<sup>151</sup> David Habershon Hamilton Belloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?," June 11, 1978, CO 009 LIDDLE/WW1/C0/009, Belloch, D.H.H., Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds. Belloch is pronounced as “Bulloch” [As it was misspelt on a file in the Liddle Collection. I assume it is pronounced as Bew-Lock, which is my own phonetic pronunciation].

conscientious grounds.<sup>152</sup> It was in this legislative context where men such as Blelloch and Gaudie sought absolute exemption from military service.

Conscientious objectors’ experiences during the Great War remain an understudied topic within British historiography. As mentioned previously, Lois Bibbings’ study *Telling Tales* is the only comprehensive study of conscientious objectors in Britain during the Great War. Her six main chapters depict different ways in which conscientious objectors were portrayed—1) social rejects, 2) cowards, 3) deviants, 4) degenerates, 5) conscientious men, and 6) patriots and heroes—and offers a stable analytical platform for further analysis. This chapter utilizes Bibbings’ platform in order to examine the individual case studies of two conscientious objectors: David Blelloch and Norman Gaudie.

The following analysis demonstrates how Blelloch’s and Gaudie’s case studies prove that Bibbings’ portrayals 1-2 and 5-6 are fluid rather than rigid categories.<sup>153</sup> A conscientious objector’s war experience was not defined by a singular emotional community but rather by multiple emotional communities that often overlapped and conflicted with each other. It is within this emotional context that Blelloch and Gaudie’s stories are both typical and atypical of British conscientious objectors during the Great War. On one hand, Blelloch’s and Gaudie’s individual experiences reflected those of other conscientious objectors, as they both applied for an absolute exemption and then immediately appealed when granted a conditional, combatant-only exemption, a process permitted by the Military Service Act. However, their respective medical examinations raised questions about whether Blelloch’s privileged social environment or medical issues explained why he received a *de facto* absolute medical exemption while Gaudie did not.

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<sup>152</sup> Bibbings, *Telling Tales about Men*, 28.

<sup>153</sup> Bibbings’ portrayals 3-4, though interesting, are not applicable to Blelloch’s or Gaudie’s case study, explaining why they will not be discussed in this chapter.

Yet regardless of the greater societal perceptions of manhood, citizenship, and military service, neither Blelloch nor Gaudie were ostracized by their local social communities, which were primarily emotional communities. Their stories shed light on conscription’s impact on individuals and British society during the Great War, and how a conscientious objector’s social environment affected their wartime experience. Moreover, their case studies expose the varying degrees to which the emotions love and pride shaped a conscientious objector’s experience. Their narratives expose the personal and conflicting emotions surrounding familial, communal, and national love. Ultimately, the combination of David Blelloch’s and Norman Gaudie’s case studies disprove the national myth fabricated by the British state that all male citizens sought to serve the idealized imagined community within the contingent context of conscription, thus baiting the question: “What does it mean to be British?”

### **Political and Religious Complexities**

Though their local context and access to—or lack of—privilege and social connections influenced their disparate experiences with the conscience clause of the Military Service Act, David Blelloch’s and Norman Gaudie’s unique narratives combat the assumptions of military service in Britain during the Great War on political and religious grounds respectively. Though it is tempting to fasten these descriptive labels on to Blelloch and Gaudie, this chapter acknowledges that the “political” and “religious” labels oversimplify their narratives, as they both are more complicated than the simple dichotomy suggests. Conscientious objectors, including Blelloch and Gaudie, challenge the dominant, masculine narrative of the imagined nation of Britain, which was the image of the heroic man who grabbed the banner of patriotism and marched it to battle to serve the state in war. As with other conscientious objectors, David

Blelloch and Norman Gaudie combatted this idea and believed it was their duty to serve the nation by *not* fighting and killing the enemy.

## **Historical Context on Conscientious Objectors**

### Composition of Conscientious Objectors in Britain

Between 1916 and 1918, 14,000 to 16,000 men applied for exemptions on conscientious grounds in Great Britain.<sup>154</sup> Among the several objections, there were two predominant grounds upon which individuals based their cases: religious objection (51%) and political objection (46%) (Chart 1). Therefore, Blelloch—a political objector—and Gaudie—a religious objector—offer complementary case studies through which the impact of the Military Service Act can be examined within the greater context of British society during the Great War.

Conscientious objectors warrant more historical scrutiny as they were often victims of societal emasculation. As Bibbings explained, conscientious objectors in Britain were met with “puzzlement, incomprehension, suspicion, or derision, at worst by hatred, ill-treatment, or violence” and were often ostracized and rejected by “family, friends, and mainstream society.”<sup>155</sup> They were considered not manly enough at a time of war and were shamed for not aligning with how the British nation was imagined by the state. Conscientious objectors were not only objecting to war but also the concept of fighting for their nation, “which was both a key part of the national identity and the basis of the country’s imperial greatness.”<sup>156</sup> It is in this context that

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<sup>154</sup> Holly Wallis, "WW1: The conscientious objectors who refused to fight," BBC, last modified May 15, 2014, accessed February 7, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-27404266>; Pearce, "Pearce Register," *Lives of the First World War*.

<sup>155</sup> Bibbings, *Telling Tales about Men*, 60.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*



Blelloch’s and Gaudie’s case studies reveal alternative narratives of masculinity, as neither of them was ostracized by their local communities and groups of supporters.

As Nicoletta Gullace articulated in her study *The Blood of Our Sons*, “[t]he gendered discourse of war justification and the notion of patriotic masculinity that it validated undermined public faith in the power of the individual.”<sup>157</sup> Individual judgments were questioned by the greater imagined community of Britain, as the unwillingness to volunteer facilitated the passage of the Military Service Act. A loss of trust emerged “in the idea of a moral code whose dictates lay outside the interests of the war.”<sup>158</sup> Thus, in this context Blelloch’s and Gaudie’s experiences represented facets of the greater shift in British attitudes towards what constituted citizenship.

In order to process legal appeals for conscientious exemptions, the British government organized tribunals to interpret the Military Service Act. Regardless of the verdict the Tribunal gave to a conscientious applicant, “the usual response to conscription was not passive acceptance, but an appeal” if an *absolute* exemption was not granted.<sup>159</sup> Official documentation from these tribunals are scant because the majority of the official Tribunal files were deliberately burned in the 1920s, possibly in an attempt to shove this chapter of British war history under the carpet of memory.<sup>160</sup>

### **David Habershon Hamilton Blelloch**

David Blelloch opposed conscription on political grounds. Through a chronological analysis, his narrative exposes the germination of his quasi-socialist ideology influenced by prominent members of the Fabian Society, which shaped his experience with the Military

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<sup>157</sup> Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of Our Sons: Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave, 2002), 109.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>159</sup> Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 102.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

Service Act. Although his personal experience differed from other conscientious objectors in that he was not ostracized by his community and was granted a *conditional* exemption from conscription, his story combatted the preconceived notions surrounding citizenship and military service. Blelloch's narrative conflicted with the propagated themes of the imagined community of Britain. Moreover, his familial and academic emotional community and his access to privilege exposed an inherent tension between personal and institutional relationships. David Blelloch's case study evidences how conscription redefined the characterization of the ideal British citizen and altered the state's relationship with society.

### Political Awakening (1896-1914)

David Blelloch was born on January 1, 1896 in the northern, outer London borough of New Southgate, Middlesex.<sup>161</sup> He grew up in a privileged social environment, as his parents enrolled him in a reputable boarding school in York after relocating to the Liverpool suburbs from the outskirts of London.<sup>162</sup> In the beginning of his 1978 memoir, Blelloch reflected on how Robert Blatchford, famed journalist, socialist advocate, and founder of the Manchester chapter of the Fabian Society, influenced his political maturation as an adolescent.<sup>163</sup> Blatchford's ideological imprint shaped Blelloch's mindset for social justice and reform, ideas that were gaining traction with the rise of the Labour movement but had taken root earlier at the end of the nineteenth century within the Fabian Society. As a result, Blelloch's Fabian-inspired political

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<sup>161</sup> David Habershon Hamilton Blelloch, interview by Peter Liddle, Turnbridge, Kent, England, December 1978. Accessed from CO 009 LIDDLE/WW1/C0/009, Blelloch D.H.H., Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>162</sup> Blelloch, interview.

<sup>163</sup> John W. Osborne, "Robert Blatchford: Neglected Socialist," *Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries* LVIII (1997): 62-65.

awakening shaped his view on war when he attended a “minor ‘public school’” at Exeter and enrolled in the Officer Training Program (OTC).<sup>164</sup>

While continuing to develop his own political leanings, Blelloch was awarded a scholarship to St. John’s College at the University of Oxford.<sup>165</sup> In his memoir, Blelloch commented that he won admission and the scholarship due to his essay, which argued that the only justifiable war was civil war, a point that the Oxford admission tutors deemed “very original.”<sup>166</sup> Unfortunately, upon his acceptance, Blelloch contracted typhoid. Hospitalized for eleven weeks he emerged in Spring 1914 weighing just six stone (approximately 84 lbs). Unfit to return to Oxford, Blelloch spent a “delightful convalescence with [his] family in Jamaica,” as that was where his parents moved for his father’s position in the merchant marine.<sup>167</sup> Though it is plausible that Blelloch witnessed a first-hand account of Britain’s colonial policies, there is no way of *fully* knowing if his critical views towards imperialism were hardened or dampened by his time in Jamaica because it is not mentioned in his memoir.

Following a three-month convalescence Blelloch returned to Oxford days before the “Guns of August” erupted on August 4, 1914 when Britain would enter the Great War after Germany violated Belgium neutrality.<sup>168</sup> Slated to start his first term at St. John’s, Blelloch expressed his desire to apply for a commission as a “Colonel in command of the Exeter barracks” with the aim to command a regiment on the Western Front.<sup>169</sup> Though he disagreed in

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<sup>164</sup> Blelloch, interview.

<sup>165</sup> Blelloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 2.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. Blelloch’s entrance exam essay was not included in the file at the University of Leeds.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid. 3., Barbara Wertheim Tuchman, *The Guns of August* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990), Title Page.

<sup>169</sup> Blelloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 2.

principle with the logic of imperialism and expressed in his memoir “total skepticism” towards war propaganda because “[t]he idea that imperialist nations like France and Great Britain, to say nothing of Tsarist Russia, were fighting to defend the rights of small nations was too ludicrous to be taken seriously,” Blelloch felt a sense of duty to serve his country and possibly some peer pressure.<sup>170</sup> “If I felt it was my duty,” remembered Blelloch, “that was what I ought to do.”<sup>171</sup>

However, Blelloch’s grandmother did not want her grandson to enlist and insisted that he see their family doctor.<sup>172</sup> This episode exhibited how love for one’s family conflicted with love for one’s country. The love Blelloch’s grandmother had for him superseded the love Blelloch had for his nation. Consequently, the doctor’s prognosis torpedoed Blelloch’s hopes to gain a commission: “He examined me, and decided that I was still far from sufficiently recovered from his typhoid to think of going into the army,” Blelloch recollected in his memoir.<sup>173</sup> Though almost six months had passed since he contracted typhoid, he was denied his commission.

This particular episode offers significant insight to his case study, as it raises questions about how his privileged social environment and familial emotional community affected Blelloch’s initial experience during the Great War. During an interview in 1978 with Blelloch at the veteran’s residence in Kent, historian Peter Liddle asked, “Now your family doctor pronounced you quite unfit to contemplate anything so quickly involving active military service?” to which Blelloch responded, “Yes...I was sitting in a chair in his surgery. He said stand up. I stood up. He felt my pulse and immediately said, no, you certainly are not fit to join

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

the Army.”<sup>174</sup> In retrospect it is difficult to recall an emotional response. Yet, it is likely he felt dejected by the prognosis while his grandmother was elated. Belloch’s grandmother’s love and fear for her grandson’s mortality interfered with his efforts to volunteer. Thus, his agency was compromised by his family before it was eroded by the state.

“Of course...I...refuse to be conscribed” (1914-1916)

Two years later, while attending St. John’s College, Belloch opposed the state mandate imposed by the Military Service Act of 1916. His opposition towards conscription was rooted in his socialist belief in volunteerism, accentuating his desire to serve his country on his own volition. The socialist principles espoused by the Fabian Society supported the ideas of a reform-minded state that provides services to its citizens. While at St. John’s, Belloch’s ideas were buffered by other “professed socialists.”<sup>175</sup> Yet, as the war gained steam, nationalistic fusillades reverberated around the press, such as Bernard Shaw’s gory statement from the *New Statesmen*: “If the Germans win the war they will skin us alive, and if we win we shall skin them alive.”<sup>176</sup> “Not a very positive pro-war attitude!” exclaimed Belloch in his memoir.<sup>177</sup> The overtly brutish language hurled at the Germans by the British press was not appealing to 20 year-old idealist, who was developing socialist ideas at Oxford and yearning to serve on his own terms. The Home Front at St. John’s College at Oxford and the battlefield seemed to be distant entities. Yet, that all changed on January 27, 1916 with the enactment of the Military Service Act.

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<sup>174</sup> David Habershon Hamilton Belloch, interview by Peter Liddle, Turnbridge, Kent, England, December 1978.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

“Of course, in common with a number of my socialist friends, I...refuse to be conscribed,” asserted Blelloch, “at no matter what cost to myself.”<sup>178</sup> This point was momentous. One year earlier, Blelloch sought to enlist as a commissioned Colonel of the Exeter barracks and serve on the Western Front. However, being told to serve by the British government raised an important distinction between volunteerism and conscription. When he declared his intention to enlist as an officer, Blelloch’s choice possessed personal *agency*. He wanted to serve, but by his own will. Even in his memoir, he reflected, “(In a way I almost hoped to be shot—that would at least prove that I was no coward) [parentheses original],” bolstering his resistance of conscription.<sup>179</sup> Not to appear cowardly *mattered* to Blelloch, highlighting his desire to be seen as *manly*.

Similarly, the Suffragettes and Suffragists fought to redefine service for women, as aspiring citizens. They even sought leverage by proclaiming “nationalistic women to be better citizens” than conscientious objectors.<sup>180</sup> As British women fought for the right to vote and to gain full rights as citizens, they grasped the mantle of patriotism and bought into the emotional community cultivated by the state in an effort to demonstrate that they were more worthy to be citizens than men who refused to fight for the state. Nonetheless, Blelloch’s antagonism towards conscription combatted the assumption that British men would want to fight for the state, even when legally compelled to do so.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Gullace, *The Blood of Our Sons*, 129.

<sup>181</sup> Blelloch was vulnerable to conscription as he was a bachelor within the 18-41 age bracket, the initial requirements the Military Service Act stipulated.

“Fabian Socialism is...an interpretation of the spirit of the times” (1844-1914)

No institution influenced David Blelloch’s intellectual and war experience more than the Fabian Society. Differentiating their ideology from Marxism, the Fabians enshrined freedom of thought as a core value of their Society.<sup>182</sup> Arguing that no other form of Socialism could gain traction in Britain, Pease explained how Fabians aimed to incorporate their defining principles of British Socialism—the advancement of values of democratic socialism employing gradualist and reformist means—within “the industrial and political environment of England.”<sup>183</sup> “The Fabians regarded Socialism as a principle already in part embodied in the constitution of society,” Pease added.<sup>184</sup> In layman’s terms, what Pease meant was that socialism was already woven into the social fabric of British society. Fabians like Pease distanced their socialist ideology from the Marxist revolutionary ideology, emphasizing rather the Society’s aim to advocate domestic socio-economic reform without a full reorganization of society.<sup>185</sup>

While Fabians espoused their socialist ideals to be an actual and unique strand of British Socialism, Stephen J. O’Neil argued that Fabian ideology was “more reformist than socialist in either a Marxist or Utopian sense.”<sup>186</sup> This insight may clarify some interpretive confusion, as the Fabians were elite intellectuals who advocated for liberal social reform rather than revolution. While it was true that the Fabian Society gave rise to the Labour movement and

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<sup>182</sup> Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society*, 237.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 240; George Thomson, "The Tindemans Report and the European Future" (contribution to the "European Movement International" symposium conducted at The European Movement, Brussels, Belgium, March 1, 1917).

<sup>184</sup> Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society*, 240-241.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

<sup>186</sup> Stephen J. O’Neil, "The Origins and Development of the Fabian Society, 1884-1900" (PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 1986), 3, accessed February 23, 2019, [http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss/2491](http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/2491).

painted itself as an advocacy organization looking out for working-class interests, it was a society that consisted of educated members from both middle and upper-classes. Succumbing to mounting pressure from the press and popular opinion, the Fabians were officially forced to abdicate their advocacy for working-class issues, as the organization was predisposed to advancing an elite agenda in an academic and social setting.<sup>187</sup>

Nevertheless, the Fabian Society’s contribution to British education was arguably their most enduring legacy. In order to spread the Fabian ideology in terms of political science, Sidney Webb, a prominent Fabian, co-founded the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), which opened its doors in 1895.<sup>188</sup> Through this educational context, Blleloch was influenced by Fabians while at Oxford. The study of political science was imperative in order to understand the economy’s effect “on the nature and direction on men’s lives,” noted Bernard Shaw.<sup>189</sup> A prominent Fabian and author of the “Fabian Manifesto,” Shaw freely expressed his opinions, including the anti-German sentiments in the *Manchester Guardian*, where he further asserted, ““The moral of it all is that what the British Empire wants most urgently in its government is not Conservatism, not Liberalism, not Imperialism, but brains and political science.”<sup>190</sup> Consequently, LSE was founded and other universities in Britain, most notably Oxford University, became the bastions of Fabianism by the turn of the century.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 5-25; 204.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid; The London School of Economics and Political Science, ed., "Our History," LES.AC.UK, accessed March 2, 2019, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/about-lse/our-history>.

<sup>189</sup> O'Neil, "The Origins and Development of the Fabian Society, 1884-1900," 204; Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society*, 236.

<sup>190</sup> O'Neil, "The Origins and Development of the Fabian Society, 1884-1900," 116; Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society*, 236.

<sup>191</sup> O'Neil, "The Origins and Development of the Fabian Society, 1884-1900," 204.



During the turn of the century, though, Fabian influence in Britain began to dissipate. By 1900 the Fabian Society was "closed out of the London Radical Clubs."<sup>192</sup> Coupled by the rise of the Labour Party, which prevented the Fabians in contributing to the Labour platform, and the splintering of bickering Fabian executives over the topic of imperialism, the last strongholds of the Society were in University Student Unions, such as the one at St. John's, in which Professor Sidney Ball, the Head Tutor, and Blelloch were active members.<sup>193</sup>

#### Oxford Fabian Society and Professor Sidney Ball (October 1914 - March 1916)

It was in this historical context that David Blelloch attended St. John's at the outbreak of the Great War and conscientiously opposed the Military Service Act in 1916 on political grounds. Benefitting from professorial testimonials and his privileged status as a student, Blelloch ultimately benefited from an affluent and elite social environment to attain a conditional exemption from combatant-only duties. After the introduction of the Military Service Act, two national bodies in Britain were created to oppose conscription: The Fellowship of Reconciliation and the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF).<sup>194</sup> The Fellowship of Reconciliation focused on advocacy for "the more religiously, or 'pacifistically,' inclined," so Blelloch opted to join the Oxford chapter for the more politically-minded, the NCF. As a student advocator he interviewed conscientious objectors. Among the more paradoxical objectors were "Christadelphians, whose form of Christianity obliged them to obey every injunction found in the Bible; but the Bible said both 'thou shalt not kill' and 'obey the powers at be.'"<sup>195</sup> Though Blelloch considered the Christadelphians' objection to be paradoxical, he was less willing to acknowledge his own

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 204-220.

<sup>194</sup> Blelloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 2.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

inherent contradiction: That he conscientiously objected to conscription on political grounds, yet he was willing to enlist voluntarily.<sup>196</sup>

While enrolled at St. John's College, Blelloch took Classics and Philosophy, taught by Senior Tutor and Lecturer Sidney Ball, who was one of the most ardent Liberals in British academia and a prominent member of the Oxford chapter of the Fabian Society in the Oxford University's union.<sup>197</sup> Professor Ball was a fearless democrat in his political and social beliefs, which shaped his worldview, "for no type of humanity was uninteresting to him, and nobody's hopes or troubles left him unmoved."<sup>198</sup> It was in this context that Professor Sidney Ball entered David Blelloch's narrative, to help his pupil apply for an absolute exemption on socialist grounds on the basis of conscience. An individual's convictions were worth defending in Professor Ball's mind.

#### A Student's Conscience (March 1916)

Whether he considered himself a conscientious objector or not, Blelloch opposed conscription, and applied for an absolute exemption from military service, as permitted by the conscience clause of the Military Service Act. During his application process, two professors, Sidney Ball and Maurice Redcott, wrote witness epistolary testimonials to the Oxford Tribunal, endorsing their pupil's clarity of conscience and socialist convictions. These faculty testimonial letters attested to Blelloch's personal faith as a conscientious objector and demonstrated that he was not universally ostracized for his beliefs, but rather endorsed for his conviction and character.

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> "Obituary: Sidney Ball," *The Common Cause* (London), May 31, 1918.

<sup>198</sup> "Obituary: Sidney Ball."

*“I Deny Your Authority to Try My Conscience:”  
Conscription and Conscientious Objectors in Britain during the Great War*

In his testimonial letter to the presiding Oxford tribunal on March 3, 1916, Professor Ball wrote, “I beg to express my belief that Mr. Blleloch’s conscientious objections are a part of his socialist convictions which I believe he sincerely holds.”<sup>199</sup> Reinforcing this claim, Maurice B. Recott, M.A. of St. John’s College testified, “Mr. D.H. Blleloch’s views on war are well known to me as a valid judgement argument in which he have participated, and though I am in strong disagreement with them, I believe that they are genuinely held and that his...arise from a genuine conscientious objection.”<sup>200</sup> Professor Redcott’s admission of disagreement further supports a wider acceptance by the academic community of the idea that freedom of conscience was a value worth defending, regardless of the stakes of war. While other students were heading off to the Western Front, Blleloch and his tutors professors shared a passion for and an emotional commitment to Liberalism and social reform. Aided by the strength of these testimonies, David Blleloch received a conditional exemption from combatant service three days later, on March 6, 1916, as stipulated by the Military Service Act.

“Sanctity Of Human Life?” (January 27<sup>th</sup> 1916 - March 6, 1916)

Though exempted from combatant service, the terms were conditional, as Blleloch was considered eligible for non-combatant duties of national importance. As a result, he appealed for an absolute exemption from any wartime service. Blleloch recalled the events of his Appeal Tribunal in his memoir, noting that his tutor joined him, sat next to him and whispered, “I have come to witness to your character to any extent, if required.”<sup>201</sup> Though he did not mention

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<sup>199</sup> Sidney Ball to Oxford Tribunal, March 3, 1916, Blleloch, D.H.H. CO 009

LIDDLE/WW1/C0/009, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>200</sup> Maurice B. Redcott to Oxford Tribunal, March 1916, Blleloch, D.H.H. CO 009

LIDDLE/WW1/C0/009, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>201</sup> Blleloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 4.

Professor Ball by name in his 1978 memoir, Blelloch’s *singular* reference to “my college tutor” at his appeal hearing suggests that there was *one* tutor he vividly remembered, which this chapter postulates was Professor Ball.<sup>202</sup> Corroborating this supportive sentiment was the fact that the most passionate epistolary defense of conscience was written by Professor Ball.

However, even with Professor Ball’s support, Blelloch’s appeal was rejected.<sup>203</sup> Though Blelloch was disappointed, the verdict of his appeal was consistent with every other conscientious objector, as no applicant would ever receive an absolute exemption from the Appeal Tribunal on the basis of conscience.<sup>204</sup> Blelloch justified his absolute exemption on the basis of sanctity of human life, a phrase he later regretted using because he did not hold that conviction. This defense argument, however, may have been more broadly used by conscientious objectors. For instance, Edwin Rodway, a contemporary, “Free-Thinker” conscientious objector, grounded his case on the sacredness of human life.<sup>205</sup> He applied, appealed and “appeared before five civil tribunals to substantiate [his] claim to absolute exemption as provided by [the] Act of Parliament,” yet the military courts thought otherwise and he was conscripted.<sup>206</sup> Following five rejections, his case was sent to a military court, where he again argued his own defense during the court martial. Rodway’s testimony and petition were rejected again, and he was immediately conscripted. His fate remains unknown.

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<sup>202</sup> Blelloch, “What Did I Do in the Great,” 4.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>204</sup> The claim that there were no absolute conscientious objections granted by the military tribunals between 1916 and 1918 is corroborated from data from Pearce, ed., “Pearce Register,” *Lives of the First World War*.

<sup>205</sup> Edwin Rodway in Cyril Pearce, ed., “Pearce Register,” *Lives of the First World War*.

<sup>206</sup> Edwin Rodway, Testimony, 1916, Doc 13434 Box No. 05/56/1, E. Rodway, Imperial War Museum, London.

Rodway opened his defense at his court martial contending, “I deny your authority to try my conscience.”<sup>207</sup> As an Internationalist and Believer in the Doctrine of Human Brotherhood, he resisted “ in any capacity whatever for the furtherance of War with its chairs of Hate and Violence and their concomitants, Passion, Destructions, and World-wide slaughter of Human Life which I regard as sacred.”<sup>208</sup> Belloch used the same argument to justify his exemption, yet added the phrase “sanctity of human life,” which he regretted and decades later attempted to restate what he meant:

I can only suppose that what I was meaning to say was that, until the war broke out, the socialist movement as a whole was pledged to oppose any international war, and to take no part in one; and that I, at least, felt bound to honour that pledge. But that, alas, was not what I said. I can only hope that nobody who knew what I had given as a reason for refusing to do military service will have thought that I was deliberately trying to pretend to have a ‘conscientious’ objection that I notoriously didn’t have at all.<sup>209</sup>

Clearly, Belloch was concerned about perception and contradicted himself. When asked by Peter Liddle if he had “in fact somewhat fraudulently [given himself] a double weapon,” Belloch replied, “Not consciously fraudulently. What I really meant was that no socialist should believe in war and that is more or less equivalent to believing in the sanctity of human life. Believing that one shouldn’t go and kill or mutilate other people for nationalistic causes.”<sup>210</sup> Even in 1978, Belloch rationalized his conscientious objection on the basis of the predominant socialist narrative that socialists should oppose war, so they do not fight against each other.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Rodway, Testimony.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Belloch, interview.

<sup>211</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, trans. Samuel Moore, Stanford Socialist Series (London, 1884; repr., Cambridge: C.H. Carr, Harvard University, 1906), 55.

This ideological quandary is centered around Belloch's rationale of socialism. He recollected that "the socialist movement as a whole was pledged to oppose any international war."<sup>212</sup> On the other hand, the premise that socialists should oppose war to not fight other socialists was borne out of the tradition of European Socialists, such as the Internationalists, who argued that members of the working-class should avoid war so as to not fight their fellow workers. Once the Great War erupted in 1914, proponents of working-class socialism initially advocated anti-war propositions. Belloch did not believe that human life was sacred per se, but rather philosophically, as an anti-imperialist and socialist, that man should not fight man especially in the name of nationalism. This distinction is paramount as the language Belloch used was more in tune with the International Socialists rather than the Fabian Society's. While Belloch embodied an inherent contradiction, which reinforced his culpability as an unreliable narrator, critics should acknowledge his conflation of these two socialist beliefs might have been genuine at the time. Nevertheless, Belloch and Rodway demonstrated different positions for opposing conscription under the Military Service Act on the basis of the sanctity of human life.

#### Arrest for Failure to Attest (March-April 1916)

After his appeal for absolute exemption failed, Belloch refused to comply with the call to non-combatant duty, resulting in his arrest at St. John's in April 1916 along with an Oxford graduate student named Victor Murray, who was a "Primitive Methodist."<sup>213</sup> When they refused to sign their military attestation forms at the Oxford police station, they were locked up in a detention cell for a night.<sup>214</sup> The following day they were taken to Cowley Barracks for their

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<sup>212</sup> Belloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War." 4-5.

<sup>213</sup> Belloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 4.

<sup>214</sup> Karyn Burnham, *The Courage of Cowards: The Untold Stories of First World War Conscientious Objectors* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2014), 42; Belloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 4.

penultimate medical examination. Their refusal reinforced the conflict between those who defied conscription on moral, religious, or political grounds, and the State’s preconceived expectation that men would want to serve the state.

“[T]he Army Had No Further Use For Me” (May 1916)

David Blelloch’s army medical exam in early May 1916 was consequential because he was given a *de facto* absolute exemption, placed in such a low medical category that the British Army had no need to conscript him. After their release from the Oxford jail, Blelloch and Murray were sent to Cowley Barracks, just outside Oxford, for their army medical.<sup>215</sup> Recalling their medical exams, Blelloch explained that “Victor was totally unfit and immediately released,” while he recollected, “[I] wasn’t found totally unfit, but was placed in a medical category so low that I was told the army had no further use for me, and I...could go [back to my studies at St. John’s].”<sup>216</sup> Though not striking at first glance, this defining moment in Blelloch’s case study was historically significant because it raises questions whether or not his privileged social environment played a part in the outcome. In his memoir, Blelloch offered two explanations why he was medically exempted: “I can’t help thinking they were being kind to me. I’m sure I had completely recovered from my typhoid, and the only medical defect I was aware of was a pair of “hammer” toes. People can be very kind, especially to an innocent-looking curly-haired youth of 20 but appearing to be about 16!”<sup>217</sup>

This episode remains ambiguous because Blelloch’s medical records were lost or destroyed with the documents of countless others, and there is no known corroborative documentation on his specific case. Blelloch offered two possible reasons for his medical

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<sup>215</sup> Blelloch, “What Did I Do in the Great War?”, 4-5.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 5.

disqualification in his 1978 memoir: his youthfulness or his hammertoes. While it was implausible that his youthful appearance dissuaded the examining physician (Figure 7) because the British Army had turned a blind eye allowing boys younger than 18 years old to lie about their age to enlist, it was more plausible that his "hammertoe," as he said in his 1978 memoir, or his "flat feet," as he said in his 1978 interview provided medical cause for his de facto medical exemption.<sup>218</sup> While his inconsistency reinforces his unreliability as a narrator, the lack of documentation and medical disqualification prerequisites suggest that neither contributed to Blelloch's medical exemption.

Therefore, it is possible that the military doctor let Blelloch off the hook because of his privileged social status as a student since physical-limitations seemed not to be the obvious disqualifying factors. Just as in 1914 when Blelloch was found unfit after his pulse was briefly checked by a family doctor, the Oxford student was medically excused from military service. Thus, it appears that David Blelloch was again the beneficiary of leniency from the medical authorities, showing that conscription in practice was in part based on the decisions of *men*, not the *law*. If Blelloch was not given a medical exemption for physical reasons, then it seems that his privileged social environment and access to social connections benefitted him. In May 1916, David Blelloch walked away from his medical examination a free man, excused from conscription because of his access to privilege.

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<sup>218</sup> Blelloch, "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 4-5; Blelloch, interview. Both "flat feet" and "hammertoe" were not considered medically disqualifying factors by the British Army during the Great War, as shown by: Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, ed., "British Army Medical Categories 1914," Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, accessed March 3, 2019.



### Privilege’s Relationship with Medical Exemptions

Although elements regarding David Belloch’s case study will remain unknown, his pursuit to resist conscription on conscientious grounds exposes how privileged social environments benefited individuals in Britain during the Great War. The argument that Belloch’s privileged social environment, and specifically his social status as a student, was related to his medical exemption is corroborated by Chart 2, titled “Chi-Square Test on the Relationship between Privilege and Medical Exemptions in Britain during the Great War.” The premise of the subsequent Chi-Square Test was to determine whether or not privilege helped male university students, such as Belloch, to gain a medical exemption, thereby bypassing the mandatory service requirement prescribed by the Military Service Act.<sup>219</sup> Using the Pearce Register from *Lives of the First World War* to compile biographical data on 292 conscientious objectors in Britain during the Great War, a statistical test was employed to see whether or not privilege, defined here as “student status,” was *dependent* (related) or *independent* (not related) in the granting of medical exemptions. Since the students listed in the Pearce Register were enrolled at the undergraduate or graduate level when the Military Service Act became law after January 27, 1916, this decision to use the aforementioned proxy was justifiable. Moreover, in

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<sup>219</sup> Eric Gaze and Albert William Wetter, "Chi-Square on the Relationship between Privilege and Medical Exemptions in Britain during the Great War," chart, February 28, 2019, Microsoft Excel. Professor Gaze and I ran a chi-square statistical test to determine if privilege is independent of getting a medical exemption (the NULL hypothesis). Using data from the Pearce Register from *Lives of the First World War*, we tallied up a sample of conscientious objectors who either received a medical exemption or did not. Computing the chi-square test, we see the observed data on the left. If these variables ARE independent (not related) we would expect to see 65 of the not privileged men get an exemption and 112 of the privileged men. The chi-square test gives us a p-value of **7.06E-36 (7.06x10<sup>-36</sup>) = 0!** If  $p < 5\%$  we reject the null hypothesis and conclude we have enough evidence to 95% certainty that these variables are indeed related (i.e. dependent) to each other. Lastly, since our p-value basically equaled zero, this clear dependent relationship is statistically significant with 99.99% certainty.

order to analyze Blelloch's case statistically, it is necessary to compare him to his contemporaries. The Chi-Square Test results were significant, showing that privilege and medical exemptions were in fact dependent on one another (Chart 2). After their subsequent appeals to overturn their conditional or partial exemptions from combatant-only service to a full absolute exemption failed, 88% (i.e. 163 out of 185) of privileged conscientious objectors received medical exemptions while only 14% (i.e. 15 out of 107) of men who were not privileged conscientious objectors received medical exemptions.<sup>220</sup> Therefore, based on these findings, it is highly likely that privilege played a part in David Blelloch's exemption.

#### A Call to Duty: Joining the Friends Ambulance Unit (August 1916- November 1918)

Since he was not susceptible to the call of duty, David Blelloch returned to St. John's, yet found "an almost empty university."<sup>221</sup> His peers with whom he walked the halls, ate lunch, and attended classes were gone. It is probable that feelings of guilt stirred, as Blelloch joined the Quaker sponsored organization called the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU).<sup>222</sup> After gaining permission from St. John's Reverend President to pause his studies, Blelloch served on the FAU as a backline stretcher-bearer and nurse on board hospital ships in France and Belgium until the cessation of hostilities on November 11, 1918.<sup>223</sup> This final chapter of his war experience highlighted a significant distinction. Blelloch wanted to serve on his own terms. The fact that he

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<sup>220</sup> Gaze and Wetter, "Chi-Square on the Relationship between Privilege and Medical Exemptions in Britain during the Great War," chart. Given the temporary closure of the *Pearce Register* till the Summer of 2019, this chapter is unable to compute more original statistics regarding conscientious objectors, though supports the possibility for further research on this matter.

<sup>221</sup> "What Did I Do in the Great War?", 4-5.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> N. Q. Jives to David Habershon Hamilton Blelloch, "Letter from St. John's President," May 16, 1916, Blelloch, D.H.H. CO 009 LIDDLE/WW1/C0/009, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds. Name was transcribed to the extent to which it was legible.

may have felt under pressure to serve supports the argument that his social environment *mattered*. In this instance, his fellow students were serving, so he chose to as well. Ultimately, the call to duty, and the larger emotional community of patriotism, led David Blelloch to join the war effort through volunteerism after he was medically exempted from conscription.

### Self-Reflection

David Habershon Hamilton Blelloch conscientiously resisted conscription because of his Fabian socialist beliefs. Although Blelloch was granted only a conditional exemption, his desire to serve the state on his own terms rather than to perform his duty to the state as required by the Military Service Act exposed the difference between the agency involved in the “sacred principle” of volunteerism and the lack of agency in conscription. Moreover, Blelloch likely felt some peer pressure to serve in some capacity. Emotions, such as love for friends, guilt or loneliness, likely impacted his agency to act. His case was clearly aided by the professorial epistolary testimonies and his privileged social environment as an Oxford undergraduate. Blelloch’s privilege and access to social connections enabled him to combat conscription while undermining the underlying assumptions that it was the duty of ideal male citizens to take up arms for the state. His story offers a valuable case study because the issues raised are repeated decades later, as Blelloch explained in his 1969 book exploring political science: *State and Society in a Developing World*. Writing during the tumultuous era of anti-Vietnam draft riots in the United States, Blelloch stated, “To learn that Old Glory has been burnt by demonstrators on the steps of the Capitol is as encouraging as it was, a generation earlier, to learn that members of the Oxford Union could no longer be conned into killing and being killed ‘for King and

Country.”<sup>224</sup> Though he did not reference his own experience, clearly Blelloch found the draft riots in the United States echoed his own conscientious objection on political grounds during the Great War, displaying how the assumptions surrounding military service were still combatted decades after the guns of war were silenced on November 11, 1918.

### **Norman Gaudie**

Norman Gaudie offers another case study of an individual who opposes conscription on conscientious grounds. Originally from a working-class family, Gaudie was born in 1887 in East Boldon, a village east of Newcastle; he was a member of the Congregationalist Church and an ex-Sunderland A.F.C. footballer.<sup>225</sup> At the time of his conscription in 1916 Gaudie was a 29 year-old clerk for Northeast Railway in Newcastle.<sup>226</sup> Gaudie’s social standing as an ex-footballer turned railroad clerk was used against him during the exemption process, suggesting again that social environment affected conscientious objectors’ experience in Britain during the Great War.

#### “I Am Prepared to Suffer For My Own Convictions” (January 1916 - March 1916)

When conscription was introduced on January 27, 1916 with the Military Service Act, Gaudie believed that his faith as a Congregationalist Christian justified his absolute exemption from military service.<sup>227</sup> He was one of 386 Congregationalists who applied for exemptions, which constituted approximately 5% of the total number of religious conscientious objectors in Britain between 1916 and 1918 (Chart 3). Similar to Blelloch, Gaudie applied for an absolute

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<sup>224</sup> David Habershon Hamilton Blelloch, *State and Society in a Developing World* (London: Watts, 1969), 182.

<sup>225</sup> Norman Gaudie, Biographical Information, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>226</sup> Norman Gaudie, Biographical Information.

<sup>227</sup> "A Claim for Absolute Exemption By Norman Gaudie, of East Boldon," March 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds. 1.

exemption as a conscientious objector. However, as a Congregationalist, he based his objection on his religious beliefs and faith in God, arguing that they prohibited him from taking up arms in defense of his country and the state.

In March 1916, Gaudie pleaded his case for absolute exemption before the Tribunal in East Boldon.

My objection to participation in the prosecution of war in any form whatsoever is based on the ground that to do so be a denial of my faith, and belief, in the Fatherhood of God, as revealed in the teaching of Jesus Christ. I therefore claim absolute exemption in accordance with the provisions of the Military Service Act No. 2, having the deep conviction that to change my activities other than by the dictate of Conscience would conflict with the profound belief I have.<sup>228</sup>

Gaudie objected to conscription on the sole premise of his religion and a *higher law*. Similar to Belloch, he gained epistolary testimonies, from a friend and a Congregationalist Reverend rather than from professors. In his letter endorsing Gaudie's genuine conscientious objection, Percy B. Lemon explicated how they were members of "the little 'free speech' Society," in which they refined their critical view towards the bearing of arms "and the anti-Christian character of war."<sup>229</sup> Arguably, Lemon's most profound endorsement of Gaudie's conscientious objection was found in his final line: "I know you are no coward, no man who suffers for his convictions is."<sup>230</sup> Lemon's endorsement of Gaudie's conscience and religious principles exposes an affirmation of the legitimacy of an individual's courage to say no to the state and reject the call to arms. Gaudie believed it was his duty to serve his country, but not by participating in war in any direct way.

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<sup>228</sup> "A Claim for Absolute Exemption By Norman Gaudie, of East Boldon."

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

Bolstering Gaudie’s case, Reverend A.T. Cadoux, a Minister of the East Boldon Congregationalist Church proclaimed, “I hereby testify that Mr. Norman Gaudie...as long as I have known him had conscientious objections to participation of any sort in war and that I believe him to be perfectly sincere in holding this conviction.”<sup>231</sup> Reverend Cadoux attempted to offer further support by explicating that Congregational Churches “have no official pronouncement upon Christian duty in the matter, but leave it to the Conscience of the individual,” indicating that in the eyes of Congregationalists, the individual parishioner was empowered to decide for themselves.<sup>232</sup> However, this created a paradoxical quandary for Gaudie, as Reverend Cadoux’s letter stated that the Congregationalist Church did not take a stance on military service and believed that individual convictions should be respected.<sup>233</sup> Gaudie’s epistolary endorsements exhibited a sense of inclusivity.

This conclusion undercut key assumptions of the Military Service Act in that the Congregationalist Church held it was an individual’s decision to oppose conscription or serve the state. On one hand, the Congregational Church considered that an individual was an ideal citizen in the eyes of God and of one’s Church when choosing not to serve, even if required by the British state. Yet, on the other hand, the Church would also respect a decision to accept the call to arms. He was ostracized not by his immediate community, but by his tribunal. Chairman Mr. Laidler asked condescendingly, “You have a conscientious objection on religious grounds? As far as I am concerned I think it is a very poor objection.”<sup>234</sup> On his subsequent appeal form, Gaudie rebuked the Chairman’s comment, stating it was clearly “not judicial and would suggest

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

that my case was prejudged in his mind.”<sup>235</sup> As he was rhetorically grilled for conscientiously refusing “to [participate] in any form [of service] whatsoever,” Gaudie remained composed and spoke with clarity, knowing that his conscience was clear.<sup>236</sup> Confident in the morality of his beliefs, when asked by Chairman Laidler if he was nervous, Gaudie calmly replied, “Not at all. I am prepared to suffer for my own convictions whatever decision you come to.”<sup>237</sup>

Continuing the religious line of questioning, the Tribunal attempted to derail the Congregationalist’s views on the moral justification of conscientious objection and military service. The Chairman Laidler asked, “Do you know there are many Ministers and Christians in France ministering to the sick and wounded which I think is a glorious work for a Christian to participate in and which is a work purely of Christian character?”; defending himself, Gaudie maintained, “Of course I am not answerable for other men’s conscience, I can only say that my Conscience forbids me to do so.”<sup>238</sup> The Chairman further questioned, “Are there no orders in the Bible where God commanded war?”, Gaudie responded, “Yes, in the Old Testament, but I base my view on the Spirit of Christ.” Mr. J.T. Bell, the presiding military advisor, countered, “Well where did Christ say anything against war?”; Gaudie rebuked, “He said, ‘Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the Children of God.’ I wish to have my testimony heard that I believe that all warfare is wrong, morally wrong and opposed to Christianity.” At this point in his hearing, while employing his religious beliefs, Gaudie verges towards making a “political” statement against conscription and war. Unable to challenge his conscience, Mr. J.T. Bell asked

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<sup>235</sup> Norman Gaudie, "Notice of Appeal," March 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 3 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>236</sup> “A Claim for Absolute Exemption By Norman Gaudie.”

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*

Gaudie, “But in the Bible and in the New Testament is it not mentioned about the punishment of wickedness?”, to which Gaudie responded, “Wickedness brings its own punishment through the Conscience.”<sup>239</sup>

A barrage of questions continued, but Gaudie did not budge, as he believed in the soundness of his conscience and remained true to his principles. Testing his political views of the war, Mr. J.T. Bell grilled, “Do you think the English people are the aggressors in this War?” Gaudie answered, “No, politically I think that England has more right on her side.” His answer was significant because though he said Britain was politically in the right, he *still* opposed the war.

In a final test of Gaudie’s convictions, Chairman Laidler asked him if it would help his conscience to “assist those who are downtrodden and in pain, and suffering in the trenches.”<sup>240</sup> Denying it would help his conscience, Gaudie responded, “[Because] [i]t would be helping make the Military Machine more efficient.”<sup>241</sup> He opposed any form of military service at all costs. Gaudie took a moral stance rooted in his religious convictions and adherence to a higher power rather than patriotism. Though he was not trying to be offensive in this instance, the idea of service to the state was not the lens through which he interpreted his resistance. Gaudie identified himself as British; yet, his implicit fidelity to his Congregationalist faith community, emotional ideals, and love for God forbade him to participate in the war. His objection manifested the belonging to a local emotional community that undermined a more abstract and imagined view of the British nation. By nature, religious movements provide a sense of belonging among those who feel disenfranchised or excluded from the imagined national community.

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.



Gaudie’s personal defense of his convictions not only echoed the moral capital contained in Edwin Rodway’s aforementioned testimony but rebuked a major underlying assumption about the relationship between state and society: By manipulating prevailing ideas of the emotional community—patriotism—the state could compel male citizens to fight and do their civic duty. Although he possessed limited personal agency in a legal sense given the Tribunal would render his verdict and not his conscience, Gaudie possessed more personal agency in regard to his faith, as an individual’s principled religious belief is a potent source of agency. By opposing conscription on the basis of his conscience, Gaudie was reinstating his personal agency and withdrawing it from the Tribunal, showing how his relationship to God was a conduit through which he combatted the gendered assumptions of citizenship and military service.

Although Gaudie offered a sterling personal defense on the basis for his religious convictions, the Tribunal denied him an absolute exemption, and issued a conditional combatant-only exemption. Gaudie appealed the decision. When appealing the decision for “an absolute exemption” [emphasis original], Gaudie contended on his appeal form, “The evidence of having held these views before the war was unquestioned therefore according to the [Military Service] Act it was within the jurisdiction of the local tribunal to have made my exemption absolute” [emphasis original].<sup>242</sup>

Gaudie’s Tribunal experience also exposes the biases launched against conscientious objectors by the military authorities. Although Blelloch and Gaudie shared commonalities in that they were both unmarried men between 18 and 41, their treatment during and after their appeal process exhibited stark contrasts. David Blelloch, the 20-year-old Oxford student was treated cordially and with leniency by the military medical personnel and granted a de facto absolute

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<sup>242</sup> Gaudie, "Notice of Appeal."

exemption on medical grounds, which was most likely due to his privileged social environment. Conversely, Gaudie, a 29-year-old ex-football player turned modest Newcastle railroad clerk, was ripe for prejudiced treatment because of he possessed the characteristics of the working-class.<sup>243</sup> The Chairman’s ridicule of his conscientious objection on religious grounds, and Gaudie’s lack of privilege made him more susceptible to demeaning and abusive treatment compared to Blleloch, an Oxford student from a higher social class. Furthermore, since Congregationalist Churches in Britain were predominantly members of the working-class, they were more vulnerable to prejudice compared to the affluent members of Britain’s religious society, namely the Anglicans and Quakers.<sup>244</sup> Consequently, Gaudie’s social class, unmarried status, and religious objection, provided perfect prejudiced ammunition for the Tribunal to reject his initial application and his appeal. Nonetheless, Gaudie’s conviction as a conscientious objector on religious grounds was undeniable.

“I Am Doing My Duty” (March 1916 – April 1916)

While he failed to get an absolute exemption on religious grounds, Norman Gaudie, armed with his combatant-only exemption, continued to peacefully oppose any form of military service while in the British Army’s Non-Combatant Corps (NCC). After being fined £2 at the Police Court in Jarrow on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1916, six days later Gaudie was sent to Sunderland to

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<sup>243</sup> William J. Baker, "The Making of the Working-Class Football Culture in Victorian England," *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1979): 242.

<sup>244</sup> Thomas M. Parker, "Religion and Politics in Britain," *Journal of Contemporary History* 2, no. 3 (October 1967): 130-134; Christopher Bagley, "Relation of Religion and Racial Prejudice in Europe," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 9, no. 3 (Autumn 1970): 220-223. As the graph titled “Composition of Religious Conscientious Objectors in Britain During the Great War (1916-1918)” (Chart 3) shows, Congregationalists consisted approximately only 5% of the total amount of religious objectors. Therefore, Gaudie was both a member of the minority in terms of class and religion.

perform a standard army medical.<sup>245</sup> In his diary entry for April 25<sup>th</sup>, Gaudie recounted the experience of the medical:

I was there requested to take off my clothes but this I refused to do, a duty which my escort performed, removing my coat to shirts. The Col. Sergeant pushed me on to the measuring place and recorded my height in socks, 5 ft. 6 ½ inches; he then measured my chest 36 inches, expanded 37 ½ inches, but I did not do any expanding, he remarked ‘poor for a footballer.’<sup>246</sup>

This episode evidenced Gaudie’s peaceful, non-antagonistic rejection of the policy of conscription: If the army could not compel him to undress or expand his chest, how could they compel him to pick up a rifle and fight on the Western Front?

After refusing to participate in a sight examination, the officer told Gaudie: “[I]f I had my way I would do what the Germans do [to conchies]—shoot you,”<sup>247</sup> exposing the disdain felt towards conscientious objectors by officers in the British Army.<sup>247</sup> This negative view of conchies was not shared by all British officers, however, as Major RP Schweder MC’s admission to his wife on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1917 revealed: “Next war I shall be a ‘conchie.’ (conscientious objector) [parentheses original]”.<sup>248</sup> Though historians such as Gregory assumed that most officers detested conscientious objectors, Major Schweder’s private admission challenges that

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<sup>245</sup> The biographical information for Gaudie’s fine in Jarrow and transfer was gleaned from Frederick Jowett, "Refusal to Sign Attestation Papers," speech, May 16, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>; Norman Gaudie, *Diary of Events 1916-onwards*, 1916, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>246</sup> Gaudie, *Diary of Events 1916-onwards*.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> Letter by R.P. Schweder, August 3, 1917, Doc 3397 Box No. 86/65/1, Private papers of Major RP Schweder MC, Imperial War Museum, London.

assumption. Therefore, how and to what extent did officers want “conchies” to be shot, or at least, excluded from the imagined British community?<sup>249</sup>

From Sunderland, Gaudie was sent to the Newcastle Barracks, where he met Major Long, who then referred him to Major Byrne. In Newcastle, Gaudie again displayed his conscientious objection. Though Gaudie impressed Major Byrne with some “[knowledge] of the [Military Service] Act and the Tribunals,” Major Byrne demanded, ““Well, you must do your duty;”” to which Gaudie replied, ““I am doing my duty.””<sup>250</sup> Duty was perceived differently by these two men. Major Byrne viewed duty as respect for state authority whereas Gaudie viewed duty as respect for personal principles. Then a fellow officer asked Major Byrne if he would shoot his friend if commanded to do so, to which the major replied, “[C]ertainly, it is my duty.”<sup>251</sup> Gaudie responded that he “had a higher duty and would do no such thing.”<sup>252</sup> Clearly, for Gaudie, duty was to his personal faith and therefore to oppose military service.

The following day, according to his diary, Gaudie was remanded by Colonel Seely for his conscientious objection, and then told by Colonel Greenwall that he would be sent to the Non-Combatant Corps (NCC) at Richmond Castle.<sup>253</sup> Gaudie protested that he could not “distinguish between that service and combatant [service].”<sup>254</sup> Nevertheless, he was escorted to the army depot and handed a standard khaki uniform, which he refused to put on.<sup>255</sup> When the soldiers threatened force and outnumbered him, Gaudie confided,

I thought it was wise to allow them to dress me; [with] this completed they deal[t] out my kit, parceled my civilian clothes and hung the kit round my

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<sup>249</sup> Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 50-100.

<sup>250</sup> Gaudie, *Diary of Events 1916-onwards*.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

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neck; I can hardly describe my feelings, except that I was very much humiliated by the treatment and remarks as to my being a sportsman.<sup>256</sup>

Gaudie was further emasculated at Newcastle Barracks in humiliating fashion, as he reflected in his diary: “I was taken to the Guard Room and there I regretted having allowed them to dress me. I at once proceeded to take them [the khakis] off, and with my only waistcoat, pants, and socks, sat awaiting developments.”<sup>257</sup> One of the guards, who saw Gaudie’s antics through the nearby door watch hole, came in and asked him if he refused to wear the khaki uniform, to which Gaudie responded with a defiant “Yes.”<sup>258</sup> The guard immediately reported Gaudie’s disobedience and more soldiers were summoned to forcefully ensure that Gaudie wore his uniform. Gaudie felt demoralized:

[The guard] brought a body of men determined to put on a uniform; the original number did not prove sufficient so they were supplemented by the guard on duty, and a pair of handcuffs; I was then badly handicapped and forced to submit; a tornado of abusive remarks followed.<sup>259</sup>

Gaudie’s opposition to any form of military action was on absolute grounds, which apparently included wearing a uniform. Furthermore, the physical and verbal responses by the military personnel exposed obvious differences in the treatment of Blelloch and Gaudie. While the former was treated with respect and leniency by the military doctor and allowed to go back to Oxford, the latter was treated with brutality. These disparate experiences expose how an individual’s social environment affected their treatment as conscientious objectors.

“The Footballer with a Conscience” (April 1916 – May 1916)

While ridiculed and emasculated at Newcastle Barracks, Norman Gaudie continued objecting the war on religious grounds. Once he was relocated to the Non-Combatant Corps

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<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

(NCC) at Richmond Castle and subsequently imprisoned for repeated objections to military discipline, Gaudie’s fight against military service garnered public attention. A public outcry revealed how Gaudie’s status as an ex-football player defied the predominant narrative that professional athletes were demeaned for not participating in the national team in order to play up the war.<sup>260</sup> Gaudie was an outlier when it came to British footballers, as they were commonly expected to change their multi-color football kit for their khaki-color army kit to help their country win the war.<sup>261</sup>

A publicity campaign highlighted the tense relationship existing between sports and politics in early twentieth-century Britain, especially the relationship between football and the working class.<sup>262</sup> During his imprisonment in Richmond Castle, public testimony supporting Gaudie surfaced forty-two miles northeast in Sunderland.<sup>263</sup> His ex-footballer supporters in Sunderland published a headline in the “Sporting Pink” section in the *Sunderland Echo* that read, ““The Footballer with a Conscience.””<sup>264</sup> Though Gaudie played center-forward on Sunderland A.F.C.’s reserve team, the outpouring support again disproved the assumption that conscientious objectors were ostracized from their local communities.<sup>265</sup> Additionally, the headline illuminated

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<sup>260</sup> Colin Veitch, “Play Up! Play Up! And Win the War! Football, the Nation and the First World War,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 20, no. 3 (July 1985): 363.

<sup>261</sup> Veitch, “Play Up! Play Up! And Win the War!” 363.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid; William J. Baker, “The Making of the Working-Class Football Culture in Victorian England,” *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1979): 242.

<sup>263</sup> Google Maps was used to determine distance.

<sup>264</sup> Derek Naylor, “In Memory of Men Who Refused To Fight,” *Yorkshire Evening Post* (Leeds), February 8, 1982. This article was just used for biographical information regarding the Sporting Pink headline in March 1916. More analysis will be done with this article for instance in the third chapter.

<sup>265</sup> Norman Gaudie, Personal Diary, 1916, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

the problematic nature of the “conscience clause.”<sup>266</sup> It is plausible that Sunderland’s unique endorsement for Gaudie germinated from “community pride,” the intangible sense of belonging that football teams, such as Sunderland A.F.C, gave their working-class supporters “which was missing from the life of the street or the factory.”<sup>267</sup>

During the Great War, there was an “indomitable British spirit, a celebration of defiant English pluck, the ultimate proof that the British believed war to be just another game, or that football was the common thread that bound together a group of men facing the most severe challenges of their lives.”<sup>268</sup> Therefore, the predominant expectation of footballers was to embrace that triumphalism of patriotism and do their bit, and if they did not they would be ostracized.<sup>269</sup> However, as the “Sporting Pink” headline from the *Sunderland Echo* showed, the supporters of Sunderland A.F.C did not bash Gaudie for his conscientious objection, but rather endorsed his conviction and clarity of conscience. Sunderland’s community pride for their team displayed how Gaudie was not rejected by his community and suggested that local ties were sometimes stronger than national ones.

“The Just Shall Live By Faith” (May 1916)

Norman Gaudie’s file in the Liddle Personal Collections at the University of Leeds contains an undated, untitled sermon, which featured the phrase: “The just shall live by faith.”<sup>270</sup>

The words of the sermon, included with Gaudie’s diaries and journals, represents the six words

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<sup>266</sup> Bibbings, *Telling Tales about Men*, 101.

<sup>267</sup> Mona Dobre-Laza, *Class or Classes? The Difficulties of Dealing with the Notion of a Working Class*, Sport and the Working Class (Bucharest, Romania: The British Council, 2003), 7, accessed March 6, 2019, [http://elt.britcoun.org.pl/s\\_class.htm](http://elt.britcoun.org.pl/s_class.htm).

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.* 364.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>270</sup> Congregationalist Sermon, 1916, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

that defined his life. In a letter to his mother, who appeared to be his closest confidant, Gaudie wrote, “[W]e must always remember that God gave Grace more abundantly to some because of the measure of their faith, and they then become just people, because it says ‘The just shall live by Faith’ [capitalization original].”<sup>271</sup> During his entire incarceration at Richmond Castle, he never compromised his convictions according to his diaries, which remain the most accurate, in-depth sources of his day-to-day activities, duties, and especially his objections to perform any form of war work.

Two diary entries describe his actions on the basis of faith. On Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1916, Gaudie was taking part in the morning parade when Captain Bolyn commanded him to “stand at attention.”<sup>272</sup> Gaudie scribbled, “I said I would behave like a gentleman but saw no need for my standing at attention (Captain very uncivil and bullying manner).”<sup>273</sup> It becomes clearer that Gaudie did not appreciate the captain’s rude mannerisms, as he ferociously wrote, “I demanded civility!” [exclamation mark added]. As a result, Captain Bolyn, in an attempt to crack Gaudie’s conscience, asked, “I have been [through] the trouble about enquiring about your clothes, will you now stand at attention please?” Gaudie had inquired about his civilian clothes the prior day and explained, “I felt this was an attempt to get me to betray my conscience.” Resolute in his decision to follow the dictates of his conscience, Gaudie continued to refuse to obey military commands of any kind.<sup>274</sup> As a consequence, Gaudie lost his civilian clothes but retained his conscience.

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<sup>271</sup> Letter by Norman Gaudie, May 16, 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 5 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>272</sup> Norman Gaudie, Personal Diary, 1916, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>273</sup> Gaudie, Personal Diary.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.



While refusing to stand at attention evidenced a form of absolute conscientious objection, so too was his refusal to chop firewood. Reinforcing his principled behavior, Gaudie described in his pocket diary on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1916 that he was in the work field with some other conscientious objectors when they “were ordered by Corporal Rhodes to chop some wood [and we] refused [for] not [being] able to undertake military duties.”<sup>275</sup> For their troubles Gaudie and his fellow conscientious objectors were sent to Captain Bolyn, who asked them why they would not chop the wood.<sup>276</sup> Gaudie remained steadfast to his religious principles, Gaudie replied, “I said that the offence was simply a continuation of failing to report myself.”<sup>277</sup> Clearly, Gaudie professed his faith in Christ through his nonconforming and peaceful resisting of conscription. Gaudie’s actions resulted in his incarceration in the keep (i.e. central tower) of Richmond Castle with fifteen other men of working-class background.<sup>278</sup>

Norman Gaudie was a man of conviction. He articulated this lesson of living by faith to his mother in another typed letter on May 23, 1916 from Richmond Castle from his cell. “[T]he Tribunal set up by the Government,” according to Gaudie, aimed “to test a man’s convictions.” Yet, Gaudie offered a defiant definition to what constituted a Congregationalist conscientious objector: “[A] man who so loves the [Lord] to do what the soldier does for his cause: now if we show any sign which would lead them to think that we were just trying to evade Military duty, it would go badly with us, so that I think and trust that God will do with us all, that which is the

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<sup>275</sup> Norman Gaudie, Pocket Diary, 1916, CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>276</sup> Gaudie, Pocket Diary.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Gaudie, Pocket Diary; Editors of English Heritage, ed., "First World War Conscientious Objectors at Richmond Castle," *English Heritage*, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/richmond-castle/history/richmond-sixteen/>.

greatest good for all.”<sup>279</sup> Gaudie believed his efforts were not only in his own interest, but in everyone’s best interest. Norman Gaudie never questioned his religious principles nor his faith, which directed his conscience and sense of duty during the Great War.

Parliamentary Inquiry (May 16, 1916 – May 29, 1916)

While he was locked up in Richmond Castle, Gaudie’s plight spurred a political debate in Westminster. Frederick “Fred” Jowett, the Labour MP for Gaudie’s region of Yorkshire, learned about Gaudie’s physical abuse regarding the donning of the khaki uniform, exchanged letters with his jailed constituent, and, as a consequence, demanded better treatment on May 16, 1916 on the floor of the House of Commons. “I asked the Under-Secretary of State for War if he is aware that Norman Gaudie, a conscientious objector, of Sunderland,” pronounced MP Jowett, “who was fined £2 at Jarrow Police Court and handed over to the military authorities on 19th April, and was subsequently taken to Newcastle Barracks, and from there to Richmond Castle, has been subjected to severe treatment, his own clothes torn off and khaki clothes forced on him.”<sup>280</sup> Denouncing Gaudie’s maltreatment, MP Jowett explained how his constituent was “put in irons on account of his resistance and handcuffed” and promised to make inquiries about the conduct of military authorities regarding the treatment of conscientious objectors.<sup>281</sup>

Though it is probable that MP Jowett vouched for Gaudie more for political gain than heartfelt intentions, the correspondence exposed the conditions in Richmond Castle, which

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<sup>279</sup> Letter by Norman Gaudie, May 23, 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 5 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>280</sup> Frederick Jowett, "Refusal to Sign Attestation Papers," speech, May 16, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>281</sup> Jowett, "Refusal to Sign Attestation Papers," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

fueled a passionate speech in Westminster to help a fellow constituent.<sup>282</sup> Additionally, it is relevant to view this situation through the lens of Gaudie's social environment. As Jowett represented Bradford West County, a predominantly rural and working-class area of northern Britain, his sympathy for the treatment of working-class men like Gaudie was unsurprising.<sup>283</sup> The archival evidence suggests that MP Jowett's blistering speech sparked a parliamentary inquiry into the treatment of the conscientious objectors at Richmond Castle, resulting in Norman Gaudie and the Richmond Sixteen being released on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1916.<sup>284</sup> Unbeknownst to the sixteen conscientious objectors, though, they were about to become the victims of a British Army scandal.

"A... Test for Faith" (May 29, 1916 – June 26, 1916)

Norman Gaudie possessed unwavering principles of faith, which reinforced his conscientious objection on religious grounds. However, the realities of the war, coupled with his social environment as a member of the working-class, posed a threat to Gaudie's mortality, if it

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<sup>282</sup>MP Jowett's party affiliation gleaned from "Obituary: Mr. F.W. Jowett," *The Times* (London), February 3, 1944.

<sup>283</sup> "Obituary: Mr. F.W. Jowett."

<sup>284</sup> Interestingly, there apparently was miscommunication between Gaudie and MP Jowett, according to Norman Gaudie's journal, a letter to his mother from May 1916, and letters from his brother Fred and sister Edith to the War Office in May 1916. The source of the confusion was where Gaudie was subjected to the physical abuse. MP Jowett painted the administering military officials at Richmond Castle as the source of the abuse. As a result of the parliamentary inquiry, Gaudie wrote to his mother explaining how he was brought before the presiding Captain at Richmond Castle and asked if he was ever physically assaulted or treated in an unbecoming way by any member of the local garrison. Gaudie replied that he was given fair treatment at the Castle. He explained to his mother that it was at Newcastle Barracks and not at Richmond Castle where he was abused, though he was incarcerated in unkempt and unhealthy conditions in his cell at Richmond Castle. Even with the clarification letters, the outcome was still the same, as the Richmond Sixteen were released after Parliament demanded it. Further details on this episode can be located in Norman Gaudie, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds and Letter by Norman Gaudie, May 16, 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 5 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

were not for a fortuitous intervention by his older brother who exposed a cynical, and illegal, British army scandal with explosive political consequences. Significant coincidences enabled Gaudie to dodge-a-bullet literally. The French Scandal exposed the extent to which the British Army tried—and ultimately failed—to punish conscientious objectors for combatting the gendered assumptions surrounding citizenship and military service with a humiliating punishment: death by firing squad.

In his entry for Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1916, the day the Richmond Sixteen were released from Richmond Castle, Norman Gaudie hurriedly scribbled in his diary, “This was a day of test for faith.”<sup>285</sup> Why was this day a “test of faith”? Though their release was deemed a day of celebration, it was also a day of uncertainty and dread, because they were sentenced to a Court Martial before being shipped to France—as mentioned in Gaudie’s diary—and nobody from the Richmond Sixteen knew why.<sup>286</sup> While waiting on Darlington platform for their Dover bound train, Gaudie was visited by his older brother, Fred Gaudie, who drove up from East Boldon.<sup>287</sup> What seemed to be a banal sibling catch-up actually sparked a political controversy and, to some extent, embarrassed the British Army.

Though there is no way to be certain of the sequence of events, the evidence suggests that what while Norman Gaudie knew he was going to France, it was Fred Gaudie who learned *why* his younger brother was being sent to France and ignited a political maelstrom in Westminster. After learning that Norman and the rest of the Richmond Sixteen were being sent to France after they were court martialed at Richmond Castle, he immediately telegraphed the news W.J.

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<sup>285</sup> Gaudie, Personal Diary.

<sup>286</sup> Gaudie, Diary of Events 1916-onwards.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

Chamberlain, the Head of the Non-Conscription Fellowship (NCF), as well as sympathetic MPs F.W. Jowett (Liberal) and Philip Snowden (Labour), asking them to “please endeavor anticipate this move.”<sup>288</sup> In his letter to W.J. Chamberlain of the NCF, Fred Gaudie explained that a friend who was visiting Norman learned from another officer the true reason for shipping the Richmond Castle conscientious objectors to France.<sup>289</sup> The archival evidence does not offer evidence that a friend visited Norman Gaudie that day, as his diary only noted that his brothers Herbert and Fred, and his sister Edith came to see him on the that fateful day on the Darlington platform.<sup>290</sup> Though it is possible that Fred may have said it was a friend in order to shield bias as a concerned sibling, it is more likely that his love for Norman spurred him into action, hoping to do what he could to save his little brother’s life. Fred Gaudie’s actions demonstrate another example of how personal emotional bonds of love superseded love for the British nation.

After submitting the telegrams, Fred Gaudie precipitated a firestorm in Parliament. Ten days after Norman Gaudie and other members of the Richmond Sixteen were sent to France, Arnold Rowntree, the Quaker Liberal MP from York who was one of the original co-sponsors of the conscience clause in the Military Service Act, stepped on to the debate floor of the House of Commons and posed the question to his peers:

I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War whether it is true that sixteen men from Richmond and others from Abergele, who on conscientious grounds were resisting military orders, in spite of

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<sup>288</sup> Fred Gaudie to W.J. Chamberlain, May 22, 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 3 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds. The uncertainty on spelling of naming of the officer in charge is accurate as Fred Gaudie put both in the original telegram and in the subsequent letter; Information for the officer of the other NCC group was cited from footnote number 68 in Clive Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers: War-Resistance 1914-1918 ; an Anglican Perspective* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2014), 261.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>290</sup> Gaudie, *Diary of Events 1916-onwards*.

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instructions to the contrary, were this week sent to France; if so, what steps have been taken to bring them back without delay?<sup>291</sup>

Answering his fellow Liberal MP, Harold Tennant admitted there was no prior debate on this particular matter, and mentioned, “I can inform the House of the steps that were taken to prevent these men going abroad, and as to what is the proposal is now;” however, it was not certain if MP Tennant read the telegram, which asked “that steps should be taken to send the men back” home.<sup>292</sup> In response, Rowntree defiantly waved the actual telegram in the air before turning to Tennant, asking him to read it.<sup>293</sup> Once the contents of the telegram were laid bare for the members of the House to hear themselves, Rowntree, demanding answers, pressed his fellow Members of Parliament to get to the bottom of this issue:

Arising out of the answer of the right and hon. Gentleman, may I ask him whether he knows that a definite assurance was given to us on Tuesday that these men should not go to France, and that on that assurance no Debate took place in this House in regard to the matter? That being the case, may I ask whether he cannot give orders at once that these men shall be returned? May I also ask him whether, in view of the new Army Order, he cannot give an assurance now that no more of these resisting men shall be sent to France, where they must be a serious encumbrance to the Army?<sup>294</sup>

Since Rowntree “championed the cause of [York’s] conscientious objectors,” it is understandable he would advocate for a parliamentary inquiry involving his constituency, including the Richmond Sixteen.<sup>295</sup> Moreover, as one of the co-founders of the exemption clause, it is

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<sup>291</sup> Arnold Stephenson Rowntree, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, June 1, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed February 4, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jun/01/conscientious-objectors>.

<sup>292</sup> Harold Tennant, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, June 1, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed February 4, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jun/01/conscientious-objectors>.

<sup>293</sup> Rowntree, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Summer Strevens, *The Birth of the Chocolate City: Life in Georgian York* (Stroud: Amberley, 2014), 85.

plausible that Rowntree felt some moral responsibility to see this investigation through and prevent unjust casualties. Supporting Rowntree’s sentiment, Liberal MP Thomas Edmund Harvey of Leeds, a fellow co-sponsor of the conscience clause, infuriated with the illegality of the scandal, rebuked, “[T]hose men should be stopped from going to France.”<sup>296</sup>

Following the heated exchanges on the floor of the House of Commons, news about the parliamentary inquiry was sent to Norman Gaudie in Boulogne, France. Employing Gaudie’s meticulous diary writing, it is clear that he knew of Rowntree’s role in the inquiry, as noted on June 19, 1916 “Visit of Mr. Rowntree.”<sup>297</sup> Though it is possible that *the* MP Rowntree visited Gaudie, it is more plausible that a representative from his office set off for France to make contact with Gaudie. There is no way of *truly* knowing one way or the other, though. Gaudie noted that he was informed that “Mr. Asquith [was going] to announce something in relation to C.O.s.”<sup>298</sup> Though the announcement from Asquith was never known to Gaudie, the ramifications would ultimately save his life.

The scandal was a cynical ploy by the British Army to try to crack the consciences of objectors by sending them to the coastal city of Boulogne, France, where they would be under the jurisdiction of martial law.<sup>299</sup> The conscientious objectors would be prosecuted for cowardice and desertion in the face of the enemy and executed by firing squad.<sup>300</sup> Given the realities of the

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<sup>296</sup> Thomas Edmund Harvey, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, June 1, 1916, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed February 4, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jun/01/conscientious-objectors>.

<sup>297</sup> Gaudie, *Diary of Events 1916-onwards*.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> Holt, "Prepared to Die...But Not to Kill;" Lois Bibbings, *Telling Tales about Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service during the First World War*(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 70-107.

war and the necessity for more men to fill in the ranks along the Western Front, the British Army tried to bend the rules, a decision that historian Clive Barrett argued aimed to prepare for the large summer offensive in France, which would become the notorious Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916.<sup>301</sup> Gaudie, uncertain of the ramifications of Rowntree's visit, offered his defense at his court martial, on June 26, 1916: "My motive for refusing is because my Religious Convictions prevents me from taking any part in the military system whatsoever and I am therefore forced to disobey any military orders in loyalty to those Convictions which are based on the spirit and teaching of Christ."<sup>302</sup> Furthering his defense, Gaudie rhetorically disemboweled the Army's rationale, highlighting the illegality of his relocation to France:

[I]t was illegal to draft me out to France...I should have been handed over to the Civil authorities in accordance with the order which states that where an accused soldier represents that the offence was the result of conscientious objection to military service imprisonment and not detention is to be awarded and the accused on being sentenced is to be committed to the nearest civil prison.<sup>303</sup>

Gaudie was well-versed in the legalities of his conscientious objection, which could be a product of his responsibilities as an accounting clerk, a profession which requires meticulous ledgering. Though it is possible that Rowntree or his representative had briefed Gaudie on his legal standing, it is undeniable that he offered a passionate defense full of supporting legal evidence. The only guilty party, in Gaudie's mind, was the British Army.

Concurrently, Parliament pressured the officers of the British Army to intervene.<sup>304</sup> Five days after the Rowntree visit, on Saturday June 26, 1916, Gaudie's diary entry noted the verdict

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<sup>301</sup> Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers*, 113-114.

<sup>302</sup> Norman Gaudie, "Court Martial Testimony," June 26, 1916, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 5 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

<sup>303</sup> Gaudie, "Court Martial Testimony."

<sup>304</sup> From the information available in Gaudie's file at the University of Leeds, neither there was publicity on this matter nor public outcry.



of his court martial: “Sentenced to be shot. Commuted to 10 years [of] penal servitude.”<sup>305</sup>

Numerous injustices emerged from these series of events; yet, Norman Gaudie found solace knowing “[t]he just shall live by Faith.”<sup>306</sup>

#### Civil Imprisonment and De-Mobilization (June 16, 1916 – April 1919)

All of the members of the Richmond Sixteen returned to Britain to serve their incarceration in municipal jails and labor camps, such as Dyce Camp near Aberdeen, Scotland, and served three of their ten years. After a parliamentary inquiry under David Lloyd George’s administration, Gaudie and the rest of the Richmond Sixteen were released from penal service.<sup>307</sup> Finally, the *Daily Echo* newspaper headline on April 12, 1919 stated, “Local C.O. Released,” announcing that Gaudie, and the rest of the Richmond Sixteen, were released from their penal service having served three of the prescribed ten years of service.<sup>308</sup> The *Daily Echo*’s headline exhibited how the immediate public response of the release of the Richmond Sixteen was not enthusiastic, suggesting that members of the populace were still unsympathetic to conscientious objectors.<sup>309</sup> On that same day, April 12, 1919, Gaudie received his Certificate of Discharge and was demobilized, and returned to Yorkshire.<sup>310</sup> Though Norman Gaudie was forced to serve as a member of the Non-Combatant Corps, imprisoned in Richmond Castle, and illegally sentenced to death in France, he survived the Great War by staying true to the dictates of his conscience.

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<sup>305</sup> Gaudie, Pocket Diary.

<sup>306</sup> Congregationalist Sermon.

<sup>307</sup> Editors of The Daily Echo, “Local C.O. Released,” *The Daily Echo* (Southampton), 1919; Editors of the Northern Echo, “Silence in castle to honour First World War conscientious objectors,” *The Northern Echo* (Leeds), June 25, 2015, accessed February 8, 2019, <http://Silence in castle to honor First World War Conscientious Objectors>.

<sup>308</sup> Editors of The Daily Echo, “Local C.O.”

<sup>309</sup> Editors of The Daily Echo, “Local C.O.”

<sup>310</sup> Norman Gaudie, “Certificate of Discharge,” April 12, 1919, CO O38 Box 2 of 2 File 5 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.

### **Post Script: What of the “Sacred Principle” Then?**

David Blelloch and Norman Gaudie’s case studies offer insight into how conscientious objectors combatted the assumptions regarding citizenship and military service imposed by the British government’s passage of the Military Service Act. Moreover, their experiences as conscientious objectors spotlight the inherent contradictions imbedded within British conscription. The authoritarian, compulsory military mechanisms of conscription refuted Britain’s traditional Liberal moral code of personal choice, an affront to the “sacred principle” of volunteerism. The mechanism to implement conscription, made Britain more similar to Germany, eroding its self-perception of moral superiority. As discussed in Chapter 1, when Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914 after the invasion of Belgium, British politicians claimed the high moral ground, painting the Germans as less moral militaristic brutes. Many MPs championed the “sacred principle” of volunteerism, a central tenet of British Liberalism. Yet, as Brigadier General Seely highlighted, the realities of the war required a temporary expedient, necessitating the implementation of conscription for pragmatic purposes.<sup>311</sup> At this juncture, Britain entered uncharted ideological and moral waters. After passing the Military Service Act in 1916, the British government began losing moral capital with its populace, appearing more like Germany, and exhibiting the Prussian characteristics of militarism. “With the British people’s history of hard-won liberties and traditions of dissent,” explained historian Clive Barrett, “the fact that such freedoms and rights were now threatened by conscription was a sign of the moral slippage provoked by war.”<sup>312</sup> This “moral slippage” was raised by the Irish MP John Dillon on the floor of the House of Commons on February 22<sup>nd</sup>,

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<sup>311</sup> Seely, "Military Service (No. 2) Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>312</sup> Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers*, 113.

1917 suggesting that if Britain was using the same authoritarian means to fight the war, then how is it any better than its enemy?<sup>313</sup> When debating the topic of industrial conscription to empower the Director-General of National Service to impose mechanized conscription on a national scale, MP Dillon asserted,

The principle underlying the whole of this scheme is the compulsory principle... The idea that we are now asked to finally take leave of the principles on which prosperity and the success of every industrial community has been built up since civilization began, namely, that men understand their own business better than the State can do it for them.<sup>314</sup>

MP Dillon saw industrial conscription as a clear sign that the British nation had abandoned and violated the “sacred principle.” He also implied it was a gross overreach of the government’s control in British society. Though he does not mention Germany by name, he employed history as his witness to illuminate the extraordinary progress made under the banner of Liberalism, displaying conscription as a mechanism for militarism, the antithesis of the liberal volunteerism. Therefore, David Blelloch and Norman Gaudie’s case studies shine a powerful spotlight, exposing a glaring contradiction of conscription in Britain during the Great War.

## **Conclusion**

David Blelloch’s and Norman Gaudie’s case studies exposed the inherent contradiction of conscription, which eroded the belief that Britain was morally superior to German militarism because of its “sacred principle” of volunteerism. Although it remains difficult to determine the extent to which classic Victorian Liberalism died during the Great War, Blelloch and Gaudie’s case studies reveal that the passage of the Military Service Act and the adoption of conscription

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> John Dillon, "Industrial Conscription," speech, February 22, 1917, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed February 25, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1917/feb/22/industrial-conscription>.

redefined the ideal male citizen while discarding their former values of liberty, individual choice, and volunteerism. Thus, the introduction of the Military Service Act in January 1916 proved that winning the war was more important than preserving individual freedoms.<sup>315</sup> Within this historical context, Belloch’s case study demonstrates that choice was the most important factor for his conception of citizenship. Gaudie offers a fundamentally different view. It was *not* about choice per se, but about religious principles and conscience. Even though Belloch and Gaudie had different philosophies on opposing conscription, both agreed that ideal citizenship should not be defined by obedience to the state, but by individual liberty. This thesis establishes that both Belloch and Gaudie denied the Military Service Act’s authority to try their consciences.

Though Britain began the Great War with rational Liberalism and Victorian social order, the war and conscription shattered these traditions. Conscription revealed the differing conceptions of the imagined community of Britain through these divergent emotional experiences. By combining David Belloch’s and Norman Gaudie’s case studies, different emotions emerge as well as the ideas that influenced each man’s commitment, conviction, and loyalties. Emotions such as love and pride were important to every Briton, but directed each person’s actions differently, and altered how individuals related to the demands of the monolithic state.

The question “What it meant to be British?” carried social and emotional ramifications. It challenged an individual’s moral compass while threatening their mortality. For conscriptionists, it was their duty as a British citizen to fight in war and obey the state. However, conscientious objectors did not share the same version of this imagined national community and did not buy into the state’s mandate of conscription. Conscientious objectors believed their conduct as

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<sup>315</sup> Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 77.

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individual British citizens must follow their moral consciences. These perceived rights epitomized the values of Victorian Liberalism, liberty and individual choice.

However, this perception was not conducive for fighting a war because if every British conscript refused to fight, then the war could not be won. Consequently, conscientious objectors were victims of prejudice because they did not serve the state, which conflicted with the new idea that citizenship in the post-war British nation was now imagined via duty to the state. Ultimately, this thesis concludes that during the Great War “what it meant to be British” was not only a question of love and pride, but also service to the state, and sacrifice of the self.

### **"The Peace Begins A New Epoch:" An Epilogue**

“The peace begins another epoch. The war witnessed the crashing of the superstructures of the old. In the midst of it were laid the foundations of the new,” concluded American historians Paul Kellogg and Arthur Gleason in their 1919 post-war publication titled *British Labor and the War*.<sup>316</sup> Written a year after the guns of war were silenced on November 11, 1918, Kellogg and Gleason acknowledged that the Great War brought social changes to both the continent and Britain, displaying “on the one hand...the failure of centralized Prussian autocracy to carry enduring convictions among its coerced populations and, on the other hand, the latent power for concerted action among a loosely hung group of freer, self-willed peoples.”<sup>317</sup> Kellogg and Gleason maintained that the conflict between these ideologies was at the fulcrum of the debate surrounding volunteerism and conscription. Their post-war narrative of Anglo-American triumphalism argued that the war was a victory of Britain’s Liberal principles, such as volunteerism, over German militarism. They held the assumption that every British male bought into this imagined ideal of citizenship and supported the emotional community of patriotism fabricated by the state. Kellogg and Gleason’s claim is *false* as this thesis illuminates the opposite: If viewed in victor’s terms, Britain won the Great War because they adopted conscription, epitomizing the same state-centric modes of militarism as Germany.

Though their interpretation of the Allies’ victory was flawed, Kellogg and Gleason were correct to say that the Great War resulted in a new era in Britain, as the nation shifted from a wartime economy back to a peacetime economy. During demobilization conscientious objectors

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<sup>316</sup> Paul U. Kellogg and Arthur Gleason, *British Labor and the War; Reconstructors for a New World* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 333.

<sup>317</sup> Kellogg and Gleason, *British Labor and the War*, 333.

often remained the bane of British society. They were politically demeaned and publicly ostracized by the press and members of the general public; however, as the case studies showed, these forms of discrimination were *not* universal within their local social environments and emotional communities. The issues regarding conscientious objectors was not resolved at the conclusion of the war. This observation gives probable insight as to why the prejudice against conscientious objectors was not discussed in the past British Great War historiography, as it deals with the debate at the heart of Liberalism, raising questions about the relationship the individual shares with the state and line drawn between freedom and duty.

In particular, the issue of employment and enfranchisement are two areas in which conscientious objectors were discriminated against because they did not fit the narrative of the ideal British citizen and did not participate in the greater emotional community during the war. On April 3, 1919, approximately six-months after the Armistice, conscientious objectors were still a cause for political ruckus, especially within the context of demobilization employment. On the floor of House of Lords, a debate raged regarding a date for the release of the absolutist conscientious objectors, such as Norman Gaudie. The Marquess of Lansdowne explained the difficulties conscientious objectors would face when seeking employment:

The idea that these conscientious objectors, if released, would occupy a number of attractive posts, to the exclusion of meritorious soldiers, seems to me to be quite fantastic. These men, if they are let loose, are generally, I am afraid, likely to be regarded by most of their fellow citizens as a kind of pariah, and the difficulty will be to get them any work at all.<sup>318</sup>

Clearly, his response highlighted how conscientious objectors were publicly viewed in exclusionary terms, outcasts within the greater imagined emotional community in Britain.

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<sup>318</sup> Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, April 3, 1919, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed March 28, 2019, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1919/apr/03/conscientious-objectors>.

Reinforcing this exclusionary rhetoric, Marquess of Salisbury mocked an ex-Army officer who became an evangelist conscientious objector by stating, “[The Military Tribunal] was obliged to say that he must do work of national importance, and he was one of the queer, odd, cranky, men who thought it was wrong to do work of national importance because it was ordered under the Military Service Act.”<sup>319</sup> The employment of the term “queer” may be significant, pointing to the question of masculinity. Though homophobia is plausible, another likelihood was that it referenced odd behavior by a person who did not buy into the British emotional community; nevertheless, Marquess of Salisbury degraded conscientious objectors’ personal worth.<sup>320</sup>

Another source of exclusion regarding conscientious objectors was disenfranchisement. From late 1917 onwards, there was a push to strip conscientious objectors of their right to vote. As noted earlier in this thesis, under section 9(2) of the Representation of the People’s Act, conscientious objectors would be disenfranchised for the remainder of the war and up to five years.<sup>321</sup> While historians Lois Bibbings and Nicoletta Gullace have analyzed the mechanics of the bill and the chain of events that led to its passage, they omit the impact this disenfranchisement had on conscientious objectors within the post-war imagined British community.<sup>322</sup> Most importantly, they overlook the British state’s efforts to punish conscientious

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<sup>319</sup> Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, "Conscientious Objectors," speech, April 3, 1919, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed March 28, 2019, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1919/apr/03/conscientious-objectors>.

<sup>320</sup> “Queer,” in *Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. Editors of the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2019), accessed March 27, 2019, [http://www.oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=queer&\\_searchBtn=Search](http://www.oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=queer&_searchBtn=Search). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the derogatory connotations of the word “queer” arose in Britain in 1826, so it is reasonable to postulate that battering homosexuality was the intent.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>322</sup> Bibbings, *Telling Tales About Men*, 36; Gullace, *The Blood of our Sons*, 167.



objectors, which exhibited how the nation was imagined differently. The conscientious objectors represented an earlier chapter of British history defined by the “sacred principle,” as they were imagining the nation not as duty to the state but as individuals with free-will. Consequently, conscientious objectors were excluded from participating in the new imagined British community.

Though the Representation of the People’s Act (a.k.a. Reform Bill of 1918 or Fourth Reform Act) was the signature legislation for the women’s suffrage movement, its impetus was not based on righting a gendered historical wrong, but rather on fixing a male-centric issue: the improper disenfranchisement of veteran soldiers due to strict residency requirements.<sup>323</sup> Although the Reform Bill of 1884 eliminated “the residency requirement,” which required men to reside in their lodgings for a minimum of one year “before qualifying for inclusion on the electoral register.”<sup>324</sup> Consequently, the Representation of the People Act sought to remedy that issue while also rewarding women for their contribution to the British war effort.

On December 17, 1917, the House of Lords debated the Representation of the People’s Act. While the enfranchisement of women dominated the discussion, Lord Russell raised issue on the proposed disenfranchisement of conscientious objectors.<sup>325</sup> In a biting critique, Lord Russell expressed astonishment and caution against the dangerous precedent regarding statesmanship. Though he acknowledged the logic of the popular opinion that conscientious

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<sup>323</sup> Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience*, 194; Harold L. Smith, *The British Women's Suffrage Campaign 1866-1928: Revised 2nd Edition*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 95-110; Gullace, *The Blood of Our Sons*, 166-170.

<sup>324</sup> *The Blood of Our Sons*, 170-171.

<sup>325</sup> Lord Russell in this context referred to Frank Russell, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Russell, who was the older brother of the more famous (and prolific anti-war critic) Bertrand Russell. He was part of the Labour Party.

objectors “will not take up arms to defend the State, and therefore they are not part of our civil State,” Lord Russell questioned the validity of disenfranchising “a class because you disagree with its opinions.”<sup>326</sup> “I do not agree with these gentlemen myself,” maintained Lord Russell, “But there are a great many people with whom I do not agree; yet I have no desire to disenfranchise them.”<sup>327</sup> Lord Russell’s rebuke of the disenfranchisement reflected democratic principles and ideals. He exposed how a democracy was borne out of disagreement, without calling democracy by name.

Nevertheless, the Representation of the People Bill enfranchised women and disenfranchised conscientious objectors. Though these two legal statutes were not logically inconsistent, they represented a shift in the perception of citizenship. In both cases, the underlying assumption was the same: during the immediate post-war period, duty to the state had become the main prerequisite for participation in this new imagined national community of Britain. The idea that men and women who contributed to the war effort should be included within the new British imagined community contrasted with the idea that those who did not serve the state—such as *absolutist* conscientious objectors like Norman Gaudie—should be excluded from the new imagined British community.

As a result of the exclusion clause, municipalities began removing local COs from their voting rolls. On September 2, 1921, according to the *Derby Daily Telegraph* “seven names were erased from the voting lists.”<sup>328</sup> However, one of the defendants displayed a certificate from a Military Tribunal stating he had participated in work of national importance, which reinstated his

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<sup>326</sup> Frank Russell, "Representation of the People Bill," speech, December 17, 1917, Hansard 1803-2005, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/jan/05/military-service-no-2-bill>.

<sup>327</sup> Russell, "Representation of the People Bill," speech, Hansard 1803-2005.

<sup>328</sup> "Conscientious Objectors Lose Votes," *Derby Daily Telegraph* (Derby), September 2, 1921.

voting rights. Clearly, conscientious objectors continued to face discrimination. Conscientious objectors were victims during the immediate post-war period because the defining facets of citizenship in a capitalistic democracy—the right to work and the right to vote—were under direct attack. These campaigns prohibited conscientious objectors from participating with their full civil rights in a national democratic system. Consequently, they became politically incapacitated citizens. The severing of these two civic threads—employment and enfranchisement—expose a lesser-known part of the British Great War experience: The idea that conscientious objectors were victims of political and social prejudice in the immediate post-war period.

While conscientious objectors were politically and socially discriminated against during the post-war period, their legacy was also swept aside, as the British government attempted to bury and even erase their objections and conduct from history. As noted in the introduction of this study, many of the official Tribunal files were deliberately burned in the 1920s.<sup>329</sup> The state needed to erase the history of conscientious objectors because they were a reminder of a contested transition in how the British nation was imagined. Prior to the Military Service Act, the nation was imagined as within a continuum of established traditions and institutions. Britons wanted cohesion and to avoid ideological ruptures. But the introduction of conscription shifted how the nation was imagined, which resulted in a transformation of British society.

Moreover, as historian Adrian Gregory acknowledges, the destruction of vital evidence from an important chapter in British Great War history, “the Military Service Tribunals have largely disappeared from the history of [the Great War]... Yet they were the key, in some

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<sup>329</sup> Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 101.

respects, *the* institution between 1916-1918.”<sup>330</sup> Conscientious objection, as well as domestic and employment issues represented appeals that were lost during the destruction of the files.<sup>331</sup> Nevertheless, in post-war Britain, conscientious objectors were sources of national shame. They neither lived up to the gendered expectations of heroic manliness, nor bought into the imagined emotional British community during the Great War, which Parliament intended to secure with the enacting of the Military Service Act. Reinforcing this intentional disregard of conscientious objection, the British government did not consider memorializing Richmond Castle but instead honored and sanctified the Tommy—that is, the average British soldier—and focused on memorializing the sacrifices of idealized masculine citizens who fought for the state.<sup>332</sup>

In conclusion, though conscription and conscientious objection has been discussed in British Great War historiography, this study approached how the imagined emotional community in Britain was affected by conscription and conscientious objectors, redefining citizenship, military service, and the individual’s relationship with state and society. Moreover, the case studies have shown how two conscientious objectors, David Blelloch and Norman Gaudie, experienced the war differently as a result of their social environments. The relationship between conscription and conscientious objectors must be considered through the lens of national identity, and the understanding of social environment and how it altered an individual male’s experience in the Great War. The conscientious objectors in Britain exposed the inherent

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<sup>330</sup> Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 101.

<sup>331</sup> Adrian Gregory cites an example from the Local Tribunal in Banbury. Approximately 40% of appeals were on domestic grounds, 40% on employment grounds, about 10% on both domestic and employment grounds, and less than 10% on conscientious objectors. Cited from Gregory, *The Last Great War*, 101.

<sup>332</sup> The idea of the “sanctification of the Tommy” was first introduced to me by my Oxford tutor, Calum White at Balliol College in the Fall of 2017.

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contradictions of the Military Service Act. This thesis offers an amendment to Edwin Rodway’s proclamation at his court martial, “I deny your authority to try my conscience,” in the sense that their actions spoke louder than words; by not buying into the imagined emotional community fabricated by Parliament, conscientious objectors rebuked the state’s authority to dictate the individual’s emotions.<sup>333</sup> Rodway’s proclamation evidenced the shift from volunteerism to conscription, showing how men who objected to the state’s authority to dictate how people felt perceived morality within the imagined emotional community of Britain. They are still a lesser known facet of the British story in the Great War. Yet, it was the hope of this thesis to give voice to those 14,000-16,000 men who believed it was their duty to not kill another human in the mechanized slaughter of war. “What the world thought of us matters not at all,” wrote Henry Albrow, “What we did matters.”<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Rodway, Testimony.

<sup>334</sup> Henry Rivett Albrow, *Experiences of a Conscientious Objector: 1915-1919*, 1919, 2, Doc No. 16794. Box No: 08/108/1, Imperial War Museum, London.

## Appendix

### Figures

**Figure 1: "Britons, Join Your Country's Army!"** (also known as "Lord Kitchener Wants You"). Courtesy of Alfred Leate, *Britons, Join Your Country's Army*, 1914, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16577>.



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**Figure 2: "Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?"**

Courtesy of John, Riddle, and Co., *Daddy, What Did YOU Do in the Great War?*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17053>.



*"I Deny Your Authority to Try My Conscience:"  
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**Figure 3: Step Into Your Place**

Courtesy of David Allen and Sons, *Step Into Place*, 1915, illustration, accessed September 12, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27750>.





**Figure 4: The Military Service Act, 1916**

Courtesy of Roberts and Leete Ltd., *Military Service Act, 1916*, illustration, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28449>.

**THE  
MILITARY SERVICE ACT,  
1916,**

APPLIES TO UNMARRIED MEN WHO, ON AUGUST 15th, 1915, WERE 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER AND WHO WILL NOT BE 41 YEARS OF AGE ON MARCH 2nd, 1916.

**ALL MEN (NOT EXCEPTED OR EXEMPTED),**  
between the above ages who, on November 2nd, 1915, were Unmarried or Widowers without any Child dependent on them will, on  
**Thursday, March 2nd, 1916**  
BE DEEMED TO BE ENLISTED FOR THE PERIOD OF THE WAR.  
They will be placed in the Reserve until Called Up in their Class.

**MEN EXCEPTED:**  
SOLDIERS, including Territorials who have volunteered for Foreign Service;  
MEN serving in the NAVY or ROYAL MARINES;  
MEN DISCHARGED from ARMY or NAVY, disabled or ill, or TIME-EXPIRED MEN;  
MEN REJECTED for the ARMY since AUGUST 14th, 1915;  
CLERGYMEN, PRIESTS, and MINISTERS OF RELIGION;  
VISITORS from the DOMINIONS.

**MEN WHO MAY BE EXEMPTED BY LOCAL TRIBUNALS:**  
Men more useful to the Nation in their present employments;  
Men in whose case Military Service would cause serious hardship owing to exceptional financial or business obligations or domestic position;  
Men who are ill or infirm;  
Men who conscientiously object to combatant service. If the Tribunal thinks fit, men may, on this ground, be (a) exempted from combatant service only (not non-combatant service), or (b) exempted on condition that they are engaged in work of National importance.

Up to March 2nd, a man can apply to his Local Tribunal for a certificate of exemption. There is a Right of Appeal. He will not be called up until his case has been dealt with finally.  
Certificates of exemption may be absolute, conditional or temporary. Such certificates can be renewed, varied or withdrawn.  
Men retain their Civil Rights until called up and are amenable to Civil Courts only.

**DO NOT WAIT UNTIL MARCH 2nd.  
ENLIST VOLUNTARILY NOW.**

For fuller particulars of the Act, please apply for Leaflet No. 04 to the nearest Post Office, Police Station, or Recruiting Office.

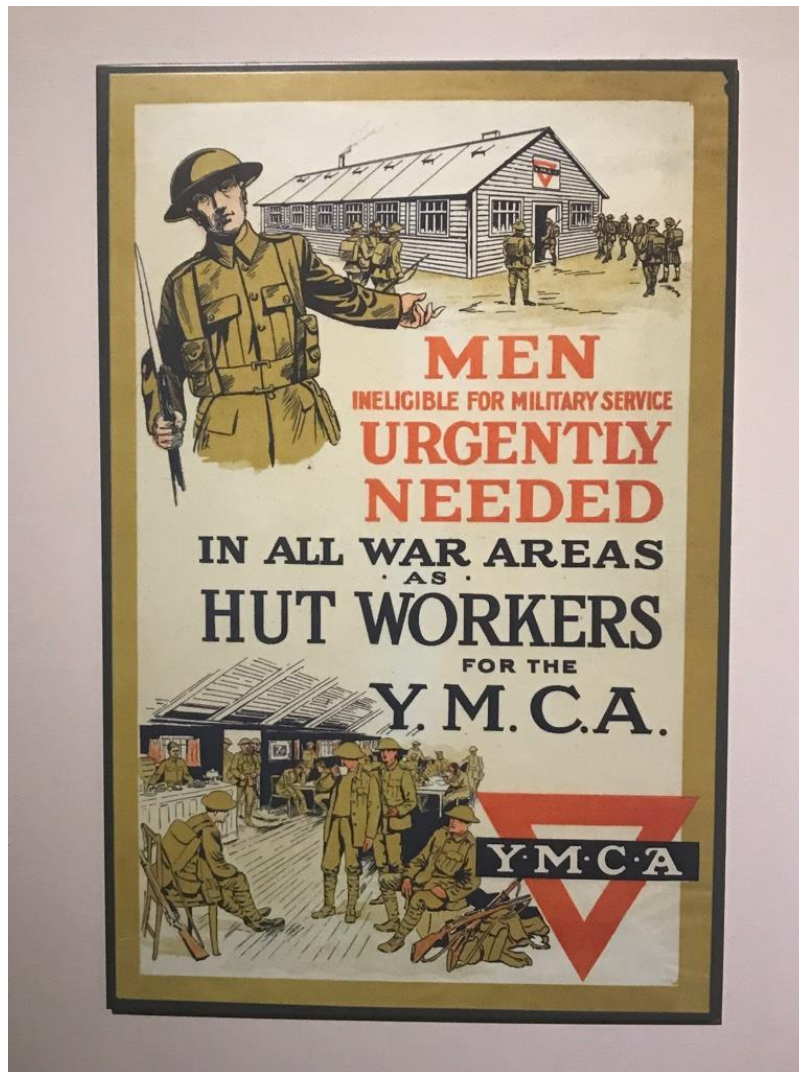
Printed by the War Office, London.

IWM

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**Figure 5: Men Ineligible For Military Service URGENTLY NEEDED In All War Areas As Hut Workers For the YMCA.**

Courtesy of: *Men Ineligible For Military Service URGENTLY NEEDED In All War Areas As Hut Workers For the YMCA*, Your Country Needs You, descriptive plaque, Imperial War Museum, London, UK. Viewed on January 5, 2019. Photo taken by author.



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**Figure 6: Photographed Portrait of Norman Gaudie.**

Photograph Portrait of Norman Gaudie, 1916-1918, Gaudie, Norman: CO O38 Box 1 of 2 File 1 CO/FAU, Liddle Personal Collection, University of Leeds, Leeds.



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**Figure 7: Photographed Portrait of David Habershon Hamilton Belloch**

Courtesy of Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), Photograph of David Belloch, August 1, 1917, accessed March 14, 2019, <http://fau.quaker.org.uk/search-view?forename=&surnam=&page=18>.



## Charts

**Chart 1: Percentages and Amounts of Conscientious Objectors in Great Britain During the Great War (1916-1918)**

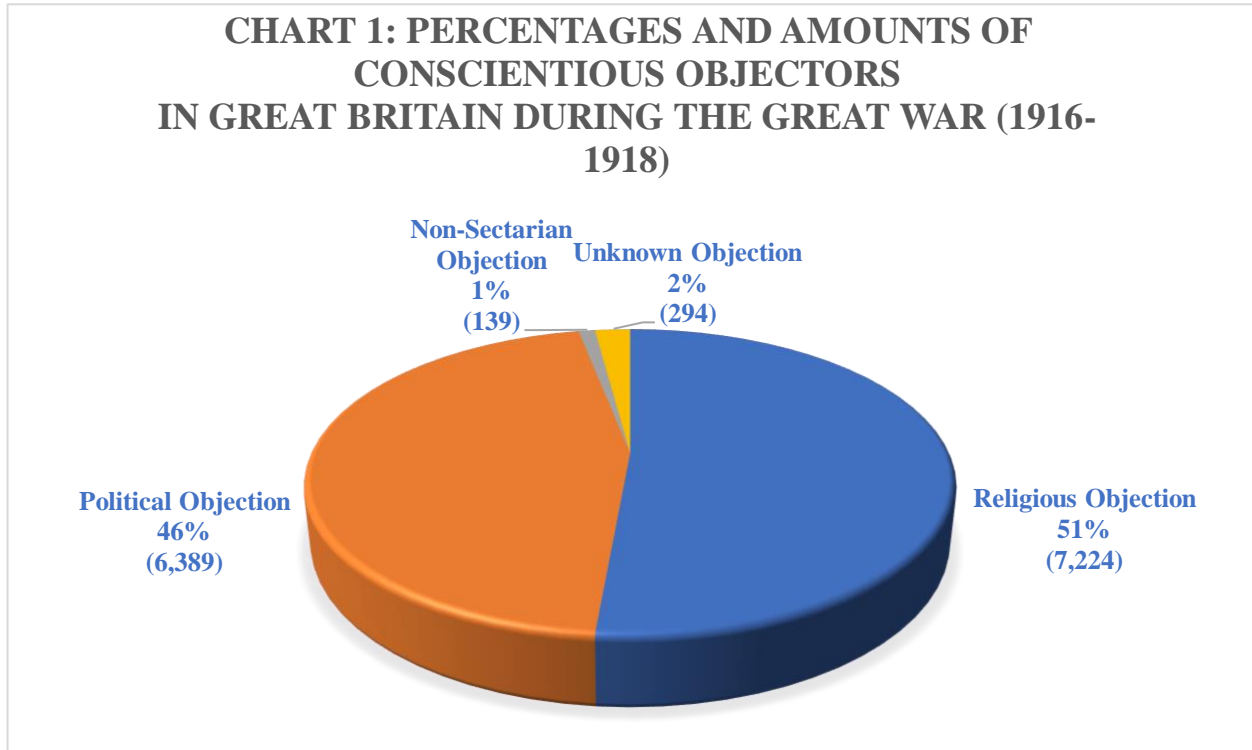


Chart Courtesy of: Albert William Wetter, "Percentages and Amounts of Conscientious Objectors in Great Britain during the Great War (1916-1918)," chart, February 28, 2019, Microsoft Excel.

Data Courtesy of Cyril Pearce, ed., "Pearce Register," *Lives of the First World War*, last modified 2015, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://search.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/search/world-records/conscientious-objectors-register-1914-1918>.

**Chart 2: Chi-Square Test on the Relationship between Privilege and Medical Exemptions in Britain during the Great War**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1		Observed Values						Expected Values					
2			Exemption						Exemption				
3				No	Yes	Total				No	Yes	Total	
4		Privelege	No	92	15	107		Privelege	No	41.77	65.23	107	
5			Yes	22	163	185			Yes	72.23	112.77	185	
6			Total	114	178	292			Total	114	178	292	
7													
8													
9		p-value:	7.06293E-36										
10													
11													

Chart Courtesy of Eric Gaze and Albert William Wetter, "Chi-Square on the Relationship between Privilege and Medical Exemptions in Britain during the Great War," table, February 28, 2019, Microsoft Excel.

Data for Chart Courtesy of Cyril Pearce, ed., "Pearce Register," *Lives of the First World War*, last modified 2015, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://search.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/search/world-records/conscientious-objectors-register-1914-1918>.

**Chart 3: Composition of Religious Conscientious Objectors in Britain during the Great War (1916-1918)**

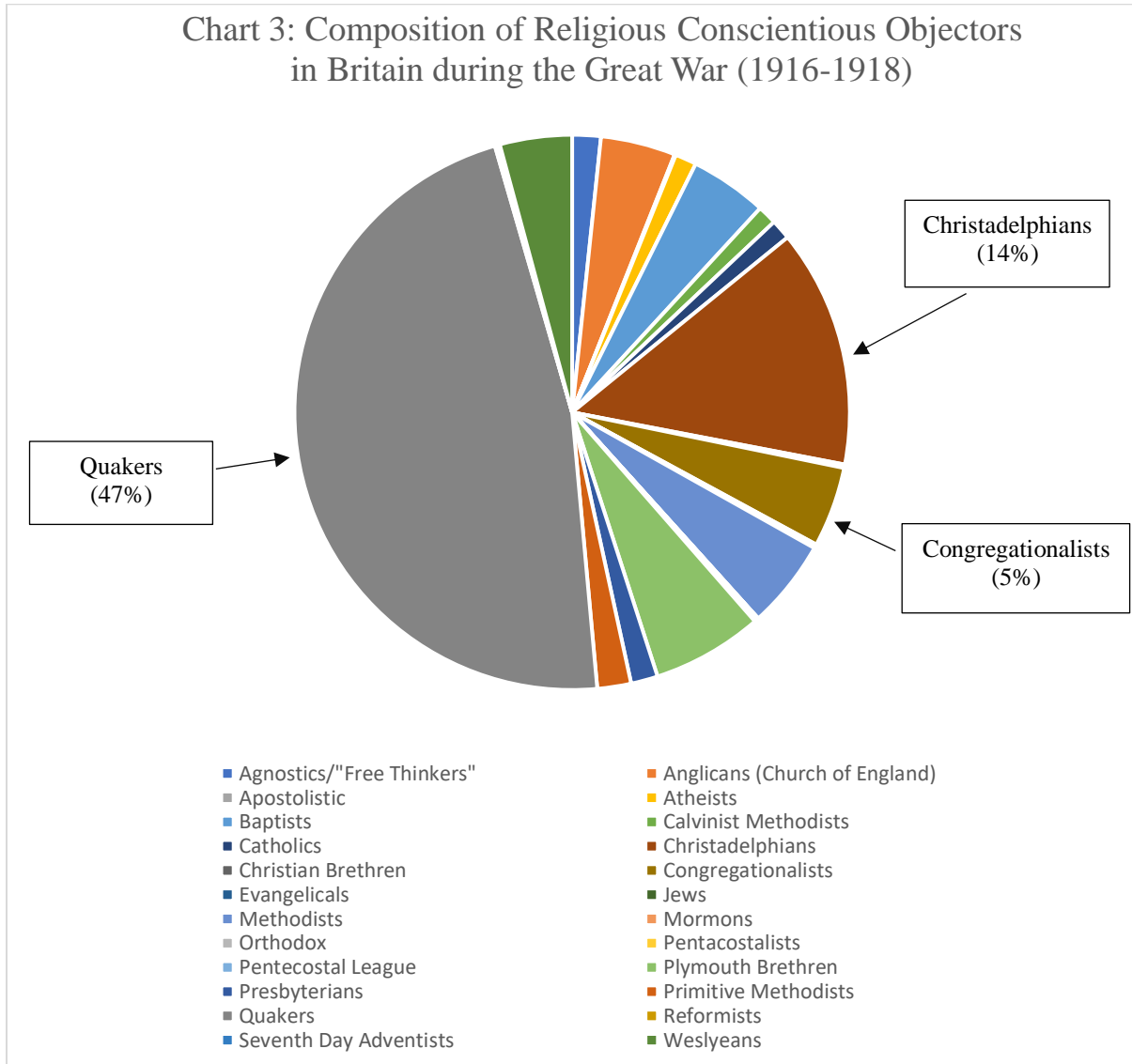


Chart Courtesy of Albert William Wetter, "Composition of Religious Conscientious Objectors in Britain during the Great War (1916-1918)," chart, February 28, 2019, Microsoft Excel.

Data Courtesy of Cyril Pearce, ed., "Pearce Register," *Lives of the First World War*, last modified 2015, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://search.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/search/world-records/conscientious-objectors-register-1914-1918>.

**Chart 3 (Continued): Data For Composition of Religious Conscientious Objectors in Britain during the Great War (1916-1918) (Compiled by author in Excel)**

Type of Religion	Number of Conscientious Objectors
Agnostics/"Free Thinkers"	137
Anglicans (Church of England)	359
Apostolistic	6
Atheists	103
Baptists	371
Calvinist Methodists	92
Catholics	97
Christadelphians	1143
Christian Brethren	17
Congregationalists	386
Evangelicals	6
Jews	13
Methodists	427
Mormons	1
Orthodox	7
Pentacostalists	10
Pentecostal League	3
Plymouth Brethren	532
Presbyterians	129
Primitive Methodists	162
Quakers	3869
Reformists	8
Seventh Day Adventists	16
Weslyeans	346
Total Religious	8240



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