These essays were written as part of the third-year undergraduate course, 'The Great Sacrifice?'. During this paper students carry out a great deal of original research using a wide variety of sources surrounding the First World War. These often innovative essays rarely see the light of day beyond being examined by me as the lecturer. In 2007, I proposed to the students that we publish some of the essays on the web – especially those which had looked at new questions and sources, or had revisited well-trodden questions with a fresh perspective – in order to provide a starting point for future students as well as to begin to build up the social history of New Zealand at war. This is our humble beginning.

I am grateful to the students who agreed to participate and provided their work for editing, and I especially acknowledge Jay Shulamith who took on the task of bringing the essays into some semblance of uniformity.

We hope these essays are useful, and request that if using them, that they are cited appropriately.

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Soldiers’ letters as testimonies of war  
Matthew Scott

The Great War 1914–1918 was a defining moment in the history of New Zealand. Ordinary New Zealanders answered Britain’s call and sailed away to battle. The War had a lasting impact on the country as what was originally thought to be a great adventure turned into four years of bitter struggle that many men did not return from. The fighting was particularly fierce during the 3rd Ypres Campaign in 1917. Letters and diaries written by soldiers during this period assist in understanding what conditions were like for soldiers, both on the battlefield and off. This essay will argue that, due to the viciousness of war, soldiers did not reveal the true extent of their experiences in their letters home. This essay will also argue that there was a difference in what soldiers entered in their diaries compared with the letters sent home. This is primarily because diaries were not used as a form of expression in this period, rather as a tool of remembrance. Soldiers’ experiences during battle and life in the trenches will be focussed on to gain common basis for comparison. New Zealand soldiers were willing to accept the challenges that they faced during the Great War, like all nations they paid the price in blood.

Military officials used glorified depictions of battle as forms of propaganda during the Great War. Allen Frantzen’s book Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice and the Great War details the many ways that propaganda was used to distort the real conditions of the War. Frantzen notes the military officials were passionate about keeping ideals of chivalry ingrained in military culture. Ideals of chivalry were so pervasive that they even affected tactical
decision making.\textsuperscript{1} The actual conditions that a typical soldier was subject to were distorted to those on the home front through the persistent use of propaganda. \textit{Anzacs the Media and the Great War}, written by John Williams describes how New Zealanders were indoctrinated by such propaganda. A dispatch from the front after fighting in the Ypres area shows the type of language used to describe the actions of Anzac soldiers. ‘I have never seen our boys in more magnificent heart... They went into battle as [they] generally do, not singing and laughing like many British regiments, but very grim and silent, with officers marching silently at their head’.\textsuperscript{2} But did soldiers fighting in the Great War strengthen propaganda by sending letters home that diminished their experiences in the War?

The historiography of soldier’s writings during the Great War suggest that there was a discrepancy in what they were experiencing and what they were recounting to their families and friends on the home front. As Gerard de Groot notes many soldiers felt they had more in common with the enemy, who were having similar experiences, than with the people at home.\textsuperscript{3} Other historians also shared this view. Paul Fussell commented that the Great War was a literary war, as the efficiency of the postal service resulted in a vast flow of letters to and from the front lines.\textsuperscript{4} Fussell remarked that there were a number of reasons why soldiers did not recount the actuality of their situation to loved ones at home in these letters. Firstly were the barriers of

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\textsuperscript{2} J Williams, \textit{Anzacs the Media and the Great War}, Kensington N.S.W, New South Wales Press, 1999, p. 196.

\textsuperscript{3} G De Groot, \textit{The First World War}, New York, Palgrave, 2001, p. 147
language, linguistics and rhetoric. Most men found words inadequate to describe their experiences in war, ‘to a foot soldier, war is almost entirely physical. That is why when some men think about war they fall silent. Language seems to falsify physical life and betray those who have experienced it absolutely – the dead’. Another reason was that soldiers understood that the reader did not want to hear bad news; they did not want to expose friends and family to unspeakable atrocities when they did not have to.

Men trying to express their sentiments in letters home found the War difficult to describe. New Zealand soldiers were no exception to this. Paul Fussell accuses soldiers who wrote about their experiences of not being clinical enough. Fussell believes that soldiers needed to be clinical, even obscene in their writings to educate those on the home front to the brutal truths of war. Perhaps Fussell’s conclusion needs to be tempered slightly as there were other factors that contributed to what soldiers could write in their letters, such as military censorship. The vast gap that existed between those fighting the War and those on the home front cannot be overlooked. In their letters soldiers wished to reassure loved ones that they were well. They did not want to overly worry those at home. Soldiers realised that the true

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extent of war could only be grasped by those who witnessed it; letters home were always going to fall short of the whole truth.

Generalisation of information was a common tool in letter writing ‘We are into it again’ Vernon Russell wrote in a letter on the 10th of October 1917.\(^\text{10}\) This effectively announced to his mother and father that the New Zealand Division was involved in the battle of Broodseinde. Military censorship forbade soldiers to give definite locations so only the general area was usually noted. Russell declared that ‘we (New Zealanders) have been making a great name for ourselves’.\(^\text{11}\) Kenneth Luke also reported to his family that ‘the boys had gone over the top at 6a.m that morning’ and they achieved a great victory.\(^\text{12}\) Luke was an officer in the Depot Company and was not a front line soldier. He was keenly aware that the New Zealanders had won a great victory: ‘I wish you people in New Zealand could have seen the animation in this depot’\(^\text{13}\). Kenneth Luke attempted to get a transfer into a rifle brigade for the next ‘move up’. He requested a transfer from his Colonel but ‘he [didn’t] listen to me, he said I was required here more than in the firing line’\(^\text{14}\).

There were no reports to family and friends of a great victory after the Battle of Passchendaele. Douglas McLean ‘thought the losses of the Division had been fairly heavy’, but allayed any fears of his family, commenting that

\(^{10}\) Russell family. Papers, 1914-1921. MS-Papers-1695, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 10 October 1917.
\(^{11}\) Russell family. Papers, 10 October 1917.
\(^{13}\) Kenneth Luke, Letters to his family. 7 October 1917.
\(^{14}\) Kenneth Luke, Letters to his family. 7 October 1917.
he had ‘managed to scrape through with his usual luck’.\textsuperscript{15} McLean told his mother that ‘this has been just such another go as the Somme, plenty of mud and land fighting’, admitting he was glad to get away from the ‘guns of this last stint’.\textsuperscript{16} Letters could not express the slaughter that the New Zealanders were subject to on the 12\textsuperscript{th} of October 1917. Kenneth Luke was ‘sorry to say our losses were very heavy ... when the New Zealand Rifle Brigade, my Brigade, went into action’. He stated that many troops drowned after being wounded, as they fell into shell holes that were full of water and mud.\textsuperscript{17} George Tuck believed that only the ‘generous mercy of Providence’ had kept him alive that day: many of those who witnessed the event would have agreed.\textsuperscript{18}

New Zealand soldiers provided commentary on conditions of front line life but found them difficult to describe. Peter Howden commented that his ‘dugout was a fairly palatial affair compared to what some of the other chaps have got’.\textsuperscript{19} He shows a sense of humour when describing his bedding for the night as ‘duck walks... covered with the remains of old sheets and old blankets’ which ‘make quite a comfortable bed ... “Comfortable” to the extent that there are no large lumps’.\textsuperscript{20} George Horn starts a letter to his family by

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\textsuperscript{16} Douglas McLean, Letters to family, 20 October 1917.
\textsuperscript{17} Douglas McLean, Letters to family, 20 October 1917.
\textsuperscript{18} George Tuck, Outward correspondence from Tuck to his parents, Jul-Dec 1917. MS-Papers-3879-06, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 26 October 1917.
\textsuperscript{19} Peter Howden, Outward correspondence to Rhoda Howden, 5 Jul-14 Oct 1917. MS-Papers-1504-4, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 1 October 1917.
\textsuperscript{20} Peter Howden, Outward correspondence to Rhoda Howard, 1 October 1917.
\end{flushright}
letting them know he is ‘still in the muck’. Vernon Russell told his parents that he was ‘sliding around in the Flanders mud, mush worse than anything New Zealand could produce’. Mud was a fact of life for troops on the Western Front; they had to manage the best they could. A soldier recounted that Ypres was just the same thing over again, ‘smells, shells, shell holes, bombardment, Huns and mud – the same old things’.

New Zealand historian Glyn Harper has studied the letters of New Zealand soldiers during the Great War. Harper concluded that despite the brutal nature of the War New Zealand soldiers did not view it as an exercise in futility. He notes that although many saw the War as being protracted and needlessly costly, they always believed in what they were fighting for – King and country and for their families back home. Sergeant Allen Wilson’s last testament was found in his pocket after he had been killed on October 4th 1917. Addressed to his father it began ‘If you are reading these lines you will be aware that I have been called upon to render the most extreme sacrifice that my country can ask of her sons’. Sergeant Allen was willing to accept death for what he believed to be the greater good. Harper suggests that subsequent generations have lost sight of this purpose and as a result shift the focus onto other aspects.

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21 George Horn, Letters to family, 1917. MS-Papers-8794-6, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 10 December 1917.
22 Russell family. Papers, 10 October 1917.
23 Lindsay Inglis, Letters to his fiancée, Jan – Dec 1917. MS-Papers-0421-05, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 26 October 1917.
26 Harper, Letters from the Battlefield, p. 158.
War believed they were fulfilling their duty to the Empire and to their loved ones. Not sharing their experiences in detail through letters was merely an extension of their duty. To keep those at home safe, free from the violence of war.

In contrast to letters, perfunctory entries show that New Zealand soldiers used diaries as tools of remembrance. Diaries act as reminders of what happened rather than a means to express personal feelings about the war. However, from a just bare recitation of events personal thoughts and attitudes can be gained. An example is the relief that soldiers feel coming off the front line. This speaks to what a terrible and frightening experience it must have been for these men. Frederick Varnham expressed his contentment when receiving a 'comfortable billet, hot coffee and bread and butter' as he arrived behind the lines 'dog tired and weary'.

Their experiences were so horrific that soldiers would never forget the way they felt during the War. Soldiers often repressed their most disturbing experiences and feelings, saving these for private reflection, and focused on lighter aspects of the War. Possibly they needed to write down events to remind, and validate, to themselves the reasons why they fought. Reflecting and finding purpose for their actions and sufferings.

Living conditions on the front lines were horrendous. Soldiers were in a constant battle not only with the enemy but also the elements. The Ypres

area was prone to flooding; the soil consisted primarily of clay with a minute amount of topsoil. Due to the composition of the soil water drained away very slowly and tended to stagnate in large areas.\(^{30}\) Constant bombardment coupled with heavy rain resulted in a quagmire of liquid mud, which troops operated in during the Passchendaele campaign. Ypres had been a crucial theatre of the War since 1914, and by 1917 was absolutely devastated. Nothing had survived during the three years of war. Not a building was left standing and all that could be seen was twisted rubble and muddy fields, pockmarked with shell holes.\(^{31}\) This awaited the New Zealand troops when they marched in and took up positions in late September 1917.

Conditions of the front line life where widely commented on in the diaries. Reading the entries of the New Zealand soldiers gives an indication of how terrible life in the trenches must have been. Harry Bourke noted that he had ‘a pretty cold dugout here, with a nice layer of water in the bottom of it’.\(^{32}\) Sarcasm was used in attempts to make light of the situation. One had to have a sense of humour in attempts to stay upbeat about an otherwise desperate situation.\(^{33}\) Bourke was grateful for ‘clean straw to sleep on, and a roof over [his] head’ when he came off the front line, remarking that is was ‘tip top after the wet tents’.\(^{34}\) Such enthusiasm over sleeping in a barn shows a complete change of attitude that war inspired. What once would have been frowned upon had been transformed into a form of first-class

\(^{31}\) Wolff, *In Flanders Fields*, p. 83.
\(^{32}\) Harry Bourke, Diary, 9 June-19 Oct 1917. MS-Papers-2481-1, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, October 10 1917.
accommodation. Soldiers had to make the best of what limited resources were available to them.

Grim determination assisted New Zealand soldiers in the squalor of front line trenches. Harry Bourke noted ‘my neighbour started to dig in the bottom of the trench to clean out the mud. He had only gone a few inches, when he struck a boot, and further investigations showed that a man was buried there, so we soon covered him up again’. Horrifying experiences such as this were far from unusual when living on the front lines. Men also lacked the sufficient clothing required in the conditions and spent many nights huddled next to their comrades in attempts to stay warm. It was a fight for survival on the battle fields of the Western Front. Not only did soldiers battle against the enemy, but they also fought for survival in their own the trenches. The trench for the soldier of the Great War was a double edged sword, they protected and also killed.

Trepidation surrounded most soldiers’ entries into their diaries as they were about to go into combat. No one really knew what to expect, as information from headquarters was not as forthcoming as many men may have liked: ‘there were all sorts of guesses to where we [were] going’. While officers like Frederick Varnham often had prior knowledge of the attacks and battle plans, many of the regular soldiers had the briefest of

33 Phillips, A Man’s Country, p. 137.
34 Harry Bourke, Diary, October 9 1917.
35 Harry Bourke, Diary, October 18 1917
36 Frederick Varnham, War Diaries, October 2 1917.
37 Harry Bourke, Diary, October 10 1917.
instructions. Private Robin Hamely only knew they were ‘moving up’ to the line when they were issued with their equipment for battle. On their way to the front on the 3rd of October 1917 Robin Hamely’s company came under heavy fire. His thoughts must have been akin to most when he wrote, ‘I am in the hands of God. So are we all. Preserve us Lord.’

Fighting during the 3rd Ypres campaign was vicious. The New Zealanders were engaged in two major encounters, first at Broodseinde on the 4th October and then the First Battle of Passchendaele on the 12th of October. The battle of Broodseinde was a great success for the New Zealand troops who succeeded in meeting their objectives; however the fighting was still extremely fierce. Frederick Varnham took part in the battle of Broodseinde and entered his contribution into his diary. Varnham summed up the Battle as ‘a great victory’, but was rather mechanical in his detailing of it, as were most soldiers who entered details of the battles. This is evidence of soldier’s finding words inappropriate to describe their experiences in battle. Varnham’s account of advancing under ‘fairly heavy’ German fire gives the impression that the mission went off with relative ease. Secondary sources reveal the true extent of the fighting that day. Robin Hamley was not so fortunate during the battle of Broodseinde, he was shot in the stomach and

38 Frederick Varnham, War Diaries, 30 September 1917.
39 Robin Hamley, Diary, 1 Jan-4 Oct 1917. MS-Papers-2499, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 2-3 October 1917.
41 Frederick Varnham, War Diaries, 4 October 1917.
42 Harper, Massacre at Passchendaele, pp. 32-49.
neck but managed to make one final entry into his diary ‘Dear M D and G, think I’m dying, best love, don’t fret, tell Dorothy, Rob’.43

The New Zealand Division’s second major encounter during the 3rd Ypres came on the 12th of October. The New Zealanders had been fortunate during the battle of Broodseinde, as their attack had been a surprise. At Passchendaele the Germans were waiting for them. Heartened by the success of the October 4th attack, Allied Commanders were too ambitious when setting objectives. Sodden terrain made artillery support ineffective, so the infantry had to advance with virtually no cover, constantly being held up by wire that had not been cut by the bombardment. Kiwi troops were caught in the wire and shot down by German machine gunners; 1200 New Zealanders died and up to 2500 were wounded.44 Eric Morgan reveals that the ‘damage was not to good like last week’ as ‘pillboxes held up our boys in front of Passchendaele Ridge’.45 Morgan also notes getting trapped in no man’s land, having to ‘shelter in a destroyed tank’. All the while, ‘batteries of all calibre guns [were] destroying ground about [them]’.46 Thomas Preston was fortunate: his company was not in the main assault unit. Instead, he was in the reserve. Preston noted in his diary that ‘we did a lot of stretcher bearing’.47

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43 Robin Hamley, Diary, 4 October 1917.
46 Eric Morgan, Diary, 12 October 1917.
The letters and diaries written by New Zealand soldiers fighting during the 3rd Ypres Campaign offer a unique view of the event. It becomes clear from reading these letters and diaries that only by witnessing the event would a true indication of the War be gained. Soldiers understood this and sought to protect their families from the devastation of the War, never willing to provide too much information that might harm those at home. Soldiers also struggled to illustrate the war in their diaries. By using them as tools of remembrance soldiers could detail their actions, and reflect on them at a later date. The cost to New Zealand during the Great War was high. A generation of young men lay in cemeteries instead of assisting in the development of a progressive country. New Zealanders of later generations have to believe in the ideals their predecessors were fighting for. If not, the terrible toll that the War imposed on this country would be for nothing.
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Playing the Game

How significant was the New Zealand public in influencing the official treatment of conscientious objectors during the Great War?

Franchesca Walker

On 25 April 2007, members of Peace Action Wellington (PAW) were arrested following a protest which disrupted Wellington’s Anzac Day dawn service. Holding a sign reading ‘Conscientious Objectors: the real war heroes’, the protestors attempted to highlight what a PAW spokesperson called the ‘the hypocrisy’ of Anzac Day.48 Such a move, when coupled with the blowing of horns and burning of a New Zealand flag, was widely criticised: current Defence Minister Phil Goff claimed that it showed a depth of ignorance while the Wellington RSA stated that it was an act of ‘extreme disrespect’.49 It is thus unsurprising that two protestors were subsequently arrested on charges of offensive behaviour and the obstruction of police.50 As one of the thousands who attended the Wellington dawn service, I witnessed the protest and followed with interest New Zealand’s response. Generally, the official and public reaction was one of disgust; PAW was dishonouring the memory of fallen soldiers by protesting at an inappropriate time. In many ways, this

outrage displays the ongoing tendency of the New Zealand public to embrace conformity above outspokenness. Indeed, the response that PAW’s actions generated was more due to the timing of the protest than the protest itself. This has remarkable parallels to the public perception of conscientious objectors during the Great War. At this time, it was considered that in maintaining an anti-war stance, objectors were failing to ‘play the game’.

The following essay will aim to examine how such desire for conformity shaped the treatment of conscientious objectors. The term ‘conscientious objector’ is used rather liberally: as H.E. Holland has indicated, various motivations drove men to resist compulsion. For the most part, objectors were either Christian, socialist, Irish or Maori. While Maori resistance to conscription maintains a significant chapter in New Zealand’s history of the Great War, the focus of this essay will be on Pakeha objectors. It will be argued that the treatment received by these men arose from a war culture which caused New Zealand’s high regard for conformity to develop into the promotion of simplistic solutions. As has been pointed out by Megan Hutching, it is difficult to analyse the feelings of a population as a whole. Such a problem is magnified when one is arguing that the majority of New Zealand remained in the shadows on the question of objection, as I do in this essay. However, even in silence the public inadvertently influenced the official treatment of conscientious objectors. While the majority of the public

did not pressure Parliament to overlook conscience as a reason for exemption from military service nor lobby for more severe punishment, neither did they contest it. This lack of mass opposition allowed more vocal minorities to dominate. Despite the silence, one is able to gain an underlying sense of what drove the New Zealand public. Whether in mainstream newspapers like the *Dominion*, or pro-conscriptionist publications such as *Observer* or *Freelance*, correspondents display a belief that objectors were letting the country down by failing to ‘play the game’. As such, two conclusions will be reached: firstly, that the war culture caused New Zealand to prize simplicity above conflict and secondly, that this simplicity prevented the majority of New Zealanders from directly influencing the treatment of conscientious objectors. It is thus perhaps fitting that PAW chose to highlight the role of this country’s objectors. Though the response to their protest was one of outrage and condemnation as opposed to widespread silence, it nevertheless displayed that New Zealand continues to demand conformity from all members of society.

The outbreak of war in 1914 marked New Zealand’s mass entry into another realm. Labelled a ‘war culture’ by Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, this realm was a place where equal sacrifice and simple solutions reigned, with contradictions to these doctrines virtually outlawed. For those countries at war, the international conflict with which they were faced represented an escape from the problems of industrial civilization. Men

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52 Megan Hutching, “‘Turn Back this Tide of Barbarism’: New Zealand Women who were Opposed to War, 1896-1919”, MA Thesis, University of Auckland, 1990, p.163.
were no longer divided along class lines, but unified in a world ruled by
comradeship, discipline, authority and common purpose.\textsuperscript{54} As has been put
by Eric J. Leed, ‘war was seen as the binary opposite of social life and the
counterpole to normal existence in modern industrial society’.\textsuperscript{55} As such, war
promised uncomplicated armed conflict as a replacement for domestic
division. In New Zealand, acceptance of this view contributed to the
nationalistic outpourings following the declaration of war on the 5 August
1914. According to the \textit{New Zealand Truth} ‘all indecision vanished as if by
magic, and one and all became eager to do something in the way of
rendering practical aid for the defence of…the British Empire’.\textsuperscript{56} Likewise, the
\textit{Press} wrote of crowds waving Union Jacks and becoming united through
song.\textsuperscript{57} While such initial fervour declined as the war continued, the country
remained encased in the war culture. In relation to Britain, Audoin-Rouzeau
and Becker claim that the validity of war was never opposed by the majority
of the public not because of unquestioning acceptance, but because their
early emotional investment prevented them from doing so.\textsuperscript{58} After voluntarily
contributing a large proportion of their male population, and accepting that
the reported German atrocities must be prevented, it was virtually impossible
for the public to seriously consider opposition. Similarly in New Zealand, the
early belief that war was a simple solution to domestic division meant that

\textsuperscript{53} Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, \textit{14 – 18: Understanding the Great
\textsuperscript{54} Eric Leed, \textit{No Man’s Land: Combat and Identity in World War I}, Cambridge, p.41.
\textsuperscript{55} Eric Leed, \textit{No Man’s Land: Combat and Identity in World War I}, Cambridge.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{New Zealand Truth}, 8 August 1914, p.5.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Press}, 6 August 1914, p.8 in Megan Hutching, “‘Turn Back this Tide of Barbarism’”,
p.103.
\textsuperscript{58} Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker, p.98.
conformity had to be maintained. While a large percentage of the population may have disagreed with the way in which objectors were treated by officials, any outspokenness would have fractured the façade of simplicity. In essence, the public migration into the war culture prevented any mass discontent.

These societal pressures played a significant role in New Zealand’s adoption of conscription. Passed in to law on 1 August 1916,59 the Military Service Act was initially promoted as a simple solution to the complications presented by the volunteering system. By the end of 1915, it was widely believed that New Zealand’s form of enlistment prevented equality of sacrifice. While some families sent away all their sons, others contained no enlisted men. Likewise, Catholics were regarded as insufficiently eager to join up in contrast to Protestant men.60 When coupled with benefits such as the prevention of underage enlistment and an order of sacrifice which would protect vital industries, conscription became synonymous with organization. With its assurance of equal treatment, the system seemed to fit perfectly within the war culture. As such, the public clamoured for conscription with increasing urgency. A Reform Member of Parliament (MP) quoted in the Auckland Star highlighted the desire for compulsion by stating that ‘surely the Government must see by this time the public opinion is dead against the

inequality and injustice of the played out system of voluntarism?" 61 This was echoed by Freelance, which claimed that if a referendum was taken on the subject ‘the result would be an overwhelming majority of “Ayes”’. 62 When the Military Service Bill was introduced to Parliament on 31 May 1916, 63 MPs echoed the growing public desire for simple solutions to an imperfect system. A member called upon the House to ‘put in operation a better system, under which the sacrifices will be distributed fairly and equitably’. 64 As such, it was not the need to fill reinforcement quotas that primarily motivated the Military Service Bill, but a desire for a simple organization. With such conformity legislating society, this motivation would impact significantly on those who sought to move against it.

It is ironic that although the Military Service Bill sought to avoid complexity by demanding the entire population contribute equally, its enforcement gave birth to division by stimulating illegal conscientious objection. Nevertheless, the Government virtually ignored such inevitable complexity. When reading the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates it is evident that MPs struggled to accept that individuals would have genuine objections to the war. When the question of religious exemption was raised in the House, speakers were frequently interrupted by jokes from other members. 65 The scorn placed on conscientious objectors reached such a level that an MP questioned if the House ‘admitted that there was such a thing as

63 Holland, p.10.
conscience at all’ as ‘the derision with which conscience was referred to, the contempt that was thrown upon it...made me wonder’. 66

Despite this outcry, there was little change in the way objection was viewed. When the Military Service Bill was eventually passed, it contained only a narrow exemption clause. For a balloted man to be exempted, he had to be a member of a religion whose doctrine stated its opposition to the bearing of arms. What’s more, he had to have been a member of this group prior to 4 August 1914, and prove he adhered to the convictions of the religion. 67 In practice, this only exempted Quakers, Christadelphians and Seventh-Day Adventists, and even then it was expected that they would undertake alternative service in the Ambulance or Army Service. As P.S. O’Connor has stated, ‘there was to be absolutely no escape for the “shirker”’. 68 This was an overly simplistic response to an otherwise complex issue. According to Paul Baker, the majority of MPs were not wholly opposed to exemption. 69 However, they were determined to maintain the equality of sacrifice. As such, Socialist, Irish and non-conscientious objectors were grouped together, and subsequently overlooked. By regarding society as having only one dissenting voice – that of the religious objector – Parliament displayed its support for uncomplicated solutions. Rather than acknowledge that sections of society did not agree with the cohesion façade, the Government instead viewed New Zealand as being divided into three groups

67 Pugsley, p.225.
69 Baker, p.171.
– those willing to participate in the war; legitimate religious objectors; and
shirkers.

Less than eight months before New Zealand’s Military Service Act became law, Britain also imposed conscription. In contrast, however, Britain’s version of the legislation allowed for religious and moral objections to armed military service. A New Zealand MP, when the example set by Britain was discussed in Parliament, cried that the exemption clause was the ‘biggest blot in the Bill’. Indeed, while the intentions of the British Parliament may have been honourable, in practice the exemption clause was ineffective due to its inability to be implemented as intended. According to Cyril Pearce, this primarily arose out of the Act’s ambiguous wording, which led many Tribunals to believe that conscientious objectors could not be absolutely exempted. Likewise, John Rae has argued that the Tribunals received little direction from the President of the Local Government Board, Walter Long, as to how to interpret the Act. As such, tribunal members often imposed the law in a high-handed manner. One conscientious objector was allegedly told he was only fit ‘to be on the point of a German bayonet’, while another was called a ‘shivering mass of unwholesome fat’. Regardless of the application of the Military Service Act, the fact remains that Britain was willing to consider the complexity of society during the Great War. While conformity

72 Cyril Pearce, Comrades in Conscience: The Story of an English community’s opposition to the Great War, London, p.159.
74 Kennedy, p.109.
was desired, it was not idealistically promoted through legislation to the same extent as New Zealand, nor was its public as desirous of cohesion. Indeed, Pearce has alleged that following the passing of the Military Service Act, British objectors were regarded with increasing respect.\textsuperscript{75}

In contrast, the New Zealand Government’s lack of regard for men opposed to compulsion was legitimated by a similar public response. When Parliament passed the Military Service Bill containing the exemption clause, \textit{Freelance} commented that ‘a sad blunder was made by Parliament...in ever accepting the principle of “conscientious” objection.’\textsuperscript{76} In essence, the public took the desire for simple solutions one step further than Parliament. Rather than three groups, New Zealand could have been divided into two categories: the patriotic participant and the shirker. Such a view was indicated in correspondence to the \textit{Methodist Times} which claimed ‘the proper name for conscientious objection is moral squeamishness’.\textsuperscript{77}

Despite the widespread derision placed on objectors, not everyone was in favour of the narrow exemption clauses in the Military Service Act. Indeed, it was stated by Holland that the population of New Zealand were ‘outraged people’ following its passing.\textsuperscript{78} While this may have been overstating the public response, a nucleus of anti-war individuals did take exception with the Act. Led by groups such as the New Zealand Freedom League, the Canterbury Women’s Institute, the National Peace Council and various trade unions, sections of society did disrupt the desired conformity by questioning

\textsuperscript{75} Pearce, p.158.
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Freelance}, 3 August 1917, p.8.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Methodist Times}, 29 April 1916, p.5 in Baker, p.173.
both the war’s validity and the imposition of conscription.\textsuperscript{79} Sarah Saunders Page, writing on behalf of the Canterbury Women’s Institute, voiced the concerns of many of these groups in saying that in imposing compulsion, the government was ‘filching [men’s] freedom of choice’ and denying the ‘right of free thought, free speech and public discussion on the questions of the utmost importance to the community’.\textsuperscript{80}

Despite these sentiments being passionately voiced, New Zealand generally lacked the coordination that was needed to significantly change the way in which conscientious objectors were treated under the Military Service Act. In contrast to Britain, which boasted the umbrella organisation No Conscription Fellowship with approximately 10,000 members, New Zealand objectors were only supported by their family and church.\textsuperscript{81} Indeed, there was a tendency for New Zealand protest to be fragmented and pursued only for self-interested reasons rather than significant change. This was particularly evident in the reaction to the conscription of Catholic priests and theological students. While the Government had no intention of conscripting the Catholic spiritual leaders, they were not included in the exemption clause in the Military Service Bill. Rather, in order to maintain the equality of sacrifice so highly prized by the public, it was left to the Military Service Boards to excuse priests and theological students. While most complied with the Government’s wishes, a few Boards decided to enforce the ballot.

\textsuperscript{78} Holland, p.13.
\textsuperscript{79} Hutching, “”Turn Back this Tide of Barbarism””, p.107.
According to Baker, this caused a ‘Catholic outrage’, resulting in Defence Minister James Allen being bombarded with letters from congregations, Catholic Federations and Hibernian Societies.\textsuperscript{82} Faced with the overwhelming demands, Cabinet intervened and placed pressure on Boards to comply with the Government’s original intentions. By May 1917, this had resulted in the acceptance of ministerial certificates as a reason for exemption. What is most interesting about this incident is the fact that through organisation, the Catholic Church was able to stimulate a favourable response. Had this been applied across all anti-conscription organisations, the treatment of conscientious objectors may have been considerably different: as Holland has pointed out ‘it is organisation that counts’.\textsuperscript{83} However, the inability to do so displays a sense of reluctance by the groups. When also considering that they kept a low profile from August 1914 to early 1915 – when war culture was at its height – suggests that even those who claimed to oppose the war may have viewed public solidarity as more important than outspokenness.\textsuperscript{84} If the Catholic response is an indication of the social environment, it would appear that New Zealanders favoured simplistic paths until their position was significantly threatened.

Indeed, accounts published by conscientious objectors after 1918 indicate that there were many people sympathetic to the objector’s plight. Archibald Baxter’s book \textit{We Will Not Cease} is full of small kindnesses shown to both him and the thirteen other men shipped to the Western Front in an

\textsuperscript{81} Baker, p.171.  
\textsuperscript{82} Baker, p.126.  
\textsuperscript{83} Holland, p.19.
attempt to break their staunch objections. While being taken to Europe, he not only writes of troops who gave the prisoners fruit and chocolate but of Waitemata’s cook who prepared steak for the objectors as ‘they’re men after my own heart!’ Likewise, when forced to experience the Frontline, Baxter was supported through a bombardment by a number of soldiers. However, individual acts of kindness such as these did not have the ability to significantly alter the treatment of conscientious objectors. Whether or not they supported the way in which objectors were treated, the lack of widespread discontent meant the system was supported by default. This is poignantly illustrated in Mark Briggs’ account of his experiences as one of the ‘Fourteen’: as the men were being forced onto the Waitemata, some wharf labourers called out that ‘you have our sympathy’. In response, Briggs cried ‘we want more than that’.

Without the outspokenness that Briggs demanded on 13 July 1917, the New Zealand public was generally unable to influence the treatment of conscientious objectors beyond Parliament. After having been denied exemption from compulsory military service by Boards, men who continued to remain defiant experienced a full court martial at Trentham and were subsequently sentenced to hard labour of between 11 months and two years. According to Baker, the treatment of prisoners was reliant on the nature of

84 Hutching, ““Turn Back this Tide of Barbarism””, p.107.
those who controlled the camps.\textsuperscript{89} Due to the good behaviour usually displayed by the men, there were rarely any beatings and the objectors were treated in a similar way to any other criminal.\textsuperscript{90} Of course, there were exceptions to this model. Under the command of Lieutenant J.L. Crampton, for example, the Wanganui Barracks was ruled by Crampton’s maxim ‘either I beat you or you beat me, and I’ll take good care you don’t beat me.’\textsuperscript{91} Partly on the understanding that objectors could be reformed through brutality, and partly due to Crampton’s violent nature, men were often forcibly dressed in military uniform including a weighted pack and a rifle tied to their shoulders. This done, the men were ordered to march. If they refused, they were kicked, punched and pulled (sometimes with a rope) in an attempt to force submission.\textsuperscript{92} According to Commissioner J.G.L. Hewitt’s investigation into the Barracks, when an objector came to a corner of the yard ‘he was pushed so as to bump against the wall of tin, so that he would strike it with his head’.\textsuperscript{93}

The fact that this brutality raised little protest throughout New Zealand shows the extent to which war culture subverted any possible outcry.\textsuperscript{94} Indeed, it was only after the Armistice was signed that the public was able to criticise the treatment of objectors at the Wanganui Barracks with the publication of Hewitt’s Magisterial Inquiry findings. At this time, the Press felt justified in claiming that ‘the methods adopted were so cruel that they would

\textsuperscript{89} Baker, p.177.  
\textsuperscript{90} Garth C. Ballantyne, ‘Garth C. Ballantyne’, in Holland, p.88.  
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Press}, 6 December 1918, p.6.  
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Press}, 6 December 1918.  
\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Press}, 6 December 1918.
have done credit to the Huns’.\textsuperscript{95} Yet it simultaneously noted that ‘when the complaints were being discussed some months ago, most people believed that the stories of brutal ill-usage were inventions’.\textsuperscript{96} While the simplicity of the war culture reigned, New Zealanders felt there was little reason to question the treatment of those who refused to conform. As was summed up by a correspondent to the \textit{Press}, at the time that such reports were first heard, the public believed that ‘these C.O.’s did not “play the game,” and deserved far more than they received’.\textsuperscript{97} It was only after the war ended, once New Zealand had re-adopted the complexities associated with a peaceful industrial civilization that the simplicity offered by silence was ignored.

In April of this year, the war culture which dominated New Zealand society between 1914 and 1918 once again reared its head. While the actions undertaken by PAW and the prolonged protest carried out by New Zealand’s conscientious objectors are separated by some ninety years, both groups were subjected to societal pressure to conform. Rather than the widespread condemnation that arose from PAW’s protest, however, the Great War objectors were generally met by silence from society. After indirectly pressuring the Government to impose conscription in an attempt to simplify the volunteering system, the majority of New Zealanders became spectators, allowing the minority to dominate proceedings. These moves were motivated by the war culture, which metamorphosed New Zealand’s support for

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\textsuperscript{94} Baker, p.196.
\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Press}, 7 December 1918, p.8.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Press}, 7 December 1918.
\end{flushleft}
conformity into something perhaps more sinister – the desire for the simple solution. As such, any potential domestic conflict was avoided, with the victims being outspokenness and widespread condemnation of the treatment of conscientious objectors. Parliament, in the pursuit of equality, thus imposed a narrow exemption clause that was ill-fitted to the complexities of society. Likewise, objectors were subjected to the individual natures of prison commandants with little public intervention. It was only after the Armistice was signed that New Zealand society felt justified in speaking against the treatment of conscientious objectors. With the division, inequality and conflict that traditionally characterised a peaceful industrial society, the public was once again able to travel the less simple path. It is therefore perhaps fitting that PAW chose to highlight the role of the conscientious objector during their protest in April 2007. Their actions highlighted that the majority of New Zealanders continue to ‘play the game’, despite claiming to live in a democracy where differences are supported.

97 Press, 9 December 1918, p.10.
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To what extent were the 1914 to 1918 New Zealand School Journals representative of the Edwardian era ideas about girls’ and boys’ roles?

Jay Shulamith

The 1914 to 1918 New Zealand School Journals were largely a product of their time. This essay will discuss the roles that boys and girls were expected to display in Edwardian times, and will then discuss how these roles were exemplified in the 1914 to 1918 New Zealand School Journals. Firstly we will define this topic further, and then we must look at New Zealand society at large during the Edwardian era, which will help us to understand the roles that children were expected to exhibit. The essay will then discuss what Edwardian people thought the roles of boys and girls were. Finally, we will look at the New Zealand School Journals from 1914 to 1918 and how they were representative of Edwardian ideas about boys’ and girls’ roles. While the roles that children were expected to play were often different, the values that underpinned the roles they were expected to exhibit were often the same. And, because there were a wide variety of roles that children were expected to play, this essay will look primarily at the major values that underpin the roles.

As the time period covered by the Edwardian era is widely disputed (ranging from 1901 to 1910, when Edward abdicated; or from 1901 to 1912, when the Titanic sank; or from 1901 to 1914, the beginning of the Great War; or even from 1901 to 1918, the end of the Great War), we must also define the time period that this study entails. As I wanted to see if there was any change over the war period of the behaviours expected to be exhibited of
young people, this essay will cover the period 1901 to 1918. The Oxford dictionary defines roles as ‘the behaviour expected of a particular person by society’. This essay will primarily focus on children between the ages of five and twelve, which is the age range of the majority of the readers of the New Zealand School Journals. However, this does not mean that the Edwardian ideas about girls’ and boys’ roles were totally confined to this age group.

In the minds of its founders, the Journal was a tonic and a subtle enforcer of colonial values. Current Journal editor Tricia Glensor considers the early issues were designed ‘not so much to change the world as to enshrine and preserve the values of a world that was soon to disappear forever’. New Zealand was at that time still drawn to an imperial ideology, taken directly from her mother country, England. This meant that the values and beliefs illustrated in the New Zealand School Journals were largely drawn from English values and beliefs around children’s roles.

‘Doing your duty’ was the first role that children were expected to play. Children were expected to do their duty to a variety of people and ideas, including their parents, their God, and to the British Empire. Children were expected to obey their parents because ‘[p]arents are invested by God with certain inalienable rights, and their authority is upheld by Divine precept, which commands children to honour and obey their parents.’

A misconception around this topic is that boys and girls would have totally different roles in helping their parents, however, this is at least

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partially incorrect in some contexts. The roles that boys and girls were expected to play varied from place to place. For example, Pamela Riney-Kehrberg’s has written an article on children who lived on New Zealand’s farms in the late 1800’s to the early 1900’s. This article states that all children were expected to help out on the farm.  

It also states that while boys and girls usually had specific roles on the farm, if parents only had girls or only boys, then the jobs expected to be done by boys would also be done by girls and vice versa. There were also jobs that were gender neutral, for example, milking the cows.

On the farm, girls were expected to do jobs with their mothers in the home, for example, ‘cooking, washing, ironing, and butter-making’. In the event that their mothers were sick or unable to work, the eldest daughters were expected to take over the running of the household. Boys, on the other hand, helped their fathers on the farm, which included ‘plant[ing]

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potatoes, clear[ing] bush, and herd[ing] cattle’. 105 While there is little or no
evidence pointing to boys helping their mothers in the house, in families
where there were no daughters or hired help, this must have been
necessary.106

Children doing their duty to their parents was not really illustrated in
the School Journal; however, being obedient, which is part of doing your
duty, was.

Being obedient is illustrated in the Journal article about Griselda the
Patient, a poor woman. She promised the Marquis that she would be
obedient to him, and so they married. The eventually had a daughter, and
one day the Marquis, deciding to test Griselda, told her that the people were
murmuring that they did not want to be ruled by someone born of a
commoner, and so they must kill the baby. However, the Marquis did not
actually kill the daughter, and sent her to live in another country with his
sister. Eventually the couple had a son, and the Marquis decided to test
Griselda again, so he repeated the performance. Griselda once again let the
Marquis take away her baby to be killed. After many years, the Marquis told
Griselda that the people were murmuring again, and they wanted him to take
a new, more nobly born wife, so Griselda gave up the throne, and went to
live with her father again, in the fields. One day, the Marquis came and
asked Griselda to come and clean make the castle ready for the new Queen,

105 Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, ‘Alice Churned, Kathleen Washed, Hugh Milked:
daughters and sons on New Zealand’s turn-of-the-century farms’, The Turnbull
Library Record, volume 33, 2000, p.70
and her escort. Griselda agreed, and she returned to the castle. Then the
Marquis was sure of her obedience, and so when the young woman and her
escort arrived, and Griselda asked the Marquis if this was his new wife, and
the Marquis said that he would have no other wife but Griselda, and that
these were actually their children.\textsuperscript{107}

The 1906 Census Report states that the Church of England and
Protestants was the most popular denomination in New Zealand at the time,
with 41.51\% of New Zealanders adhering to it.\textsuperscript{108} It was followed by the
Presbyterians (22.96\%), then by Roman Catholics and Catholics (14.32\%),
Methodists (10.06\%), Other Protestants (2.07\%), Baptists (2\%), Salvation
Army (0.95\%), Congregationalists (0.83\%), Lutherans (0.55\%), Other
Denominations (0.23\%), Hebrews (0.21\%), Buddhists and Confucians
(0.17\%), Unitarians (0.09\%), Society of Friends (0.04\%), and the Greek
Church (0.03\%), with 3.98\% either having no denomination, no religion or
objecting to state.\textsuperscript{109} Despite this evidence that New Zealand was an overtly
Christian society, there are only a few references to religion in the Journal.

One example of being true to your faith is illustrated in an article about
‘how Alban gave up his life’, which tells the story of Alban, who was a
Christian, who died when he would not give up a Christian minister to the

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\textsuperscript{106} Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, ‘Alice Churned, Kathleen Washed, Hugh Milked:
daughters and sons on New Zealand’s turn-of-the-century farms’, \textit{The Turnbull
Library Record}, volume 33, 2000, p.72
\textsuperscript{107} New Zealand Education Department, \textit{School Journal}, Volume 8, Part 2, February
1914, pp.11-15
\textsuperscript{108} E.J. von Dadelszen, \textit{Results of a census of the colony of New Zealand taken for
the night of the 29th April, 1906}, Wellington, 1907, p.24
\textsuperscript{109} E.J. von Dadelszen, \textit{Results of a census of the colony of New Zealand taken for
the night of the 29th April, 1906}, Wellington, 1907, p.24.
\end{flushleft}
There are also short references to biblical figures in the *Journal*. For example: ‘[I]f they [English people] are asked, “Who was the most patient man under pains and losses?” they say, “The most patient man was Job, whose story is told in the Bible.”’

The reason that there were no overtly religious stories in the *Journal* was because ‘the Education Act of 1877 effectively kept religious instruction out of the New Zealand primary school curriculum’. However, the *Journal* is full of Christian virtues, such as being truthful, doing what is ‘right’, being modest, being unselfish, helping others, and being content with what you have. These virtues were exhibited in a number of articles in the *School Journal*, such as a biography of Father Damien, a missionary who went to help lepers in the Hawaiian Islands. Being content with what you have is illustrated in a poem that

...tells of a discontented, ill-tempered king, whose doctor said he could get well only by sleeping one night in the shirt of a happy man. His kingdom was searched for such a person, but the only man who was happy was so poor that he had no shirt at all. Thus was the rich, discontented

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110 New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 8, Part 2, March 1914, pp.151-153
king made to feel shame, and to realize that a contented mind is far better than great possessions.¹¹⁵

Boys were also expected to do their duty to their country. This usually meant that they were expected to exhibit similar characteristics to a good soldier.¹¹⁶ According to Malone, these values included ‘[f]aith, [c]ourage, [d]uty, [s]elf-[d]iscipline, [f]air-[dealing], [e]ven [j]ustice, [g]ood [c]itizenship, [l]oyalty, [p]atriotism, and [s]ympathy’.¹¹⁷

One example of doing your duty to your country was illustrated in the 1914 Journal with this poem, entitled ‘A Boy’s Resolve’:

I ought to love my country,
The land in which I live;
Yes, I am very sure my heart
Its truest love should give...
She wants men brave and noble,
She needs men brave and kind,
My country needs that I should be
The best man she can find.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ New Zealand Education Department, School Journal, Volume 8, Part 2, March 1914, p.17
¹¹⁸ New Zealand Education Department, School Journal, Volume 8, Part 1, June 1914, p.65
Here is another poem entitled ‘Patriotism’, by Sir Walter Scott:

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite these titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.119

Another part of doing your duty to your country was in keeping your body healthy. The School Journal’s were quite prolific in this area, with articles on all areas of keeping healthy. For example, an article appears in the 1915 Journal that pronounces the evils of alcohol, saying that soldiers do not obtain any benefit from drinking alcohol,120 and that it ‘unfits men for strenuous work’.121

Girls were also expected to do their duty. However, girls and boys had different duties. While boys were expected to exhibit soldier-like

119 Sir Walter Scott,, ’Patriotism’, in New Zealand Education Department, School Journal, Volume 9, Part 3, April 1915, p.96
120 New Zealand Education Department, School Journal, Volume 9, Part 3, November 1915, p.310
characteristics, girls were just expected to do their duty. This is illustrated in Madame Cecilia’s document about ‘The Discipline of Girls’, where she states that

*duty* [should be] the watchword of every Christian home. It is related of Mrs. Buss, the mother of the great educator, Emily Buss, that when one of her nieces once said, “Aunt, I am sure I cannot,” she replied, “Child, never say ‘I cannot’ when called to any duty, but do the best you can.” This is a golden rule; never hesitate in the face of duty; go forward instantly. “I will” should follow “I ought” as quickly as the sound of thunder follows the lightning.122

Doing your duty was illustrated in the *Journal* in the story ‘Hans the Cripple’, which tells of Hans, a Swiss boy who sacrificed himself to warn his village that the French were about to invade their village.123

Doing your best and not giving up is another dominant theme of the Edwardian Era. Studd illustrates this in his foreword of the Empire Annual for Boys, where he compares cricket to life. He states that ‘[i]f a game is worth playing, it is worth playing well. Never be satisfied with a low standard of skill, or achievement, try to be as good as, or better than, the best. Take great and constant pains over the details, for it is the skill in detail which

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123 New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 8, Part 1, March 1914, pp.22-27
makes for perfection as a whole.' Girls were also expected to do their best, however, the domain that they were expected to do their best in differed slightly to boys. Doing your best is illustrated in this poem from 1915, entitled ‘Do Your Best’:

Do your best, your very best,
And do it every day –
Little boys and little girls,
That is the wisest way.

No matter what you try to do,
At home or at your school
Always do your very best –
There is no better rule.

So if you read your little book,
Or if you learn to spell,
Or if you play with hoop or ball,
Be sure to do it well

What if your lessons should be hard,
Do not give up to sorrow;
For if you bravely work to-day,
You’ll surely win to-morrow.

125 New Zealand Education Department, School Journal, Wellington, Volume 9, Part 1, 1915, p.65
Children were also expected to be kind to others, and unselfish, especially to people less fortunate than themselves.\footnote{Madame Cecilia, ‘The Discipline of Girls: The Training of Girls Under Twelve Years of Age’, no editor given, Essays on Duty and Discipline, London, 1910, p.20-21} Ways that this could have been nourished included ‘encourag[ing] them to lend their toys, to help others out of difficulties, to help the poor personally, to deprive themselves of something in favour of the orphan children or of the sick.’\footnote{Madame Cecilia, ‘The Discipline of Girls: The Training of Girls Under Twelve Years of Age’, no editor given, Essays on Duty and Discipline, London, 1910, p.21} This was also encouraged in the *School Journal’s* in articles such as ‘The Chief Scout on Board Ship’, which was about how Baden-Powell kept the scout law while travelling. It says that he was happy to give pleasure to others, and he was always kind, and was hardworking, and this made him the great man that he was.\footnote{New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 8, Part 2, 1914, pp.136-139} Helping others was also illustrated in a story about a man called Doctor Goldsmith, who helped a poor family whose father and husband was sick and could not eat. The Doctor examined the man, and found that he was not really sick, but there was not enough money to buy food, so the Doctor gave the family all the money he had.\footnote{New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 8, Part 2, 1914, p.142-143.} This little poem also illustrates both the religious aspect of the *Journal* and the need to help others:

Little deeds of kindness,

Little words of love,

Make our earth an Eden

Like the heaven above.\footnote{This little poem also illustrates both the religious aspect of the *Journal* and the need to help others:}
There is another article in June 1916 *Journal*, on how children are helping in the war. This describes how

> [I]n Russia all the good girls and boys are saving their “copecks” to help the war fund, instead of spending the money on toys. The poorest children work hard at knitting and sewing for the soldiers; and the richest children will not cry if this year they have less butter on their Easter pancakes, and less cream in the cabbage-soup. “All that you save on the cream and the butter,” their mothers say, “shall be your very own present to Red Cross work.”

There were a wide range of values that underpinned the roles that Edwardian boys and girls were expected to play. The most obvious of these was the imperial ideology, which seemed to have underpinned the majority of the values. The imperial ideology basically stated that everyone had a duty to the Empire. This imperial ideology was indoctrinated into children of this era using a variety of mediums, of which the *Journal* was one. The ideology underpinned the majority of the values of this period, such as being obedient, being ready to do one’s duty to your parents, to your country, to your ideals, and to your God, being patriotic (in other words being ready to sacrifice yourself for the greater good, or for the good of the Empire), and helping others. This ideology underpinned the majority of the articles and stories in the 1914 to 1918 New Zealand School Journals. While there were

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130 New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 8, Part 2, 1914, p.143
131 New Zealand Education Department, *School Journal*, Volume 10, Part 1, June 1916, p.72
obviously other things that were valued in this society, such as being patient, being honest, being temperate, having good manners, and having discipline, a wide range of these values can also be classified under imperial ideology. Like today, children were brought up to be the best citizens that they could be, however, there were different roles that they played to be the best citizen they could. Boys were expected to be like soldiers, while girls were expected to be good mothers and wives.
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The Feilding War Memorial: Remembrance, Empire and Victory

"Theirs The Victory
To The Glory of God
And In Grateful Memory
Of The Feilding Men Who Gave Their Lives
For King And Country
1914-1918"

Franchesca Walker

Inscribed above the names of 95 men, these sentiments display an attempt by the Feilding community to console themselves in the aftermath of the Great War. Like many New Zealand towns, Feilding clung to commemoration, the glory of Empire and the successful Allied victory in order to make sense of the high cost that the district paid for war. In the planning and creation of the local memorial, the aforementioned justifications were continually espoused. Rather than rushing to build the monument, the community ensured that ‘every endeavour be made to secure the best possible design for a monument to commemorate the memory of our fallen.’132 This resulted in contentious debate which saw numerous proposals suggested and rejected, and possible sites dismissed. Accordingly, the memorial, which stands in Manchester Square, was not unveiled until 3 October 1923, almost five years after it was first proposed. While the planning process of the Feilding monument has become a side-note to the memorial itself, the values which motivated the community remain on display. Remembrance, Empire and Victory are cemented in its form, continuing to champion early twentieth-century ideals to those who pass by the memorial.

I. Symbolism: Victory

Best described by the Feilding Star in the days prior to the unveiling, the Feilding Memorial is a ‘square tapering pedestal surmounted with a winged

132 Feilding Star, 3 September 1919, p.2.
figure." As shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, its appearance has changed little since 1923. The memorial’s base is Australian bluestone, chosen specifically for its longevity. Above this rises a granite pedestal, holding two polished marble slabs with the names of Feilding’s dead. These are each crowned by a cross, which themselves sit beneath the dominant ‘winged figure’ that tops the pedestal. Sculpted from Sicilian marble, the angel was chosen in an attempt to portray “Through Sacrifice Victory.” The symbols used overwhelmingly support this expression, with the figure holding a laurel wreath and raised sword in her right and left hands respectively. Traditionally, a laurel wreath has signified victory, while a sword pointing downward expresses peace. Feilding chose to point the sword skywards, mirroring the outstretched wings of the figure, in an attempt to show a strong stance symbolic of triumph.

a) Names

Throughout New Zealand, it was widely believed that as ‘all served and all died for the same cause,’ equity should dominate war memorials. As such, there are no ranks displayed on the Feilding monument and the majority of names are in alphabetical order. There are, however, some discrepancies in this pattern. At the memorial’s unveiling, there were only 94 names featured (Fig.3 and Fig.4). Of these, three – W.C. Johanson, L. King and J. Doherty – are not in alphabetical order. There is a certain sense of mystery surrounding their inclusion as there is no definite record of these men on the New Zealand Expeditionary Force Roll of Honour (although there are potential

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133 Feilding Star, 2 October 1923, p.2.
134 Feilding Star, 2 October 1923
135 Feilding Star, 2 October 1923
candidates). There is a possibility that they fought in the British Army, yet this does not explain the interrupted pattern.

Another discrepancy is the inclusion of the name R.A. Whitelock, featured on the first slab beneath F.W. Mawhiney (Fig. 5). As evident is in Fig. 3, the name was added only after the memorial’s unveiling. While the NZEF Roll of Honour contains the details of one Ronald Ambrose Whitelock, the lack of information about his origins has meant that it is difficult to claim with certainty that it is the same man. If it is, the reason for his late inclusion is not easily discernible, given that he died on 24 February 1918, which provided his family with more than enough time to apply for his inclusion prior to the unveiling.139

II. Planning: Remembrance

Feilding’s war memorial project was born in the aftermath of the Armistice. First mooted by Mayor Arthur Ongley (1913-1919) on 14 November 1918,140 the scheme was to remain a point of controversy until its unveiling five years later. As is noted by K.S. Inglis and Jock Phillips, the sacredness that developed around the word ANZAC caused many towns to closely scrutinise their local commemoration project.141 Feilding took this to the extreme, with two main areas debated: firstly, the form that the memorial would take and secondly, the site that it would be built on. For the district, the commemoration of the ‘fallen’ soldiers was a ‘subject…worthy of the highest and best treatment obtainable.’142 As such, there was little compromise,

140 Feilding Star, 15 November 1919, p.2.
142 Feilding Star, 3 September 1919, p.2.
forcing Mayor James Tingey (1921-1925) to cry that even if Feilding had ‘wanted to bring heaven down to earth there would be some people to vote against it.’

a) Form

When Ongley first suggested a memorial in the form of a band rotunda during November 1918, there was little indication that the project would cause such controversy. With the rotunda to be made of concrete and built as a replacement for the one already in Manchester Square (Fig.7), it was widely regarded as an ideal form of memorial. Indeed, with a local resident pledging £200 prior to the issue even being discussed, many on the Borough Council predicted that the memorial scheme would be completed within a short period of time.

The complexities of the project, however, quickly became evident. Soon after Ongley’s proposal was made public, country residents criticised the rotunda as unusable for those who lived beyond the Feilding boundaries. Once again without a memorial plan, alternative proposals continued to be advocated. For example, it was suggested that the agricultural High School, eventually opened in 1922, should play a role in the remembrance of Feilding’s dead. While the cottage hospital that was subsequently adopted avoided the educational sector, it nevertheless displayed a bias for utilitarianism. Advanced in February 1919, the hospital was promoted as the best way of showing ‘appreciation of the services of the men who had given their lives for the country.’ While Inglis and Phillips suggest that such projects were adopted to prevent New Zealand from becoming a ‘huge

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143 *Feilding Star*, 15 August, 1919, p.2.
144 *Feilding Star*, 15 November 1918, p.2.
145 *Feilding Star*, 1 February 1919, p.2; *Feilding Star*, 22 July 1921, p.2.
146 *Feilding Star*, 1 February 1919, p.2.
147 *Feilding Star*, 1 February 1919.
cemetery’ filled with tomb-like memorials,\textsuperscript{148} for Feilding the escalating Spanish Influenza contributed to the decision. According to Ongley, the epidemic severely undermined the Palmerston North Hospital’s ability to cater for Feilding patients. ‘When the influenza epidemic broke out, not only was the whole hospital taken up with patients from Palmerston, but the whole nursing staff was also concentrated in Palmerston.’\textsuperscript{149} In essence, by building a hospital of their own, Feilding could address two demands simultaneously.

By March 1919, however, it was concluded that the cottage hospital was unviable. After approaching several doctors in the region, a deputation was informed that while ‘such a hospital was desirable, they could not say it was necessary.’\textsuperscript{150} Likewise, the Borough Council’s representative on the Palmerston Hospital Board, J. W. Bramwell, claimed that by the end of 1919 Palmerston North Hospital would be ‘one of the most complete and fully equipped institutions of the kind in New Zealand,’ thus negating the need for a Feilding hospital.\textsuperscript{151}

Undeterred, the Council continued to advocate various monument forms. No doubt influenced by Acting Prime Minister Sir James Allen’s campaign against utilitarian memorials,\textsuperscript{152} Mayor George Harford (1919-1921) began to advocate a ‘pure and simple’ form of monument.\textsuperscript{153} He went as far as forbidding the discussion of ‘any proposal of a utilitarian character,’\textsuperscript{154} instead encouraging suggestions such as a broken column, a statue of a New Zealand soldier and a Corinthian column.\textsuperscript{155}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{148} Inglis and Phillips, p.189.
\item \textsuperscript{149} \textit{Feilding Star}, 1 February 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{150} \textit{Feilding Star}, 14 March 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{151} \textit{Feilding Star}, 8 March 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{152} Jock Phillips ‘The Great War and New Zealand Nationalism: The Evidence of War Memorials’ in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.) \textit{An ANZAC Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45}, Australia, 1992, p.18.
\item \textsuperscript{153} \textit{Feilding Star}, 14 March 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{154} \textit{Feilding Star}, 15 August 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{155} \textit{Feilding Star}, 15 August 1919; \textit{Feilding Star}, 2 October, 1919, p.2.
\end{itemize}
In the end, the level of indecision surrounding the most ‘fitting monument’\textsuperscript{156} for Feilding’s dead meant that the winged figure which still stands in Manchester Square was only chosen after the memorial funds had been collected. In essence, Feilding was forced simply ‘get the best possible with the sum of money available.’\textsuperscript{157} As such, while overwhelming desire to commemorate correctly contributed significantly to the delayed unveiling of Feilding’s memorial, it was not this factor that eventually directed the monument’s form. Rather, money dictated the selection of a figure which has featured so prominently in Feilding for nearly a century.

\textbf{b) Site}

In contrast to the numerous proposals regarding the form of Feilding’s memorial, only two sites were serious contenders for the proposed monument. The first, initially suggested by Ongley, was Manchester Square.\textsuperscript{158} Surrounded by shops and already containing the Boer War Memorial (\textbf{Fig.6}), it appeared to offer the centrality necessary to remind the ‘future generation… as well as our own… of the glorious deeds done for them as well as for us.’\textsuperscript{159}

However, following a suggestion by Councillor Bramwell that the various roads bisecting the Square should be closed off (\textbf{Fig.7}), there was widespread outcry.\textsuperscript{160} While such a submission was merely echoing the national belief that memorials were sacred ground and thus should be fenced,\textsuperscript{161} it prevented Feilding ratepayers from distinguishing the Square upgrade from the proposed memorial. With many regarding the enclosure as unnecessarily costly, there was thus a rejection of the memorials associated

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{156} \textit{Feilding Star}, 15 November 1918, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{157} \textit{Feilding Star}, 2 October 1923, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{158} \textit{Feilding Star}, 15 November 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{159} \textit{Feilding Star}, 3 October 1923, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{160} \textit{Feilding Star}, 14 March 1919, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{161} \textit{Feilding Star}, 18 March 1919, p.2.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
with the upgrade. For example, in August 1919, a vote taken on the broken column and reconstruction of the Square resulted in the proposal being rejected 395 votes to 242. Likewise, when the Corinthian column was put to the Feilding public in July 1920, they turned it down due to its association with the upgrade. 162

Because of this public rejection a second site, Kowhai Park, was proposed by the Feilding Civic Club. Supported by various residents, it was claimed that the park would create an environment in which ‘men would raise their hats as they passed [the memorial].’ 163 However, criticisms of the site simultaneously emerged. It was said that the Park lacked the immediacy necessary to educate Feilding children of ‘the sacrifices made by their soldiers in the war.’ 164 What’s more, a Mr. Andrew suggested that the site was not even a viable option, given that it was not in the borough boundaries. 165 As with Manchester Square, it was the Feilding ratepayers who were tasked with resolving the debate. They did so accordingly (although hardly overwhelmingly), with residents voting against Kowhai Park 15 votes to 11. 166

Faced with opposition to their favoured sites, the Borough Council was forced to reconsider the memorial’s association with the Square upgrade. Abandoning plans to enclose the area, the Council acquiesced to the public demand. 167 Somewhat appeased, the majority of ratepayers thus obligingly voted for the memorial to be placed in Manchester Square, where it continues to stand today. 168

III. The Unveiling: Empire

162 Feilding Star, 22 July 1921, p.2.
163 Feilding Star, 22 July 1921, p.2.
164 Feilding Star, 22 July 1921, p.2.
165 Feilding Star, 22 July 1921, p.2.
166 Feilding Star, 22 July 1921, p.2.
167 Feilding Star, 15 August 1919, p.2.
Despite post-war historians such as Fred Waite claiming that New Zealand discovered her national identity during the Great War, there is little indication that nationalism motivated the creation of local war memorials. Indeed, in the case of Feilding it was not the nation which received the most discussion at the unveiling, but rather the British Empire.

Unveiled on 3 October 1923, the columns of the *Feilding Star* claimed that the event was 'one of the most important...in this town's history.' In many ways, it was even more significant as it allowed Feilding to display its loyalty to Britain. In fact, to a certain extent it appears that Feilding emphasised Empire to a greater degree than it honoured its dead. In the days leading up to the unveiling, it was claimed by the *Feilding Star* that the 'fallen' were to receive the supreme tribute with the presence of Governor-General Lord Jellicoe, the 'greatest sailor in the greatest of all wars.' Given that Jellicoe’s exploits as the Admiral of the Fleet during the Battle of Jutland were widely applauded, the primary purpose of the day – remembrance – was somewhat overlooked as the town repeatedly expressed its appreciation in having 'one of the Empire’s most devoted and distinguished sons’ presiding over the ceremony. In fact, Feilding was only said to be proud of its men due to their contribution to the ‘preservation of the Empire.’

Such sentiments were echoed in the ceremony itself. As shown in Fig.10, during the unveiling numerous British flags hung on the memorial, with no national symbol in sight. Indeed, the Union Jack was not only visually prominent, but was emphasised in the accounts of the day. According to the *Feilding Star*, it appeared that the flag atop the Post Office ceased to wave during the ceremony, as if it were in sympathy with the great assembly of

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168 *Feilding Star*, 2 October 1923, p.2.
170 *Feilding Star*, 2 October 1923, p.2.
171 *Feilding Star*, 2 October 1923, p.2.
172 *Feilding Star*, 3 October 1923, p.2.
people.’ Once the ceremony finished, however, the flag unfurled and ‘over
the heads of the people waved that Union Jack which, for the sacrifice of
those men who were so quick to answer the call of Empire, would not have
flown so proudly over this fair land today.’\footnote{Feilding Star, 3 October 1923, p.2.} The fact that such an account
was published in the local newspaper suggests that many residents held
similar beliefs. For Feilding, it was not so much the men themselves for which
they were proud, but rather their role in ensuring the ‘triumphant emergence
of the British Empire...from the great World conflict.’\footnote{Feilding Star, 3 October 1923, p.2.}

**Concluding Comments**

While the winged figure which stands in Feilding’s Manchester Square is
undoubtedly a local memorial, its creation was influenced by national trends.
The first utilitarian proposals succumbed to governmental pressure and were
eventually scorned in favour of more monumental structures. Like 85 percent
of New Zealand memorials,\footnote{Feilding Star, 3 October 1923, p.2.} those names featured on Feilding’s monument
belong solely to men who died as a result of the Great War. The equality of
sacrifice that was emphasised nationally is also evident in the pattern of
names inscribed on the Feilding memorial, with men listed alphabetically and
without rank.

Despite these similarities to the national trend, however, the Manchester
Square monument is unique to Feilding. The mystery surrounding the broken
pattern of soldier’s names speaks of local stories. The site and form of
memorial were chosen because of Feilding perceptions of how the war should
be remembered. The tensions that became so evident throughout the
memorial process – between town and country, Council and rate payers –
were due to local factors. Above all, the particular way in which
commemoration, the British Empire and the Allied victory were espoused

\footnote{Feilding Star, 2 October 1923, p.2.}
\footnote{Feilding Star, 3 October 1923, p.2.}
\footnote{Feilding Star, 3 October 1923, p.2.}
displays a concerted attempt by Feilding to justify their personal loss. While such justifications are less pressing today, they nevertheless remain a central part of Feilding’s history. Indeed, with the memorial undergoing little change since 1923, they are continually promoted to the Feilding residents who pass by Manchester Square.

176 Inglis and Phillips, p.186.
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Appendix

Figure 1: Feilding War Memorial, 3 October 1923.

Figure 2: Feilding War Memorial, 2007. Author’s own photo

Figure 3: Feilding's Roll of Honour on the day of the unveiling. Note the absence of R.A. Whitelock. *Feilding Star*, 3 October 1923, p.2

Figure 4: Feilding's Roll of Honour. Note the names of J. Doherty, W.C. Johanson and L. King. It was the same on 3 October 1923. Author’s own photo
Figure 5: Feilding's Roll of Honour 2007. Note the inclusion of R.A. Whitelock.


Author’s own photo

Figure 6: Manchester Square, early twentieth century. The section of the Square directly in front of J. Darragh's is the eventual site of the memorial. Note the Boer War Memorial in the centre of the road.

Feilding Public Library,

Figure 7: Manchester Square, probably early twentieth century. Note the band rotunda and the separated plots of the Square.

Figure 8: Crowd at the unveiling of the War Memorial 3 October 1923
Reference Number: 22-9/21-2

Figure 9: Inspection by the Governor General, Lord Jellicoe, at the unveiling
Reference Number: 37-10
Figure 10: The War Memorial at its unveiling. The *Feilding Star* noted that on the platform were the Mayor J.S. Tingey; the Governor-General Lord Jellicoe, his Aid-de-Comp, Lieutenant-Commander Dove; J.A. Nash, M.P; Major McLean; R.S.A. President Dr. Cameron; the Town Clerk; the Secretary of the Soldiers’ Memorial Committee and various religious ministers.

Note the number of Union Jacks.
A comparative analysis of the developing reactions to ‘shell shock’
during and immediately after World War One in the medical, military
and public sectors of British and New Zealand societies.

Matthew Tonks.

Due to the unprecedented scale and conditions brought about by World War
One (WWI), the first major mechanised military conflict of the twentieth
century, mental illnesses suffered by military servicemen became prominent
and widespread. Now known by the more appropriate names of war neuroses
or combat fatigue, the psychological and physiological breakdown of a soldier
became popularised and romanticised as ‘shell shock’. Throughout the course
of the war, beginning with the first recorded cases in December 1914, and in
the years following the Armistice in 1918, the opinions and explanations
relating to war neuroses varied and altered in many ways as a result of
changing events, values, opinions, and medical theories. This essay aims to
analyse the ways in which different segments of British and New Zealand
society viewed shell shock, and how they changed their perceptions of it.
Ordered thematically, it will commence with a historical definition of shell
shock, and a broad look at the changing views of the public, politicians, and
press of these countries in order to outline the social context in which war
neuroses arose. Following this, the essay will concentrate on the ways that
the medical profession, both specialists and field doctors, tried to explain and
cure the many thousands of cases of this malady with which they were
inundated. Finally, it will also describe how and why the Armies’ authorities,
for the most part, disregarded and belittled shell shock for several reasons.
The overall aim of the essay is to show that shell shock victims and the condition itself were viewed in a variety of ways, and that in spite of the Army’s persistence that shell shock was not a legitimate disease, there were some broader shifts in society and medicine due to changing perceptions.

In 1910 R.L. Richards prophesied that as a result of the increasingly large scales of warfare, in terms of population, geography and industrialisation, there was certain to be ‘a larger percentage of mental diseases... in a future war.’ This prophesy materialised in WWI in the form of mass war neuroses, known as shell shock. The misnomer ‘shell shock’ was coined by neurologist C.S. Myers early in 1915 after he theorised that the condition was precipitated by small lesions in the brain caused by artillery shells exploding in the vicinity of the victim. This hypothesis is supported in E.E. Southard’s compilation of shell shock case studies, in which he states that ‘[i]n not a few instances... actual structural lesions have been recorded even in cases in which no direct external injury of a material kind was experienced as a result of the explosion’. Indeed, Southard’s book documents, for the most part, cases of shell shock that were caused by the simultaneous ‘shell explosions’, ‘mine explosions’, ‘shrapnel wounds’, ‘burial’,

and ‘gassing’.\textsuperscript{180} It was soon evident to most medical authorities, however, that the label was not sufficient as many victims were ‘remote from the exploding missile’.\textsuperscript{181} In fact, as Russell Clarke claimed, what became known as shell shock was a combination of various mental disorders that were already well documented before 1914, such as mutism, deafness, paralysis, and shock, but the common factor in this neurosis was its sudden or unexpected precipitation as a result of the conditions of intense warfare.\textsuperscript{182} Elaine Showalter asserted that Myers did realise the link between shell shock and the psychological disorder of hysteria, usually associated with females, but did not want to ‘stigmatize British soldiers as hysterical.’\textsuperscript{183} Despite the Army’s remonstrations that the term ‘shell shock’ should be avoided, it remained due to its co-option and popularisation by the public, who, like Myers, were willing to adopt a label that would not force upon its victims the connotations of insanity.

Within the public arena there were many differing opinions regarding shell shock, some less sympathetic than others. Hughes-Wilson and Corns made the claim that British war-time society ‘equated mental illness with lunacy’ and therefore the victims were seen with ‘scant sympathy, as

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{180} ibid., p.xxv.  \\
\textsuperscript{182} Clarke, Russell, “‘Not Mad, but very Ill’: The Treatment of New Zealand’s Shellshocked Soldiers 1914 to 1939”, M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1991, p.5; Winter, p.68.  \\
\end{flushleft}
weaklings at best, and degenerates at worst.184 Many victims suffered unfavourable prejudice despite their sacrifice, and as Jay Winter poignantly stated, ‘The stigma of mental illness did not vanish just because it registered in the service of one’s country.’185 The uncontrollable and fundamental debilitation of so many soldiers went against society’s belief that men, especially those fighting a war, ought to be strong, brave, and resolute.186 Those who suffered shell shock were opposing society’s expectation that emotions, especially fear, remain repressed.187 Many victims feared that their relatives, friends and comrades would consider them as cowards, and, indeed, in many cases, in a vain attempt to find an explanation, intolerant people would label and accuse victims of being cowards.188 One contemporary commentator went as far as saying that the victims were ‘childish and infantile’.189 Showalter even suggested that shell shock victims were seen as contradicting the Edwardian ideal of masculinity by succumbing to, or failing to resist, effeminacy, and thereby inherently undermined and threatened ‘an essential cement of society’: the distinction between the genders.190 This contemporary opinion that shell shock victims were weak was reflected by influential public figures, such as Sir John Collie, who

185 Winter, p.59.
186 Corns et al., p.59; Showalter, The Female Malady, p.169
188 Leese, p.33; Clarke, p.36; Shepherd, Mat, ‘Combat-Induced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder’, New Zealand Journal of Disability Studies, no.4, 1997, p.141.
contended in a *Times* newspaper article that ‘insufficient will-power’ and, of course, fear were directly involved in precipitating this mental disability.\(^{191}\) Yet in spite of the press’s ability to focus society’s discontent on the issue of shell shock, it was also an instrument through which the condition was made into ‘an emblem of heroism and sacrifice.’\(^{192}\)

Numerous other sections of society viewed shell shock and its victims with more compassion, especially in New Zealand, according to Russell Clarke.\(^{193}\) Although New Zealanders considered their soldiers to be more ‘mentally resilient’ than their British counterparts due to their ‘pioneer spirit’, the medical evidence, such as that from M.D. Eder, contradicts this myth.\(^{194}\) It should be noted that New Zealanders may see their troops in a different light to that British society, due to the myths and reverence afforded to Anzac soldiers who were considered as those who formed the nation’s identity.\(^{195}\) This sentiment of reverence was the opposite of that given to the insane, and it is therefore understandable that the New Zealand public viewed with outrage the mistreatment and institutionalisation of its shell shock victims in mental asylums.\(^{196}\) One example of this outrage is an *Auckland Weekly* News article which declared that the neglect of the soldiers’

\(^{190}\) Showalter, *The Female Malady*, pp.169-171, & 168; Mosse, p.103.  
\(^{192}\) Leese, p.57.  
\(^{193}\) Clarke, p.53.  
needs as ‘among the gloomiest and saddest results of the war’. Clarke’s thesis stresses the New Zealand public’s sensitivity to the treatment of its soldiers and their exemption of the victims from the mentally ill category. This sensitivity included, as already mentioned, the protest of any move to place shell shock victims in asylums with ‘lunatics’, as well as the popularisation of the label ‘shell shock’, which removed the female connotations of ‘hysteria’. Clarke’s claim that shell shock was an intensification of well known pre-war neuroses contradicts the fact that New Zealanders were willing to consider shell shock victims as distinct, yet this could be explained by the incompatibility society saw in its fit, healthy men returning from war visibly affected and changed. These sympathetic sentiments were also evident in Britain; amongst the public, press, and parliament. Fundraising was undertaken for the construction of appropriate hospitals for the victims, parliamentary commissions of enquiry were set up, newspaper articles expressed concern as to their fate, and J. Hodge, the Minister of Pensions, addressed some victims by stating they ‘have been fighting for people like me, and nothing we can do is too great to make you comfortable after the great sacrifice you have made’.

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198 Clarke, pp.10, 61, 62, 68, 110, 114, 117, 129, 131, & 133.
199 *ibid.*, p.5.
Although it is fair to say that throughout the war there were sections of society that remained hostile towards shell shock and its victims, and those who remained more sympathetic, there were also some shifts in public sentiment as a result of events and gradual adjustment. Peter Leese identified the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 as the turning point in public perception of shell shock, due to the vastly increased number of cases.\textsuperscript{201} He also claimed that as the cases became more commonplace, focus shifted away from the victims to more pressing factors in the war, thereby relieving public attention and prejudices.\textsuperscript{202} Regarding the perception of officers suffering from shell shock, there is some evidence that they lost their negative stigma as failing to maintain the masculine ideal, and gained a status of nobility, as their breakdown was attributed to the constant strain of responsibility and concern for their subordinates.\textsuperscript{203} Another explanation of the shift in attitudes towards victims is that as the public became aware of medical advances and theories, it was realised that shell shock was a mental condition, usually temporary and curable, that did not discriminate and thus did not carry the connotations of degeneracy or feebleness.\textsuperscript{204} Furthermore, as Peter Barham stated, ‘in the later stages of the war, there was an emerging current in which militaristic standards of manly superiority were seen as rarefied or out of touch with contemporary circumstances.’\textsuperscript{205} It could well be that very few people changed their views, but certain opinions

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\textsuperscript{201} Leese, p.40.
\textsuperscript{202} Ibid., p.60.
\textsuperscript{203} Showalter, \textit{The Female Malady}, p.175; Leese, p.66.
\end{flushright}
within society became more prominent, because, as George Mosse asserted, public attitudes changed very slowly as ‘a specific mental condition was seen as a social disease’. Even after the war these views still were held by some, such as a writer in the popular boys’ journal *Health and Strength* who equated shell shock with laziness and labelled victims as ‘accelerated degenerates’. This organic view of the condition was highly prominent in war time literature, especially amongst sectors of the medical community.

As mentioned already, it is believed that Myers originally deemed the aetiology of shell shock as organic in nature, and Southard maintained this belief throughout and after the war. These were not isolated cases, however, but were indicative of the numerous prominent specialists and not-so-prominent field doctors who considered shell shock not as a neurosis, but as a physical disability, either acquired as a result of an explosion or genetics. In placing WWI in the context of its contemporary society’s views, it is important to acknowledge the empirical and biological dominance of medicine in the Edwardian era, that mental illness was not known before the war, and that a person was either considered sane or insane, with no grey areas in between. As such, many of the theories devised by medical professions to explain shell shock focused on physical or mental degeneracy, heredity, a ‘predisposition’ to the condition by their ‘biological weakness’, or ‘character

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205 Barham, p.132.
206 Mosse, p.108.
208 Corns et al., p.58; Barham, p.150.
defects'. Others theorised that younger soldiers and conscripts were more susceptible to shell shock. Physicians belonging to this school of thought used or developed a variety of treatments aimed at curing shell shock, which were 'primitive at best and dangerous at worst.' On the primitive side of this scale were methods such as hydrotherapy, isolation, massage, diets, and stand-over tactics. An example of a dangerous or 'barbaric' method of recovery was electric shock treatment. The most infamous, and perhaps the only, user of such method in Britain was Dr. Lewis Yealland, whose patients, despite the brutality of the process and senselessness of his 'orders' to 'get well', seemed to achieve a full recovery. However, as a result of the high casualty rates, and inefficiency of most traditional methods, new schools of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis arose and challenged the traditional medical establishment.

The fields of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis aroused little interest in Britain or New Zealand before the war, and many historians point out that there were no doctors trained in the discipline when hostilities commenced. One of the most famous members of this school was W.H.R. Rivers, who treated shell shock victims at Craiglockhart and Maghull hospitals.

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209 Rivers, p.205; Leese, pp.18, 52, 70, & 178; Corns et al., pp.55, & 75; Showalter, The Female Malady, p.170; Stone, pp.245, & 252; Léri, André, Shell-Shock, Commmotional and Emotional Aspects, London, 1919, p.118, in Showalter, The Female Malady, p.170.
210 Bourke, p.60.
212 Leese, pp.80-1, Barham, p.236; Stone, p.264.
213 Corns et al., p.59.
214 Leese, p.74, & 81; Showalter, The Female Malady, pp.176-8.
215 Stone, p.266.
using the ‘talking cure’, hypnotherapy and psychoanalysis. Rivers adapted
the ideas of the Austrian psychologist, Sigmund Freud, to explain the sudden
inundation of shell shock cases with which he and his colleagues were
presented. Rivers asserted that Freud’s theories were popular among the
common people, as they were willing to accept new medical approaches that
could treat ‘the underlying causes of disorders and not simply the
symptoms.’ This new approach viewed repression of fear and the conflict
in one’s unconsciousness between duty and self-preservation as the origin of
shell shock, and all the war neuroses that the term implies. By the
removal of Freud’s theories of sexual repression and instead focusing on the
repression of painful war memories, revised psychology became suitably
domesticated and appealing to the British public as a way of treating shell
shock victims. Two other eminent psychotherapists were G.E. Smith and
T.H. Pear, who asserted that the lines between insanity and psychosis were
blurred and malleable. Smith and Pear merit a place in the group of the
revolutionary few British psychotherapists because they theorised that shell
shock was not a single condition, but a ‘wide-arching perspective affirming

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216 Corns et al., pp.58, & 73; Showalter, The Female Malady, p.188; Stone, p.248;
Rivers, pp.2, & 206; Leese, p.35.
217 ibid., p.83.
218 Rivers, p.4; Clarke, p.178; Stone, p.244.
219 Leese, p.83; War Office Committee of Enquiry into ‘Shell Shock’, Report of the
War Office Committee of Enquiry into ‘Shell Shock’, London, 1922, p.150 in Jones,
220 Stone, pp.245, & 255; Rivers, pp.4, 120, & 164-65; Freud, Sigmund, ‘Inhibitions,
Symptoms and Anxiety’ (1926), in Strachey, James (ed. and trans.), The Standard
Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume 20, London,
1959, p.129.
221 Smith, G.E., and T.H. Pear, Shell-Shock and its Lessons, Manchester, 1917,
pp.87-88, in Barham, pp.150-51.
the emotional origins of mental disturbances.\textsuperscript{222} As they wrote in 1917, ‘It is not in the intellectual but in the \textit{emotional} sphere that we must look for terms to describe these conditions.’\textsuperscript{223} Modern psychoanalytic theories of combat fatigue were also foreshadowed in some other documents from WWI. An official memo written in 1917 by a Medical Officer of the 8\textsuperscript{th} Australian Field Artillery Brigade states that soldiers fell victim to shell shock ‘due to the long and continuous strain they have been under’, and H.C. Marr wrote in 1919 that anyone was subject to the disorder.\textsuperscript{224}

It is clear that the ideas of the psychologist, psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic schools permeated through the medical literature and treatment in WWI. However, what is less clear is whether there was a wide-scale fundamental change within the medical establishment.\textsuperscript{225} Showalter stated that the allegiance that English medicine, including psychology, had previously given to organic-based theories had been ‘subverted by the experience of war’, and this idea is supported by Winter, who contended that ‘the initial presumption of a purely organic cause of psychological disturbances had to be discarded over time.’\textsuperscript{226} Sigmund Freud even declared that the war had eradicated the ‘temptation’ of his contemporaries to attribute war neuroses to organic reasons, and A.D. Carbery, a forward-thinking New Zealand medic, believed that by 1917 medical opinion had ‘undergone important modification’ towards the proper diagnosis of

\textsuperscript{222} Barham, p.151.
\textsuperscript{223} Smith \textit{et al.}, pp.1-3, in Barham, p.151.
\textsuperscript{224} Medical Officer of 3rd Australian Division, \textit{A & Q War Diary}, August 1917, Public Records Office, United Kingdom; Marr, p.48, in Mosse, p.105.
\textsuperscript{225} Leese, p.60.
psychoneuroses.\textsuperscript{227} Indeed, as a result of awareness of Freudian ideas, psychotherapy, and mental illness in general, certain segments of the public rejected the official medical line that there was no relationship between war and the neuroses of shell shock, British psychotherapy was legitimated, and a programme of mental health and asylum reform was initiated.\textsuperscript{228} However, as Peter Leese made abundantly clear, these revolutionary ideas and doctors were in the minority and had very little effect on war-time society as a whole.\textsuperscript{229} He believed that improvements were minor, as reforms only occurred in the specialised fields, and therefore did not affect the majority of soldiers or field doctors on the Western Front, who were not only inhibited by geographic isolation but also time constraints.\textsuperscript{230} For the most part, the field doctors were empirically and strategically mindful that their duty was to the Army, and therefore they were primarily concerned with returning ‘shell shocked’ soldiers to the Front as quickly as possible.\textsuperscript{231}

Russell Clarke’s thesis on shell shock in New Zealand described how unprepared the government and Army authorities were for the large scale of mental illnesses that were to emerge during the war. He proved this claim with a letter from the Minister in Charge of Mental Hospitals, Sir Francis Bell,

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\textsuperscript{226} Showalter, \textit{The Female Malady}, p.190; Winter, p.53.
\textsuperscript{228} Clarke, pp.127, & 144; Barham, p.5; Stone, pp.146, & 247.
\textsuperscript{229} Leese, pp.178-79.
\textsuperscript{230} \textit{ibid.}; Stone, p.243.
\textsuperscript{231} Leese, p.32; Burtchaell, Lieutenant-General Sir Charles, ‘Disease as Affecting Success in the War’, \textit{Transactions of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland}, xxxvii, 1920, p.527, in Bourke, p.62.
\end{flushright}
in which the Minister speculated that there would be approximately one hundred victims of shell shock in New Zealand’s armed forces, and furthermore that their disabilities would be of a temporary nature.\textsuperscript{232} New Zealand pensions figures for 1924 support this idea of temporariness, as only thirty of the 857 pension-receivers for neurological disorders were regarded as permanent.\textsuperscript{233} Initially, the Armies of Britain and New Zealand did not consider shell shock as a legitimate medical condition, and was tantamount to desertion, which therefore carried the same harsh penalties.\textsuperscript{234} The Army viewed shell shock as a lack of discipline, which in their eyes was contagious among the soldiers.\textsuperscript{235} In order to counter this, a strong emphasis was placed on \textit{esprit de corps}, careful selection of recruits, and the occasional execution to keep the rest of the company in line.\textsuperscript{236} In the early years of the war, the Army aimed to keep the public as uninformed as possible about the true conditions of the battlefield, and thus, the conditions that caused shell shock, in order to retain their support for the war effort.\textsuperscript{237} However, by the end of the war in 1918, the Army authorities saw some of the benefits of new medical treatments and realised the issue of shell shock, and its popularity, was not one that would disappear quickly. As a result, officers in the Royal Army Medical Corps received some psychotherapy training at Maghull, and

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{233} Carbery, p.549, in Clarke, p.35.
\item \textsuperscript{234} Corns \textit{et al.}, p.310.
\item \textsuperscript{235} \textit{ibid.}, p.75; Shepherd, p.141.
\item \textsuperscript{236} Corns \textit{et al.}, pp.420, 423, & 310; Stone, p.249; Rivers, , pp.216-7; Clarke, pp.38-9.
\item \textsuperscript{237} Stone, p.264; Barham, p.235.
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the field hospital system in France was redesigned to facilitate faster diagnosis and treatment of victims of war neuroses.  

In spite of these reforms, however, there are many factors which point to the conclusion that the opinions and views of the Army were not changed at all, chief among which is the Pension Ministry’s refusal to accept shell shock as a genuine medical condition. Showalter stated that military commanders and generals did not believe in the legitimacy of an emotional and psychological medical condition directly resulting from warfare, despite the evidence of their subordinates that suggested otherwise. Peter Leese attributed the British Army’s disciplinary approach as the reason why ‘the quality of care and treatment for psychological casualties improved only marginally’ throughout the war, despite the ‘growth of medical knowledge’. Further, the curriculum of the Anzac Corps Medical Officer’s School for 1917 grouped together shell shock and malingering as a category for teaching. Similarly, the Ministry of Pensions, as already stated, saw the condition of shell shock as temporary, and in their efforts to keep public expenditure to a minimum, and contradictory to J. Hodge’s aforementioned declaration, were ‘quick to judge a man a “lead swinger” or “malingerer”’. Lord Southborough’s Committee of Enquiry into shell shock, established in 1920, shows the Army and government authorities’ official views on the condition. The final report, as stated by Barham, indicates a regression to the pre-war

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240 Leese, p.45.
beliefs that there were ‘sharp distinctions between the neuroses and insanity,’ that a ‘nervous breakdown is viewed as a disgrace,’ and that ‘only the inferior break down.’ These official conclusions illustrate that the Army and government authorities, for whatever reason, viewed shell shock in an extremely unfavourable way, and furthermore that there was minimal changes of this opinion.

As a result of events and conditions around WWI, such as the Battle of the Somme and an increasing awareness of emotional and psychological aetiology, there were many segments within British and New Zealand society who altered their views of shell shock. The main groups to change, or improve, their perceptions of shell shock and its victims were the public and parts of the medical establishment. This essay has shown many examples of this shift of opinion away from the more prejudicial viewpoints, favouring those which were more emotionally and neurologically based. It has described various reasons for these alterations in public opinion, such as the extremely high prevalence of cases and visibility of victims. Despite claims to the contrary, one is able to conclude that there were fundamental changes in the public’s perception of shell shock, and to a lesser degree, but nonetheless important, a legitimisation and popularisation of modern psychological medical techniques occurred. The prevailing opinions of the Army, and the Southborough Report’s findings, suggest that there was not nearly as much of an alteration in this section of society. Prejudicial and traditional views

241 Clarke, p.37.
242 Clarke, pp.35-7; Winter, p.54.
243 Barham, pp.234, & 236.
remained, perhaps in order to maintain discipline within the armed forces, and most likely to reduce the post-war economic burden on the government.

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How central were religious beliefs to attitudes about death and bereavement during and after World War I?

Coralie Clarkson

War is a time where many people at home and on the battle field struggle to make sense of the death and horror around them. One would expect that religious beliefs, particularly Christianity, would become popular and widely drawn upon as sources of comfort. However, this was not the case. Many people had spiritual beliefs, and some believed in heaven or rest for the soul after death rather than an absolute end to life. However, Christianity itself was not a popular belief at the home front or in the trenches. This essay will argue that soldiers and those coping with death and bereavement used more general, spiritual ideas to comfort themselves. It will examine how soldiers put faith in physical objects, and became superstitious and aware of the supernatural, as illustrated by accounts of their time on the battlefield. It will explore how loved ones on the home front found comfort in war poetry, volunteer work, memorials and the ideal of heroism on the battlefield. It will also address wartime burials and argue that it was important for a body's dignity and for the peace of mind of the deceased's loved ones, rather than a religious ritual.

Soldiers faced the reality of death on a daily basis and often witnessed the death of their friends. Men who fought in the Great War have reflected on this, such as Clarrie Jarman who was on duty with two friends, ‘and thought I’d better go and get my goatskin coat...I went off, came back in two minutes and found my two friends dead. A direct hit from a shell’.\(^{244}\) However, Jarman does not reveal how he felt about their deaths. Similarly, Richard Hawkins described how all of his ‘original friends’ had been killed or

wounded by the time he was in battle at Boom Ravine. Yet he follows this comment up with the observation that 'I know it sounds strange, but even amid the slaughter there was some humour.' He recognises that to outsiders, the use of humour among soldiers to sustain themselves would seem odd. This statement does not reveal his emotions about his friends’ deaths. In these accounts, Jarman and Hawkins simply omit their feelings about the deaths; this says volumes about how they felt. Soldiers repressed their grief and fear as a way of coping with the war, and used humour to make the situation they were in feel more normal. Many soldiers did find the Christian faith a comfort in the trenches, especially when faced with the death of friends. One medical officer stated that he found comfort in ‘the idea that when a man achieved his earthly mission 'he is taken away by God to enjoy his rest’.” This idea of rest and sleep after death was shared by General Monash, who in a letter to his wife spoke of ‘fallen dead who lie peacefully sleeping in the little cemeteries in the valleys all around’. General Monash was not referring to a God given rest however; he seemed to have a more ambiguous belief in sleep after death. However, both of these images bought comfort to the men who imagined them. In a situation like war, little rest was to be had; the idea of rest and sleep after death was perhaps a utopian idea to the exhausted soldier, and similar to a perfect Heaven.

Soldiers also held superstitious beliefs, including some soldiers who predicted their own deaths. A personal experience of this was had by Fred Dixon’s friend, Jack Daley. Daley had a premonition of his death after he came back from two weeks leave in England. He said 'I shan’t go back again Dick, ...I

\[\text{Ibid., p.20}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]
know I’m going to stop one’. The next day, he was killed by a shell. Jack’s face ‘was a picture of despair’ as he predicted his imminent death. This superstition was also present in daily life in the trenches – such as a morbid fear of The Queen’s Death Song, which was forbidden to be sung, hummed or whistled in Fred Dixon’s battalion. Superstitions extended to the use of amulets or charms that soldiers believed gave them luck or invincibility. One common example was a bible kept in the breast pocket with the intention of blocking a bullet from entering the heart of the soldier. In this case, soldiers were putting faith in tangible objects, rather than an intangible God. Given the conditions they were fighting in, facing death daily, soldiers ‘had little difficulty in accepting the incongruous and the uncanny as part of everyday life’. They were in a situation which bore little resemblance to a normal life. Relying on and taking comfort in the supernatural allowed soldiers to ‘impose structure and certainty on the surrounding chaos’. Soldiers needed to have something to centre their lives on, and something that would make them feel less frightened about the risks of combat. In this case, near misses would more likely be seen as luck, something which is easier to believe in than help from God. Yet superstitious beliefs also served to frighten soldiers, such as Jack Daley who was despairing over his impending death, unable to overcome his feeling of dread, and The Queen’s Death Song. At a time when their lives were at great risk, soldiers were unwilling to tolerate anything which they felt could increase the risk of death. The use of amulets and charms shows that many felt they could cheat death by having faith in something – even if it was faith in an object which they believed had supernatural powers.

250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
252 Ibid.
253 Watson, p.259
254 Jay Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning, Cambridge, 1995, p.64.
255 Watson, p.261
Christianity was not a popular faith on in the trenches, and for soldiers, the war experience did not necessarily lead them to a faith in God. Grant Osborne became a Chaplain of a church after the war, but he says that 'I don't really know if my experiences in the Great War led to my longing for the church'. Osborne says that his 'dominant memories' are of death and killing, recalling 'the machine-gun shaking in my hands as I pressed the triggers with my thumbs; of watching the enemy soldiers being hit by bullets that I had fired and of walking over the dead at Pachendaele'.

He is haunted by his role in killing people, and the horror of the dead. He does not relate these memories with humour, and does not repress them and avoid them altogether. Richard Hawkins says that it was 'extraordinary... how you came to simply accept death'. Fred Dixon explained further, ‘the carnage here and elsewhere was terrible but you had to accept it. What else could you do?’ This acceptance did not necessarily arise through religion; rather it came through the sheer need to cope with the experience. Army chaplains were placed to help soldiers cope with death and grieving, and war would have seemed like a perfect experience to share Christian wisdom and comfort. Yet some became quickly disillusioned by the experience of war, worried by what it 'revealed about human nature'. Chaplains also struggled to relate their faith and provide theological explanations for the large scale of death and horror, and ‘relied on reassurances of heroic glory to understand the purpose of death’. The war was an experience that some Chaplains could not see God’s purpose in, and many would have been against the fighting. To find meaning in war, they had to rely on individual stories of sacrifice and heroism which fulfilled Christian ideals and gave soldiers Christ-like qualities.

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256 Quinn, p.111
257 Ibid., p. 110
258 Quinn, p. 24
259 Ibid., p.33
261 Ibid., p.17.
War poetry revealed thoughts about life after death during the war. These poems were a source of comfort and strength for those at home, both during and after the war. They also provoked thoughts about what soldiers went through at the front, especially as some poems were written by soldiers to document their experiences. Others were written by those who were grieving for loved ones. Many of these poems showed how the author felt about death. Siegfried Sassoon’s poem, *To any Dead Officer*, shows how Sassoon believes that the officer has gone to Heaven, but then questions ‘have you found everlasting day/ Or been sucked in by everlasting night?’

He asks the officer ‘Remember me to God’. This poem is only peppered with references to Christianity. Other poems are laden with Christian imagery, such as *How Long, O Lord*, written by Robert Palmer. In this poem, Palmer poses the question ‘how long, before the flood/ of crimson-welling carnage shall abate?...Lord, how long/ Shall Satan in high places lead the blind/ To battle for the passions of the strong?’

The poem reads like a prayer or cry to God, rather than just containing references to the afterlife. *The Dead* by J. Le Gay Brereton states that ‘God is dead/ if such as you can die and fare not well/ – if when you fall your gallant spirit fail’. He believes that soldiers who made such a big sacrifice will surely go to heaven – which is a belief many war poets seem to share. The idea of salvation through martyrdom became popular in war poetry, and undoubtedly in the minds of the public.

Comfort was gained through ideas of sacrifice on the battlefield gaining a soldier a place in heaven, especially through the Christ-like ideal of laying life down for a friend. Those who died in the war are glorified in poetry as being Christ-like, and by shedding their blood for others, are given a place in heaven. Many Christian theologians would disagree with these beliefs.

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263 Ibid., p.98.
267 Ibid., p.50.
However, comfort was found in War Poetry, and the idea of sacrifice helped grieving people justify the death of their loved ones, during and after the war.

Grief and bereavement was keenly felt by those on the home front who had lost sons, brothers, husbands and lovers. Many were seeking comfort, and found it in different ways. One of the hardest times of the year for those grieving was Christmas. It was at this time that the *Church Army Review* published a newsletter bringing encouragement to those who were finding the festive season difficult without their loved ones. A newsletter sent out in December 1916 states ‘We know that God has not deserted the world, but that He still rules over all in perfect love and wisdom, if we could but see and know what He is doing’.268 There is a realistic recognition that it is hard to understand how God would be present in such a situation, especially to those who are grieving. Yet the words also implore the reader to have faith in God to help them through their grief. Further into the newsletter, there is a call for readers to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.269 For those on the home front, this was an important role to be undertaken, and those who had lost loved ones often found solace in volunteer work during the war. Many women found that becoming involved in such work allowed them to form friendships with women who were also grieving loved ones who had been killed in the war. Women found that ‘sharing such grief eased the terrible loneliness of bereavement’.270 It was in these groups that women were able to find solace in shared experience. Women were told that their fallen loved one was a “hero” and that ‘“the sacrifice” was not for nothing’.271 The comfort women gave one another would likely have been that their loved one did not die in vain, but that they died for a great cause. This was the same cause that the women were doing voluntary work for. In situations like


269 Ibid.

these, religion was not central to coping with the deaths. However, the comfort that they were given, including the idea of sacrifice, was a very religious attitude again likening their loved one to Christ.

The “Christian modes” of burial and memorialisation were very important to both soldiers who lost friends and those at home who lost loved ones.\textsuperscript{272} On the battlefield, attempts were made to give burials, and in some cases, an effort was made to photograph these graves. This was the case for Private Clifford Arnold Wall, of the 27\textsuperscript{th} Battalion, and of Private Walter Leonard Slape of the 27\textsuperscript{th} Battalion.\textsuperscript{273} Private Wall’s grave was marked with a cross and a rifle, and Private Slape’s with two crosses, a rifle and a steel helmet.\textsuperscript{274} These graves both have mixture of military and religious symbols to mark them, one to show that they are military graves, the other to mark the grave. Many soldiers were not so lucky to be buried; such was the chaos of some battles. Makeshift graves had to make do for many, with comrades fashioning ‘rough crosses’ out of whatever suitable materials they could procure, or simply having their face covered before comrades had to move on.\textsuperscript{275} The absence of a grave increased the importance of War Memorials. This was recognised by The Sheffield Wesleyan Mission, who appealed for money to erect a war memorial for ‘140 Men...who laid down their lives’.\textsuperscript{276} The Church Army Review supported a War Memorial as a ‘permanent and beneficial testimony’ of the sacrifice of those who were killed in the war.\textsuperscript{277}

\textsuperscript{271} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{272} Winter, p.69.
\textsuperscript{273} Grave of Private Clifford Arnold Wall, 27\textsuperscript{th} Battalion, September 1918, Ref No. J00060, Australian War Memorial (accessed on Picture Australia, \url{http://www.pictureaustralia.org/apps/pictureaustralia_23_March_2008}), and Grave of Private Walter Leonard Slape, 27\textsuperscript{th} Battalion, September 1918, Ref No. J00045, Australian War Memorial (accessed on Picture Australia, \url{http://www.pictureaustralia.org/apps/pictureaustralia_23_March_2008}).
\textsuperscript{274} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{275} Scates., p.42
Women found war memorials a place to gather and recognise the sacrifice of their sons, and were ‘especially addressed by Chaplains’ at official gatherings.\textsuperscript{278} When families were informed of the death of a loved one, it was assumed by the informant that it was important to give details of a burial if possible; such as Private L.W. Pepper who ‘died “in the faith” and was buried with full military honours’.\textsuperscript{279} This craving for information stemmed not only from a desire to possibly know the location of a grave, but also the need to know that a body had been laid to rest. The news of death without the evidence of a body was hard to accept. The idea of a burial was comforting; the decomposition of a body became a hidden thing, and therefore more respectful. Attitudes about burials at this time show that it was important to bury the body as a matter of respect; for those who believed that the soul rested with the body, this was extremely important. But the real importance was the commemoration of the soldier, and this had less to do with religious beliefs and more with comfort for the bereaved. The Cross that marks a grave was used more as a symbol and a marker than an article of religious significance. Religious attitudes were not central to all burials and commemorations, despite the presence of chaplains at some of these events.

World War I was a time mass bereavement and grief, and attitudes about death are often religious as they concern matters of the soul. Bereavement is a state in which a person will use coping mechanisms, and one of these is a belief in a higher power. Yet through this war, religious beliefs were not central to attitudes about death and bereavement. Soldiers fighting at the front witnessed death very often. Some found comfort in beliefs about sleep and rest after death, some more specifically believed in heaven. Yet many were very superstitious about death, whether it was predicting their own death or trying to prevent it. These attitudes show that soldiers did not trust

\textsuperscript{279} Ibid.
in a higher power to be the executor of their fate. Chaplains at the front also became jaded, trying to make sense of the horror of war by exalting in individual men’s Christ-like qualities. War poetry also touted these qualities, and was a medium for sharing war experiences that was a lot more religious in content. This was comforting, but not necessarily theologically based. For those at the home front, the rhetoric of sacrifice and glory was used widely and was seen as a comfort to those who had lost loved ones to the war. Burial and memorialisation during and after the war was also important to those at home. Religious symbolism often surrounds these rituals. Yet to most, burial and memorialisation was a comfort rather than a particularly religious ritual. During and after the war, most attitudes towards death and bereavement were more vaguely religious and spiritual, but it appears many did not have strong Christian attitudes despite their country’s faith being recognised as such.
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