

Colofon

Historica is een uitgave van de Vereniging voor Gendergeschiedenis en verschijnt drie keer per jaar (februari, juni en oktober). Meer informatie op www.gendergeschiedenis.nl.

Redactie

Marjolein Van Bavel
Greetje Bijl (pr)
Barbara Bulckaert (eindredactie)
Anais Van Ertvelde (pr)
Stefan Meysman
John Soedirman (eindredactie)
Rose Spijkerman
Kirsten Zimmerman (hoofddirecteur)

Redactieadres

E-mail: historica@gendergeschiedenis.nl

Lidmaatschap

VVG, p/a Atria, Vijzelstraat 20, 1017 HK Amsterdam
tel: 020 - 30 31 500
www.gendergeschiedenis.nl

Voor privépersonen bedraagt de contributie €27,50 per jaar (lidmaatschap); reductielidmaatschap (voor studenten of mensen met een inkomen onder de €1200,- per maand): €22,- per jaar (studentlid, ovv collegekaartnummer). Leden van de VVG ontvangen *Historica* automatisch en hebben stemrecht bij de jaarlijkse algemene ledenvergadering. Voor instellingen kost *Historica* €27,50. Instellingen kunnen geen aanspraak maken op de rechten van leden. Het bedrag moet vooraf worden betaald. Lidmaatschappen worden automatisch verlengd, tenzij één maand voor het verstrijken van de lidmaatschapsperiode (voor 1 december) schriftelijk is opgezegd. U kunt lid of abonnee worden via de website, door te bellen, of door het bedrag over te maken op het VVG-bankrekeningnummer NL94 INGB 0004 1029 80 (de BIC-code is INGBNL2A). U kunt ook een briefkaart sturen naar de Vereniging voor Gendergeschiedenis, dan ontvangt u een acceptgiro. Donaties zijn ook van harte welkom!

Inleveren kopij

Artikelen zijn welkom op het adres:
historica@gendergeschiedenis.nl

De redactie behoudt zich het recht voor om bijdragen te weigeren. Auteurs zijn verantwoordelijk voor de inhoud van hun artikelen.

Bestuur Vereniging voor Gendergeschiedenis (VVG)

Greetje Bijl (Historica)
saartjes3@hotmail.com
Ellen Boonstra (secretaris, adreswijzigingen)
ellen@warande30k.nl
Julie Carlier
julie.carlier@ugent.be
Els Flour (penningmeester)
e.flour@amazon.be
Evelien Rijsbosch (Atria)
e.rijsbosch@atria-kennisinstituut.nl
Margit van der Steen (voorzitter)
m.vandersteen@bureau-aetas.nl

Historica verschijnt met steun van Atria, kennisinstituut voor emancipatie en vrouwengeschiedenis (www.atria-kennisinstituut.nl).

ISSN 1382-9314

Lay-out: Pien Steringa
Diges | geschiedenis & media, www.diges.nl
Druk: Drukwerkdeal.nl
Distributie: AM-groep, Hoofddorp

Foto omslag: *These women are doing their bit. Learn to make munitions* (1916).

Propaganda van het, speciaal voor de oorlog opgerichte, Britse Ministerie van Munitie. De poster riep vrouwen op in de munitiefabrieken te gaan werken; de mannen waren immers aan het front. De maker was de Britse schilder en illustrator Septimus E. Scott (1879-1965). Hij was tijdens de oorlog in dienst van dit ministerie.
© The British Library Board

In dit nummer

/ De Eerste Wereldoorlog /

- 3 'It took a mighty war to make us men equal.' World War I, British women doctors and the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women
Marjolein Van Bavel
- 9 Artsen in de 'Grote Oorlog': Een genderanalyse van de representatie van 'de arts' en het gewonde soldatenlichaam
Fabian Van Wesemael
- 16 Vrouwen in de Grote Oorlog: Dorothy Lawrence en Madame Tack
Martine Kouwenhoven
- 18 Boys to Men? A Scout's perspective on British masculinity and the Great War
Hana Qugana
- 25 'Sexing up the First World War Centenary'. Remembering the visits of British soldiers to brothels during the Great War
Clare Makepeace
- / Genderview /
- 29 Michael Roper (University of Essex, Groot-Brittannië)
Rose Spijkerman
- / Recensie /
- 34 Man worden in de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Jessica Meyers *Men of war. Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (2008)
Rose Spijkerman en Fabian Van Wesemael

Onder historicae

Als Nederlandse ben ik me pas echt voor de Eerste Wereldoorlog gaan interesseren, toen ik bij mijn studie Engelse taal- en letterkunde college over de Britse *war poets* kreeg: deze mannen waren, op zijn zachtst gezegd, niet altijd positief over de vrouwen die veilig thuis achterbleven en het goed vonden dat hun mannen voor het vaderland stierven.

Zo schreef Siegfried Sassoon in 'Glory of Women' (1917): "You worship decorations; you believe, that chivalry redeems the war". En Wilfred Owen verwijt in 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' (1917/18) dichteres Jessie Pope dat zij thuis aan eerzuchtige jongens met groot enthousiasme de oude leugen vertelt: "Dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori" (*het is zoet en passend om voor het vaderland te sterven*). Inderdaad, zei mijn docent verbolgen, Britse vrouwen joegen hun mannen de oorlog in, met witte veren.

Mijn boosheid over deze conclusie maakte dat ik het jaar daarop een essay schreef over de deelname van Britse vrouwen aan de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Daarvoor bestudeerde ik onder andere *Testament of Youth* (1933) van Vera Brittain en *Not so quiet: Stepdaughters of War* (1930) van Helen Zenna Smith. Daaruit bleek dat vrouwen (natuurlijk) zelf ook leden onder de oorlog, al was het maar door de dood van zonen, echtgenoten, vaders en broers. Ze verzorgden de gewonde mannen in het eigen land en een aantal was zelfs ook actief aan het front, als verpleegster, ambulancechauffeur of arts.

Maar begin dit jaar kwam ik door *Historica* meer te weten over de bekende suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928). En wat bleek: nadat ze zich voor de oorlog fanatiek had ingezet voor het vrouwenkiesrecht, stortte ze zich in de oorlog op het ondersteunen van haar vaderland. Pankhurst gaf patriotische toespraken door heel Groot-Brittannië en deelde met haar aanhangers witte veren uit aan 'laffe' mannen die thuisbleven...

Deze feiten brachten mij in verwarring, maar ze waren ook wel spannend. Je zou, kort door de bocht en als wrange grap, kunnen zeggen dat Pankhurst en de haren eigenlijk stiekem een harde feministische agenda hadden: mannen naar het front, vrouwen eindelijk bevrijd van huis en haard de ruimte in eigen land.

Dat de oorlog Engelse vrouwen ook veel opleverde, laat bijvoorbeeld de Britse oud-oorlogscorrespondente Kate Adie zien in haar boek *Fighting on the home front: the legacy of women in World War One* (2013). Britse vrouwen stapten uit de huiselijke schaduw in het volle licht van het publieke leven: van tramconductor tot fabriekswerker en als voetballer op zondag. Uiteindelijk zouden de Britse vrouwen in 1918 – na een halve eeuw strijd – het kiesrecht krijgen, zeer waarschijnlijk mede doordat ze in de oorlog hadden laten zien dat ze thuis hun mannetje konden staan. Terwijl de soldaten aan het front, onder leiding van regering en generaals, aan de idealen van mannelijkheid ten onder waren gegaan.

Kirsten Zimmerman, hoofddirecteur *Historica*

World War I, British women doctors and the London (Royal Free Hospital)
School of Medicine for Women

‘It took a mighty war to make us man’s equal’

The First World War has generally been understood as a watershed moment that transformed women’s status in society. And with regard to the entry of women into the medical profession too, the war can be seen as a turning point, however short-lived. This article sets out to study the discourses behind the ebbs and flows in British attitudes towards women medical students and women doctors, its relationship to the event of the First World War and the exceptional position taken up by the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women by making use of the collection of newspaper clippings produced by the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women held within the Royal Free Archive Centre.¹



English women doctors in a hospital in Paris (October 1915)

/ Marjolein Van Bavel /

Nineteenth century ideals of womanhood can be understood as constituted upon assumptions of domesticity, submissiveness, passivity, emotional disposition and self-sacrifice, closely linked to ‘biological, anthropological, and medical theories of innate female inferiority.’² Naturally, these ideals of femininity did not necessarily correspond to women’s actual life experiences. Nevertheless, they were part of powerful gender dispositions that impacted upon (white, middle class) women’s actual positions within society. However, such ideals came to be increasingly contested at the turn of the century; an evolution that took place alongside growing opportunities for (some) women. There were suffrage demands for full citizenship for women, the passing of legislation that opened up public office positions and removed common law restrictions for married women owning property.³ Moreover, in the last decades of the nineteenth century universities gradually opened their doors to female students. The numbers of women students in Britain rose to 20 percent by 1910, yet varied substantially between institutions – the majority of British universities admitted women in the early twentieth century, while it took Oxford and Cambridge until the inter-war years to allow female students – and the numbers of women students varied between departments

within these institutions – the majority of women students studied art subjects destined for the teaching vocation, while other degrees, such as medicine, were more difficult to access for women.⁴

The First World War has generally been understood as a watershed moment, which transformed women’s status in society and, arguably, advanced feminism in the subsequent period.⁵ And with regard to the entry of women into the medical profession too, the war can be seen as a turning point. Soon after the start of the war, male doctors and medicine students went abroad for military service, consequently leaving behind a national shortage. The need for more doctors led to national calls framed as patriotic duty, encouraging women from the leisured classes to take up medical education. Importantly, women doctors became highly regarded for having made a significant contribution to the war effort, both at home and abroad, since they had demonstrated their competence.⁶ Furthermore, in light of the extraordinary pressures, the war period saw seven of the twelve London schools for medicine opening up their doors to women.⁷ This was of considerable importance since women desiring to study medicine within London had before been restricted to the separate London (Royal Free Hospital)

School of Medicine for Women.

Nevertheless, this situation changed as the war drew to a close. The educational system quickly became less favourable towards women doctors in the inter-war period. Male students who had left for the trenches now reappeared in the university classrooms, self-confident in their authority, roughened by the war experience and less open to female students than their non-combatant peers.⁸ The medical market came to be experienced as overstocked and there were few opportunities for employment.⁹ In this context, opposition to women’s presence grew and the London hospitals and schools that had previously admitted women students as a temporary provision, decided to limit the number of women students or simply reverted to admitting male students only.¹⁰

Within this article, I set out to study the discourses behind these evolutions and its relationships to the event of the First World War by making use of the collection of newspaper clippings produced by the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, held within the Royal Free Archive Centre. These clippings are preserved in a series of valuable volumes that go back to the end of the nineteenth century and relate ‘of all aspects of the history of women in medicine

>>

over the last hundred years or so.¹¹ Although these sources raise methodological and interpretative problems, they are, if treated carefully, suited for the study of public opinion and discourse. I will trace whether and how the above mentioned evolutions are reflected within these press cuttings and, thus, I will attempt to answer the following questions: what were the arguments used to advance the position of women medicine students at the advent of the war and how did these arguments develop throughout the war and the post-war pe-

women students', led by Sophia Jex-Blake.¹² Until then, it had been nearly impossible for women to find entry into the profession of medicine. The school's first intake existed out of fourteen students, to whom courses were taught on anatomy, physiology and chemistry.¹³ Yet, it was only in 1877 that the school was also able to provide its students with clinical instruction, after the Royal Free Hospital decided to allow access to students from LSMW, thus giving them the opportunity to complete their medical education by providing the clini-

tors of the male sex, there was the sense that the harsh disabilities had been removed, since 'woman can now receive an excellent medical education almost as favourable for developing skill, knowledge, and resource as those offered to male medical students.'¹⁶ And it was this education that was deemed crucial for women to rival men within the profession, thus moving away from natural claims of female inferiority.

Many newspaper clippings also paid attention to the importance of the pioneering work that the school and its founders had performed. For example, in 1911, *Health and Home* portrayed Dr. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first British woman to qualify in Medicine and dean at LSMW from 1883 till 1903, as 'a distinct reminder, not only of the ambition of capable femininity, but thorough accomplishment, for the school as it stands to-day'.¹⁷ In very positive language a new 'modern' kind of medical woman was celebrated, who evolved 'from the bedside angel, all sensibility and rustling skirt', to 'the woman of to-day, begirt with instruments of deadly shape, an expert in surgery, a specialist in nerves, a good all-round physician neither gliding nor striding; business-like, nerveless, capable, inspiring confidence with every word, authoritative and yet gentle, her womanhood counting to its utmost value, but denuded of all weakness, false shame, and pettiness.'¹⁸ Assumed female virtues were emphasized as beneficial to the medical profession. Arguably, since women who moved into the public realm risked social anxieties, they often justified themselves by appealing to 'essentialized feminine attributes of care and domesticity'.¹⁹ Yet, it was argued in several clippings that there were still various difficulties and prejudices to overcome, which would also demand a change in the patients' attitudes.

Overall, the clippings showed a very positive press coverage of women doctors and the LSMW, which confirms academic ideas that



A female doctor is approached by three burly men (1870)

bron: Punch, August 13, 1870

riod? Moreover, what can we conclude about the role played by the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, based on these newspaper clippings?

Before the war

It was in a modest house in Henrietta Street off Brunswick Square (central London) that The London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women (LSMW) was opened in October 1874 by a 'small group of men and

cal training they needed to qualify as a doctor. It took 'three years of determined lobbying by Miss Jex-Blake and her supporters, who included Charles Darwin, Lord Shaftesbury and Thomas Huxley, before the Royal Free Hospital agreed to become the first hospital in England to provide clinical training for women'.¹⁴

Accounts of this early struggle, often written by the women pioneers themselves, frequently recall analogies of a battlefield.¹⁵ And accordingly, in the years before the war, newspaper clippings mentioned how it had been a hard up-hill fight for the first women to be admitted to the practice of medicine, but that progress had been made. Although women doctors were not yet on equal terms with doc-

Sophia Jex-Blake (1840-1912)



Jex-Blake was an English doctor, teacher and feminist. She was one of the first female doctors in the United Kingdom, a prominent campaigner for medical education for women and was involved in the foundation of a medical school of women in London and Edinburgh. In Edinburgh she also founded a women's hospital.

Thomas Huxley (1825-1895)

Huxley was an English biologist, known as 'Darwin's Bulldog' for his advocacy of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. In 1869 Huxley invented the term 'agnostic' describing his own views on theology.

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (1836-1917)



Garrett Anderson was an English doctor and feminist. She was the first British woman to qualify as a doctor and surgeon in the United Kingdom. She was co-founder of the first hospital staffed by women, i.e. the New Hospital for Women, dean of the London School of Medicine for Women between 1883 and 1903, the first female doctor in France, the first woman in Britain to be elected to a school board and, as Mayor of Aldeburgh (Suffolk), the first female mayor and magistrate in Britain.

by 1914 old notions of women's sexual inferiority were starting to lessen within intellectual circles, while female employment was gaining ground within all classes.²⁰

The Great War

After the outbreak of the war in 1914, student admissions at the London medical schools and hospitals collapsed and a major proportion of male students and staff soon left for foreign



bron: Royal Free Archive Centre

Anatomy class at the LSMW (circa 1890)

service or home duties.²¹ Throughout the war, the majority of clippings related of the national shortage in qualified practitioners of medicine and the urgent need for replacements. The majority of these articles blamed the war for the sudden dearth of doctors, while some emphasized that this shortage already began before the war due to the increasing national demand for medical treatment and inspection, a claim that would become stronger as the war drew to a close. Women were now encouraged to take up the study of medicine and these calls were repeatedly framed as a patriotic duty. In a letter to the editor, which was published in several of the country's leading newspapers, Miss Louie M. Brooks, Secretary and Warden at the LSMW, requested the readers to 'suggest to the well-educated, healthy young women of England that they would be serving their country by beginning to study medicine.'²² And elsewhere Miss Brooks emphasized that the 'leisured women have a duty to the State [...] quite as great as the brother and father who are now in the fighting line.'²³ The national importance of women's work in wartime was emphasized and, reportedly, there arose a new general recognition that the war called upon 'women along with other non-combatants, not only for suffering, but for service.'²⁴

Women answered the national call with great enthusiasm. Estimates suggest that well over 300 British women doctors volunteered for service.²⁵ Moreover, women doctors were said to do splendid jobs, both at home and away. They were founding hospitals at the front (like Elizabeth Garrett Anderson) and demonstrated great courage as they were prepared to move along with the front. Moreover, it was expressed that '[w]omen doctors have

proved themselves again and again in this last war, and, indeed but for their excellent surgical work and skilful operations, many a valuable soldier's life must have been lost.'²⁶ Furthermore, women doctors' were praised, for being 'above all practical, quick witted, absolutely self-possessed, never losing their nerve, and always bright and cheery. Their patients' are grateful above words, and [...] regard them more as angels than as mortal beings.'²⁷

Consequently, Victorian ideals of womanhood resonated within these reports, framing women as loyal, self-sacrificing and patriotic. Nevertheless, their presence on the battlefield also created the need to endow them with fortitude and courage, commonly associated with servicemen.²⁸ A common strategy to glorify women's effort in non-threatening ways seemed to be through essentialization and idealisation. For example, *Home Chat*, one of the twentieth-century bestselling women's magazines, described the woman in war as 'a truly helpful Eve at her Adam's side, bravely striving to make garden in the wilderness.'²⁹ Moreover, potential dangers to ideals of femininity were rendered ineffectual without moving away from these ideals. For instance, the pioneer female doctor Mary Scharlieb was quoted saying: 'It is certain that all such women cannot, and do not, expect to marry, and that in default of this most natural and desirable condition of life some women must seek other spheres of usefulness.'³⁰ Middle- and upper-class women were progressively taking up roles that conflicted with feminine ideals that had long been considered proper for their class and there seemed to be a 'popular realization that women could tend the suffering without sacrificing either their femininity or their respectability.'³¹ For example, one clipping from January 1915 stated: '[Women doctors] are so common that no one takes any thought about them or worries over their 'un-womanliness' in encroaching on this sphere of man's activities.'³²

Such statements echoed the strong sense of progress present in many newspaper clippings. Several articles reported that while there had almost been general opposition to



bron: photo (1926) - Wellcome Library, London

Mary Scharlieb (1845-1930)



Scharlieb was a pioneer British female doctor in midwifery and gynaecology. When she moved to India after marriage, she was

impelled to become a doctor by the suffering of Indian women in sickness and particularly in childbirth. She became one of the first four women students at the Madras Medical College where she gained her Licentiate in Medicine. She returned to England where she received a degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery. She worked as a lecturer at the Madras Medical College and Royal Free Hospital and as a surgeon at the New Hospital for Women in London.

women doctors a few years earlier, a great number of medical posts had now become open to women and prejudices were breaking down fast. Looking back on the first year of war, several articles described how the woman doctor was now no longer seen as 'an unwelcome intruder in a sphere of work in which tradition had allotted her no place [and that it was] now recognized that in most of the professions women [were] destined to practice side by side and on equal terms with men.'³³ Some newspapers reported a discernible change in attitudes, since the woman doctor was no longer looked at with suspicion, but 'hailed with something like national enthusiasm.'³⁴ Henceforth, women were given the opportunity to take men's places and they were reported to be anxious to do so; as tellingly expressed by *Home Chat*:

'It took a mighty war, the young people say, to make us man's equal – no war of our making, but of his! And now we count. He looks at us as he never looked before! We can do *anything!* But our chance never came till all the men went off to war, and left a labour problem which only we could fill! So the new

>>

The London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, Hunter Street, London, founded 1874

woman, the war-awakened girl, bubbles with exultation, as well she may.³⁵

Thus, the overall tone with regard to the position of women and women doctors in society was positive and hopeful towards the future. It was believed that people would have a better appreciation of the well-trained woman doctor after the war, and that ‘the devotion of the women doctors [would] form a thrilling chapter’ within history books.³⁶ According to Miss Brooks: ‘[m]any new social reforms will undoubtedly be the outcome of this war, and these will bring along certain work that can only be done by women.’³⁷ Work, Miss Brooks believed, that the educated woman of leisure would happily take up, since she ‘is at present craving for interest, and [...] will never find contentment and real life over inane conversation, paying calls, and making baubles which no one wants.’³⁸ Furthermore, prominent men also argued for the case of women doctors. For example, Sir Alfred Keogh (1857-1936), medical doctor in the British Army, emphasised that ‘[t]he idea that the medical education of women is an experiment [...] must pass away. It has come to stay, and to stay for the public good.’³⁹ Even when the USA’s entry into the war ensured the presence of greater numbers of male Army doctors, the pressing demand for more women doctors in civil life was not altered.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, some were critical of this contemporary narrative of hopeful progress. *The Lady’s Realm*, for example, made the sarcastic realisation that ‘[i]t was perhaps less surprising than amusing to see how quickly deep-rooted prejudices dissolved before the pressing need.’⁴¹ Moreover, *The Hospital* expressed that ‘[w]e have always preferred to believe that the door which the European War has opened to medical women will not be closed to them once peace is declared, though [...] matters may not prove quite as simple as they suppose.’⁴²

***The Lady’s Realm* (November 1869-October 1914)**

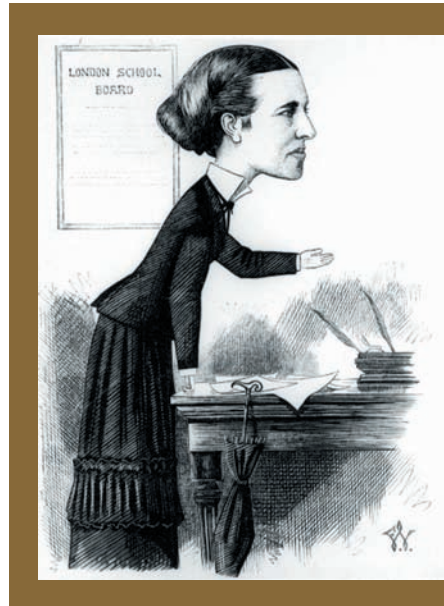
An illustrated monthly magazine aimed at an upper class or aspiring middle class audience. The editors of the magazine were men, yet it emphasized writing by women. The magazine published a mixture of London society news and articles on fashion, food, home-making, the theatre and ways for women to earn money.

Consequently, several voices, amongst which Miss Brooks, commenced to emphasize the importance of women doctors, asserting that the shortage of doctors was not simply an effect of the war and that more women doctors were needed ‘to preserve the health of the nation.’⁴³

Throughout the war, women from the LSMW were repeatedly heard in the press. Moreover, speeches held at the school and its calls for funds were widely published, which may be telling about the favourable position of the school. The school received positive media coverage, was highly regarded and seemed to hold a special position within this

hopeful time of progress, as women doctors were thought to be ‘greatly strengthened at the outset of their career by having behind them a strong, well-developed institution such as the London School of Medicine for Women.’⁴⁴ For example, *The Pall Mall Gazette* encouraged its readers to support the LSMW by emphasizing ‘the great work that is being done by the medical women who have passed through it – work both in private practice and in public appointments, in school clinics

stories of women medicine students and women doctors. Yet, the tone in the newspapers soon changed. In stark contrast with the enormous amount of newspaper articles previously reporting of the great shortage in medical staff, newspapers now started to ask themselves: ‘Will there be too many?’ It were, however, not the numbers of male doctors that seemed to alarm public opinion, but the very women that had been appealed to during the war. Especially from the 1920s onwards, the



from: caricature by Frederick Waddy, published 1872. Wellcome Library, London

In 1870 Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was elected to the first London School Board, an office newly opened to women.

and in hospitals for women and children, in fighting plague in India, and in medical missionary work, moreover, at the present time in the eastern as well as the western theatre of the war.’⁴⁵

Furthermore, the clippings also related of the situation the other London schools of medicine were in. While most of ‘the Schools and Colleges connected with London University [were] in somewhat dire straits this session for lack of students, [...] the School of Medicine for Women is in precisely the opposite position: it finds itself with more students than it can accommodate.’⁴⁶ And likewise, *The Observer* reported that ‘lately there has been an enormous increase of women students at the medical schools, and [they] will very likely outnumber the men in about twenty years’ time. Even in five years’ time, when the students now under training will have finished their courses, there will be a considerable influx of women doctors into private practice.’⁴⁷ And soon, this would come to be perceived as problematic.

The post-war years

Immediately after the Great War had come to an end on 11 November 1918, women’s war efforts were highly appreciated and numerous clippings bore witness to the many success

rush of female medicine students came to be felt as a post-war problem, since ‘over three thousand women [were] now studying for the medical profession and many more [were] anxious to begin.’⁴⁸ Ironically, according to some articles this problem was created by the war-time ‘experiment’ of admitting women to medicine. However, in one notably sharp article, the LSMW rebutted those voices blaming women for the alleged overcrowding in the medical profession, stating that if there really were an overcrowding in the medical profession, it could not have been caused by the female minority.⁴⁹

Moreover, the competence of women doctors seemed to have come under scrutiny. It was argued that even the female patient did not trust women doctors; she would consult a woman doctor for ‘small ailments’, but in matters of life or death she would probably ‘like a man’s advice just to put [her] mind at rest!’⁵⁰ Some newspapers also argued that many women who entered into the profession during the war, were actually unsuited for it, and a so-called male specialist was quoted saying: ‘Unfortunately a woman’s sense of judgment is not always to be trusted.’⁵¹ Moreover, he went on to state that a ‘very large number of women doctors marry and cease to practice. Their education is lost to the public.’⁵² This comment reflects debates

about women's place in medicine schools and their right to become wage-earners. Here Miss Brooks admitted that although women want a 'fair field and no favour [...] they have been rather slow in learning that they must accept the conditions which men have to accept. [However] [t]hey are realizing to-day that they may have to sacrifice domestic ties, exactly as men have done, in making careers for themselves.'⁵³

In contrast to the great sense of progress throughout the war period, more articles came to express that women's prospects may not look that rosy after all. Although the opportunities for study were now experienced as 'practically equal for the sexes', the woman doctor was still confronted with many obstacles and prejudices.⁵⁴ Women still did not enjoy equal access to schools and resident posts, a situation that would even worsen as the years passed. Moreover, the fact that women doctors were 'women' now seemed to become problematic. Women doctors increasingly found themselves refuting biologically deterministic arguments about their sex. Thus, while women doctors had been represented during the war as invincible and courageous, a very different interpretation of women's bodily capacities now became visible and sports played an important role in such arguments.

From 1919 onwards, there was a growing attention for the relationship of women to sports. Several newspaper clippings reported about the first female students' rowing competition, held between medicine students from LSMW and Newnham College. While the competition itself received a rather neutral coverage – i.e. pictures with a simple descriptive caption – it seemed to spark intense debate. For example, *The Daily Telegraph* dubbed a young woman cynical because she believed that up until that point universities had prohibited boat races for women because of man's desire to retain exclusive privileges, while in reality, the newspaper believed, it was the kindly intended fear that 'girls might easily overdo their strength in the great physical strain of such a race.'⁵⁵

Moreover, while in April 1920 newspapers were still applauding the 'Fit Englishwoman', in May 1921 numerous articles – some of which ominously headed 'Muscle girls' – expressed concern over the effects of excessive exercise for girls and that sports may even be injurious to motherhood.⁵⁶ LSMW addressed public opinion by stating that medical women are generally in favour of athletics for girls since sports contribute to their health and fitness.⁵⁷ Responses to the school's arguments were, however, becoming increasingly hostile. For example, the *Pall Mall Gazette* sharply argued that it would be foolish to return 'to the young-ladyism of the mid-Victorian era, when the most violent game indulged in by women was croquet with the curate [but that] there is a mean in all things, and medical women, not blinded by sex jealousy, must be quite aware that there are limits to development, and that

the right aim of hygiene is to secure a true equilibrium of physique and function.'⁵⁸

Thus there seemed to be a growing appeal to essentialism, confining woman to a lacking body and limiting her potential space of action. Yet, the proponents of sports for girls also appealed to essentialist claims in order to advance their case. For example, the *Daily Sketch* mooted the possibility that athletics for girls could be a good antidote for sentimentality and introspection. Since women who diverged from parameters of 'womanly' behaviour could be accused of sexual immorality and deviancy, it should not be surprising that claims for women's rights to study medicine too were often based in essentialist arguments.

Interestingly, in the first months of the year 1922, a growing number of newspaper clippings commenced to address women's protest against the London Hospital Medical College's ban on women students. The women doctors were reported to be up in arms, as they feared – and rightly so – that it may have been 'the beginning of a campaign to undermine their position in the profession.'⁵⁹ Already in 1920, the position of women students within the London hospitals came to be severely challenged. At University College and the London Hospital, a movement of male students, amongst which numerous ex-servicemen, demanded that the school would no longer admit women students. In November 1920 the school committee gave in to their demands, limiting the number of female students.⁶⁰ It did not become clear from the clippings why the debate on this topic only really broke out a year after the decision was put into practice. Nevertheless, the case caused quite an uproar.

The school justified its decision to newspapers by referring to the supposed difficulties that arose in teaching certain subjects to mixed classes. The women doctors, on the other hand, claimed that the men were driven by economic incentives, by fear for women's competition, jealousy and sex antagonism. During the war, the student numbers slumped and the schools struggled to survive; it were the female students' fees that kept the schools open, but now that man had returned from war, the woman student was no longer needed. A multitude of articles reported on the

'Sex Wars' in which both camps seemed to become increasingly polarized and heated. The already mentioned arguments, reasoning against women doctors, became stronger, while the tone with which they were proclaimed became nastier. For example, one article anonymously quoted an 'ex surgical sister' claiming that she never felt that she could rely upon women doctors' skill, because she thought them to be nervous, uneasy and vexatious and incapable to delegate authority.⁶¹

These developments can potentially be interpreted as part of an inter-war 'crisis of masculinity', perhaps particularly pressing within the field of medicine because of its deeply gendered character.⁶² The medical profession can be understood as a 'caring profession' running the risk of implied connotations of femininity. Sexual difference thus needs to be maintained, and an obsession with athletics and rugby seemed to serve this goal. With women students entering their field and increasingly becoming active as athletes too, men could experience emasculation.⁶³ Furthermore, it was felt that women invaded long-standing codes of honour.⁶⁴ The growing unease with the presence of women students and doctors can explain why their prospects in London looked bleaker in the late 1920s and 1930s than they had done in 1918.⁶⁵

Conclusion

By studying the discourses present within the London School of Medicine for Women's collection of newspaper clippings, my article attempts to further our understanding of the growth in opposition to the admission of women students in many of the London medical schools in the inter-war period. At the outset of the war, newspaper clippings were very positive towards women medicine students and women doctors. There was an emphasis on their importance to eliminate the national shortage in medical practitioners caused by the war, their patriotic duty towards the State, and a strong confidence in progress and female talent. However, after the war, public opinion quickly became less favourable towards women doctors; their skill was questioned, their bodily capacities scrutinized and their right to access the public sphere (e.g. >>



bron: Royal Free Archive Centre

Some of the first LSMW students (circa 1890)

their right to earn wages) were disputed. Within these debates, both opponents and proponents of the women doctors' cause appealed to essentialist arguments, drawing on traditional gender ideals. However, I would like to argue that it was not so much ideology, but elements of a more pragmatic character that influenced these processes. Likewise, Garner (1998) has argued that ostensible revolutions in the status of women can be understood as more the result of temporary convenience than lasting

Notes:

- 1 This article is based on an essay I wrote for the Master Module 'Gender and Knowledge in History', taught by Helga Satzinger at the History Department of University College London. I would like to thank Helga, who has since become my PhD supervisor, for her guidance.
- 2 Lee, J., 'I Wish My Mother Could See Me Now'. *The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) and Negotiation of Gender and Class Relations, 1907-1918*; *NWSA Journal* 19/2 (2007), p. 139-140.
- 3 Lee, 'I Wish My Mother Could See Me Now', p. 140.
- 4 Dyhouse, C., 'The British federation of university women and the status of women in universities, 1907-1939', *Women's History Review* 4/4 (1995), p. 469.
- 5 Garner, J. S., 'The Great Experiment. The Admission of Women

- 26 *Western Daily Press* 8 May 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 107, ARFH).
- 27 *Western Daily Press* 8 May 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 107, ARFH)
- 28 Lee, 'I Wish My Mother Could See Me Now', p. 143.
- 29 *Home Chat* 2 May 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 106, ARFH).
- 30 *The Times* 8 December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 63, ARFH).
- 31 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 75.
- 32 *Unknown*, ca. January 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 75, ARFH).
- 33 *The Hospital* 4 September 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 4, Archives Royal Free Hospital).
- 34 *Church Daily Newspaper* 13 August 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 150, ARFH).
- 35 *Home Chat* 2 May 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 106, ARFH).
- 36 *Church Daily Newspaper* 13 August 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 150, ARFH).
- 37 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 70, ARFH).
- 38 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 70, ARFH).
- 39 *The Common Cause* 26 February 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 88, ARFH).
- 40 *The Observer* 7 October 1917 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 100, ARFH).
- 41 *The Lady's Realm*, October 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 15, ARFH).
- 42 *The Hospital* 29 May 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 113, ARFH).
- 43 *Evening News* 15 June 1915 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 118, ARFH).
- 44 *The Morning Post* 3 February 1916 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 28, ARFH).
- 45 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 69, ARFH).
- 46 *Unknown* 12 December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 68, ARFH).
- 47 *The Observer* 7 October 1917 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 100, ARFH).
- 48 *The Graphic* 21 January 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 160, ARFH).
- 49 *The Guardian* 22 October 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 3, ARFH).
- 50 *Dundee Courier* 18 February 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 21, ARFH).
- 51 *Dundee Evening Telegraph* 3 December 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 12, ARFH).
- 52 *Dundee Evening Telegraph* 3 December 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 12, ARFH).
- 53 *Evening Standard* 22 September 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 61, ARFH).
- 54 *Daily News* 4 October 1920 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 177, ARFH).
- 55 *The Daily Telegraph* 21 June 1919 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 5, p. 140, ARFH).
- 56 *The Hospital* 21 May 1921 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 47, ARFH).
- 57 *Daily News* 12 May 1921 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 37, ARFH).
- 58 *Pall Mall Gazette* 12 May 1921 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 40, ARFH).
- 59 *Daily Chronicle* 3 February 1922 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 82, ARFH).
- 60 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 115.
- 61 *The Times* 10 February 1922 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 6, part 1, p. 88, ARFH).
- 62 Mosse, G. L., *The Image of Man. The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 77-78. Dyhouse, C., 'Driving ambitions. Women in pursuit of a medical education, 1890-1939', *Women's History Review* 7/3 (1998b), 322/224.
- 63 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 124-125.
- 64 Nye, 'Medicine and Science as Masculine', p. 75.
- 65 Dyhouse, 'Driving ambitions', p. 337.
- 66 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 69.

British women doctors and their soldier patients from the front in a Paris war Hospital (October 1914)



bron: Daily Sketch 14 October 1914

ideological change.⁶⁶ The woman doctor was not only socially accepted but also celebrated when she was needed. Yet, when she posed a threat to man's status and opportunities in society, she was cast out by appealing to gender ideology. The LSMW was at the forefront of these struggles. During the war, the LSMW played a prominent role in providing and institutionalizing medical education for women and after the war the school made its voice heard within debates on woman doctors' positions. The school's volumes with newspaper clippings therefore provide us with a fascinating walk through the fundamental stages within the history of women's emancipation. ///

- Students to St Mary's Hospital Medical School, 1916-1925', *Medical History* 42 (1998), p. 69.
- 6 Dyhouse, C., 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939. The Anatomy of a Masculine Culture', *Gender & History* 10/1 (1998a), p. 110.
- 7 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 70.
- 8 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 81.
- 9 Elston, M. A., 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women. Medical Women's Hospitals in Britain, 1866-1948' in L. Conrad and A. Hardy (edd.), *Women and Modern Medicine* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), p. 95-96.
- 10 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 110.
- 11 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 111.
- 12 Amidon, L. A., *An illustrated history of the Royal Free Hospital* (London: Special Trustees for the Royal Free Hospital, 1996), p. 32.
- 13 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 120.
- 14 Amidon, *An illustrated history of the Royal Free Hospital*, p. 32. Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 111.
- 15 Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939', p. 110.
- 16 *The Lancet*, 7 October 1911 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 38, ARFH).
- 17 *Health and Home*, 15 June 1911 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 50, ARFH).
- 18 *Lady's Pictorial*, 10 Augusts 1910 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 29, ARFH).
- 19 Lee, 'I Wish My Mother Could See Me Now', p. 140.
- 20 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 71.
- 21 Garner, 'The Great Experiment', p. 75.
- 22 *The Morning Post*, 9 September 2014 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 55, ARFH).
- 23 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 December 2014 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 70, ARFH).
- 24 *Unknown*, December 1914 (Press Cuttings, Medical Women, vol. 4, p. 73, ARFH).
- 25 Geddes, J. F., 'The Doctor's Dilemma. Medical women and the British suffrage movement', *Women's History Review* 18/2 (2009), 211.

Marjolain Van Bavel (1989) is editor of *Historica* and PhD candidate at the History Department of University College London (UCL). Her PhD project (financed by the UCL Graduate Research Scholarship) examines the experiences of British models who posed for soft-core pornographic magazines between the 1960s and early 2000s.

Contact: m.bavel.12@ucl.ac.uk

Credits small photographs:
 Sophia Jex-Blake | Swaine | © Wellcome Library
 Elizabeth Garrett Anderson | Walery, published 1889 | © Wellcome Library
 M. Scharlieb | ca. 1875 | © Wellcome Library, London

Since the writing of this essay the Royal Free Archive Centre has closed. The collection of LSMW newspaper clippings has been transferred to the London Metropolitan Archives.

Een genderanalyse van de representatie van 'de arts' en het gewonde soldatenlichaam¹

Artsen in de 'Groote Oorlog'



Artsen hadden tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog een ambigue positie. Enerzijds werkten ze dicht bij het front en kwamen ze direct in aanraking met de horror en de opwinding van de oorlogsvoering. Anderzijds waren ze geen 'echte' soldaten, omdat ze niet mochten deelnemen aan de strijd. In die zin beantwoordden ze niet geheel aan de cultureel verheven martiale mannelijkheid, welke gekenmerkt werd door een verheerlijking van het gewapend man-tegen-mangevecht, plichtsbesef, avontuur en militaire moed. De vraag stelt zich dan ook hoe zijzelf hun professionele identiteit formuleerden in relatie tot de heroïsche soldatenidentiteit. Dit artikel onderzocht deze kwestie door middel van een discoursanalyse van de oorlogsgeschriften van Britse, Amerikaanse en Franse artsen, en dit aan de hand van een specifieke invalshoek: hun discours over gewonde lichamen en lichamelijkeid.

/ Fabian Van Wesemael /

Aan de vooravond van de Eerste Wereldoorlog waren de medische diensten van alle nationale legers sterker uitgebouwd dan ooit voorheen. Traditioneel wordt dit in de historiografie verklaard door het toenemend besef bij het leger van het belang van de medische dienst voor de troepensterkte. In die zin was de medische dienst vooral een militaire noodzaak. Zoals historicus Leo van Bergen gevat stelt: 'Hippocrates was niet onpartijdig maar stond in dienst van Mars'.² Daarnaast waren de medische diensten ook ontwikkeld om humanitaire en morele redenen. In de loop van de negentiende eeuw was het medelijden met en de bezorgdheid om de condities van de soldaten stelselmatig toegenomen. Beide aspecten, de

mankracht en de humanitaire gevoeligheden, kunnen niet los worden gezien van de toenemende rationalisering en disciplinerende van het leger en de samenleving in het algemeen. De medische dienst werd een cruciale rol toegewezen ter bevordering van de efficiëntie van de oorlogsmachine en dit uitte zich, paradoxaal, eveneens in een humanitair discours. Oorlogsvoering was 'aanvaardbaar' wanneer die gereguleerd werd volgens bepaalde conventies en principes (met name, de Verdragen van Genève uit 1864 en 1906). Daarnaast was men er zich van bewust dat een goed functionerende medische dienst, als symbool van humanitaire idealen, het moreel van de soldaten

De Eerste en Tweede Geneefse Conventie hadden als doel de (medische) zorg voor zieken en gewonden op het slagveld te verzekeren en te verbeteren.

Een Russisch veldhospitaal tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, ca. 1917

en van het steeds beter geïnformeerde en mondig thuisfront ten goede kwam.³

In de aanloop van de Eerste Wereldoorlog was het voor de drie grote mogendheden van de geallieerden – Frankrijk, Groot-Brittannië en de Verenigde Staten – al duidelijk dat het contingent beroepslegerartsen niet voldoende zou zijn. Daarom werden er vóór en tijdens de oorlog inspanningen zonder weerga verricht om extra civiele artsen aan te trekken. Deze werden op verschillende wijze gemobiliseerd door de drie grote geallieerde mogendheden. In Groot-Brittannië bestond er bij de aanvang van de oorlog een systeem van vrijwilligers. Vanaf 1916 werd de mobilisatie van artsen gereguleerd om de verhouding van het aantal artsen aan het front/thuisfront te stabiliseren. Er kwam een (semi-)dienstplicht: artsen konden zich vrijwillig aanmelden, maar zij die dat niet deden konden alsnog worden opgeroepen. Hoewel de Verenigde Staten pas in 1917 officieel deelnamen aan de oorlog en toen ook de dienstplicht invoerden, waren er voorheen reeds Amerikaanse artsen actief als vrijwilligers. Ze werden ofwel individueel ingelijfd bij de andere legers, of stichtten gezamenlijk een hospitaal. Frankrijk kende daarentegen al vóór >>

de oorlog een systeem van dienstplicht. Elke Franse arts werd dus automatisch opgeroepen. Dit maakte de relatie tussen het leger en de geneesheren hechter. Het contingent civiele artsen was bij deze drie landen naar schatting 15 tot 25 keer groter dan het aantal legerartsen.⁴ Hoewel steeds meer vrouwen het doktersberoep binnenstroonden, bleef het aantal vrouwelijke oorlogsartsen gering. Hun deelname aan de oorlog was vooral de vrucht van een persoonlijk, informeel initiatief.⁵

Ondanks de essentiële en massale deelname van artsen aan de oorlog is de betreffende historiografie weinig actueel. ‘Officiële’ geschiedenissen die in een lineair perspectief vertellen hoe de geneeskunde progressie kende door de oorlog, waren tot voor kort dominant. De egodocumenten van artsen werden in dit geval gebruikt als objectieve getuigenissen van de verbetering van medische technieken en praktijken. Het laatste decennium verschenen er wel studies die dit positivistische – en impliciet militaristische – paradigma verlieten en de sociale wortels en de culturele perceptie van ontwikkelingen in de geneeskunde in rekening namen.⁶ Toch zijn de egodocumenten van de artsen ook hier zelden een doel op zich, waardoor de subjectiviteit van de artsen onvoldoende onder de aandacht kwam.⁷

Nochtans kent de historiografie van de Eerste Wereldoorlog sinds de ‘cultural turn’ in de jaren tachtig-negentig een rijke traditie in onderzoek naar subjectieve ervaring en zingeving. Hierbij was er lang exclusief aandacht voor ‘de’ ervaring van ‘de’ soldaat in de loopgraven. De implementatie van het genderparadigma bracht zowel een verruiming als een verdieping van het onderzoeksveld. Zo kwam er niet alleen aandacht voor de oorlogsge-schriften van vrouwen, maar werd evenzeer de ervaring van de soldaat gedeconstrueerd als gevormd door idealen van (onder andere) mannelijkheid en gewapende strijd. De figuur van de heldhaftige soldaat was het ideaal dat mannen werd voorgehouden en dat moest dienen als brandpunt voor de constructie van hun oorlogservaring. Zelfs voordat de vijandigheden uitbraken, werd de Eerste Wereldoorlog gepercipieerd als een test van mannelijkheid die kansen zou bieden op glorie en heroïsme. De oorlog zou voor een fysieke en morele (her)opleving van de natie zorgen. Vooral in Frankrijk was dit regeneratievertoog krachtig. Het land was na het verlies van de Frans-Pruisische oorlog (1870-1871) in crisis. Het herwinnen van de nationale mannelijkheid was er heel fanatiek tot zelfs obsessieel. In deze context werd het ideaal van de heroïsche soldaat tijdens de oorlog duchtig ge(re)produceerd door schrijvende soldaten van de verschillende naties.⁸

Binnen dit genderparadigma werd ook de gegenderde identiteit en representatie van oorlogsverpleegsters, ‘de’ vrouwelijke rol tijdens de oorlog, uitvoerig en gedegen geanalyseerd.⁹ Artsen ontsnapten evenwel aan de aandacht van vorsers. Een historisering van de ‘mannelijke’ identiteit van artsen is daarom van be-

lang om te komen tot een complete en dek-kende analyse van gender en het medisch personeel tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog.¹⁰

In dit artikel wordt de identiteit van oorlogsartsen bestudeerd aan de hand van hun culturele respons op de impact van de oorlog op het mannelijk (soldaten)lichaam.¹¹ Concreet onderzoek ik dit door een discoursanalyse van zeven egodocumenten van Britse en Amerikaanse artsen en tien van Franse artsen.¹² Het corpus omvat dagboeken en me-



© Wikimedia

moires van zowel frontartsen als artsen die werkten in het achterland, van zowel civiele artsen als beroepslegerartsen. Ze werden allen geschreven tijdens de oorlog of claimen dan te zijn geschreven. Op vier na (met name dagboeken die pas recent werden uitgegeven) werden ze geschreven of herwerkt met het oog op publicatie. Gepubliceerde werken bieden het voordeel dat ze niet beperkt blijven tot feitelijkheden en dat ze meer betekenisgeving en reflectie bevatten. Sommige auteurs maken een strikte opdeling tussen ‘dagboeken’ en ‘(gefictionaliseerde) memoires’. Dit onderscheid is niet alleen in de praktijk moeilijk hard te maken, maar impliceert evenzeer de naïeve en onjuiste aanname dat dagboeken evident waarheidsgetrouwer zijn. Zo zijn de werken die door hun auteurs ‘dagboeken’ worden genoemd, wat dit corpus betreft, vaak achteraf aangepast en gepubliceerd – het gaat dus niet om hoogstpersoonlijke documenten. Het is interessanter om de vraag te stellen waarom een arts voor het genre van het ‘dagboek’ of ‘memoires’ koos, gezien dat dit implicaties heeft voor de manier waarop ze hun ervaring representeren en de manier waarop ze de lezer sturen in de interpretatie van de gerepresenteerde ervaring (zie verder in de tekst).

In zekere zin is de invalshoek van het lichaam voor de hand liggend. Oorlog heeft niet alleen een enorme impact op het lichaam in zijn stoffelijke zin – een oorlog draait om (lichamelijk) verwonden – en is niet alleen een uitermate lichamelijke ervaring (deportatie, verwonding, schaarste en ondervoeding), maar oorlog brengt in zijn zog ook een sterke activiteit in het discours over lichamen en lichamelijkheid met zich mee. Zoals Joanna Bourke schrijft: “[T]hose experiences still fundamentally affected not only the shape and texture of the male body, but also the values

ascribed to the body and the disciplines applied to masculinity”.¹³ Bovendien is het gewonde soldatenlichaam de reden waarom de artsen bij de oorlog betrokken zijn; het vormt de spil van hun oorlogservaring.

De analyse vertrekt van de beschrijving van de lichamen door de artsen. Gebruiken ze een emotioneel of een medisch-wetenschappelijk taalregister? Wordt het lichaam gebruikt in hun vertoog over de oorlog? En hoe? Vervolgens wordt dit gerelateerd aan de manier

Een Canadees slachtoffer van een mosterdgas-aanval wordt verzorgd, ca. 1917-1918

waarop ze hun ‘Ik’ weergeven. Valt dit discours over lichamen te koppelen aan hun vooroorlogse professionele identiteit of aan een ‘nieuwe’ oorlogsidentiteit? Scherper gesteld, wordt hun professionele identiteit gemilitariseerd? En, wat is de rol van gender in de constructie van deze (professionele) identiteit? In de literatuur wordt namelijk geïnspireerd dat het mannelijk medisch personeel zich ‘ontmannelijkt’ voelde, omdat ze geen soldaat waren – de personificatie van het hegemone martiale ideaal.¹⁴ Grondige empirische staving is er voor deze stelling nog niet geleverd. Daarom stel ik de vraag hoe de artsen zich lateren tot de martiale mannelijkheid. Speelde de verschillende wijze van rekrutering (zie hierboven) een rol? Dit leidt ook tot de vraag van het karakter van deze mannelijkheid. Was deze louter ‘geestelijk’ of werd ze ook lichamenlijkelijk gemaakt?

Britse en Amerikaanse artsen: tussen twee manbeelden

Ik begin met een passage uit de memoires van **Harvey Cushing**, een befaamde Amerikaanse neurochirurg. Hij kwam als vrijwilliger naar de oorlog en stond aan het hoofd van een hospitaal in Frankrijk dat was verbonden aan de *British Expeditionary Forces* (red. het Britse leger dat werd ingezet aan het Westfront).

“It is difficult to say just what are one’s most vivid impressions: [...] the dreadful deformities (not so much in the way of amputations, but broken jaws and twisted, scarred faces); the tedious healing of the infected wounds, with discharging sinuses, tubes, irrigations, and repeated dressings [...] a varicocele¹, an appendix, and, worst of all, a thoracotomy¹¹ for a bullet in the pericardium¹¹ which apparently was doing no harm.”¹⁵

Cushing gebruikt in bovenstaande passage een medisch-professioneel discours om in het algemeen gewonde lichamen te beschrijven. Feitelijk beschrijft hij zelfs geen lichamen, maar wonden die losstaan van de soldaat en hun behandeling. Dergelijke algemene opsommingen van aandoeningen en kwetsuren in medische terminologie keren bij alle Britse en Amerikaanse artsen terug.¹⁶ Steeds vertrekt het relaas van de persoonlijke indruk van de gruwelijke wonden, waarna de aandacht verschuift naar de concrete diagnose en de therapiegerichte beschrijving van de wonden. Aldus wordt er expliciet een verband gelegd tussen de (beschrijving van) de letsels en de professionele taak van de auteur.

De beschrijving en diagnose van de wonden van individuele patiënten is al even nauwkeurig. In het volgende voorbeeld geeft de Amerikaanse frontarts **Malcom Grow**, die als vrijwilliger naar Rusland trok, het afstandelijk medisch denkproces en de secure handelingen weer die hijzelf doormaakte en uitvoerde tijdens een operatie. Voor de individualiteit van de soldaat is er geen plaats, enkel zijn afzonderlijke lichaamsdelen figureren.

"I examined the wound. A rifle bullet had entered the thigh near the hip joint and emerged in the groin. The limb was badly discolored and swollen – the purplish area extending up into the abdominal wall. When pressed on, the tissues gave forth a crackling sound caused by minute accumulations of gas produced by the deadly bacillus. ... All we could do was to incise the tissues with long free incisions, drain off the horrid brown discharge and gas, and apply a moist dressing of hydrogen peroxide."¹⁷

Een soldaat wordt verder frequent vereenzelvigd met zijn aandoening, waardoor hij wordt gereduceerd tot een medisch geval. De Britse militaire arts **Richard Dolbey** spreekt van "the abdominal cases", zijn landgenoot **Harold Dearden**, een burger-vrijwilliger, van een "Endocarditis^{IV} lad" of een "Tetanus man".¹⁸ De Brit **Henri Souttar**, als burger-vrijwilliger actief in Antwerpen tijdens het begin van de oorlog, benoemt een gewonde soldaat als "a septic fractured thigh with a hole in his leg in which you could put your fist."¹⁹ Cushing schrijft: "A busy morning; started a pituitary^V transfrontal operation an hour late. Good case – congenital suprasellar cyst^{VI} – best operation of the kind I have ever done."²⁰ De soldaat-patiënt wordt een platform voor zijn persoonlijke professionele trots.

Wat ook weerkeert zijn lijsten van de verschillende soorten verwondingen (al dan niet naar de wapens die ze veroorzaken), ziekten (al dan niet met hun frequenties) en hun behandeling.²¹

De Britse en Amerikaanse artsen hanteren dus een medisch-professioneel discours dat bol staat van vaktermen en kennis, en de nadruk legt op de gespecialiseerde behandeling van de wonden. Ze presenteren zich resoluut als 'arts', in navolging van hun vooroorlogse professionele identiteit. Overeenkomstig wordt het li-

chaam als universeel gedacht en wordt het gereduceerd tot organen en therapieën. In eerste instantie valt dit discours te interpreteren als een vorm van zelfbehoud. De artsen geven betekenis aan de verminkte lichamen en de horror van de oorlog vanuit hun vertrouwde mentale kaders. Daarnaast halen ze merkbaar ook een zekere trots uit hun beroep en hun functie tijdens de oorlog. Illustratief is dat sommigen specifieke wensen hebben wat betreft het werk dat hen wordt voorgelegd. Ze willen een pathologie en een letsel dat professioneel uitdagend is en zijn niet tevreden met wat eerste-hulpverlening.²² Bovendien valt de identiteit van de arts ook concreet te relateren aan de louter tot een lichaam gereduceerde soldaat.

De arts is, als man, *mind* en geen *body*; de arts is het subject, de soldaat-patiënt, of beter, zijn wonden, zijn het object. De professionaliteit van de arts berust op een ongemarkeerde, 'geestelijke' vorm van mannelijkheid. Dit sluit aan bij de vooroorlogse (civiele) gegenderde conceptualisering van 'de arts', waarbij hij cultureel verbonden werd met professionalisme, rationaliteit en wetenschappelijkheid en de verpleegster met emoties, zorg en bekommernis.²³ Zo geeft Souttar toe dat hijzelf weinig persoonlijk contact had met de soldaten, maar dat de vrouwelijke verpleegsters de soldaten de broodnodige "devoted attention" gaven.²⁴ Hij onderschrijft de gegenderde rolverdeling in het hospitaal en definieert zijn eigen 'mannelijke' identiteit in relatie tot de verpleegsters.

Maar, dit weerhoudt niet dat deze artsen hun werk (in verschillende mate) ook verpakken als een viriele patriotische dienst. Ook al differentiëren ze zich duidelijk van de troepen, bijvoorbeeld door klassenverschil, hun lagere militaire rang, intelligentie of door de militaire ethiek te veroordelen (zie verder), de meeste onder hen percipiëren wat ze doen als een volwaardige oorlogsdienst. Dearden noemt naar het front gaan een voorrecht waar zijn vrienden jaloers op waren:

"Men sought this privilege with the ardour of lovers, convinced that delay would see the end of hostilities and the frustration of their hopes. I was lucky."²⁵

Maberly Esler verwoordt dan weer expliciet dat het nastreven van het mannelijkheidsideaal van de burger-soldaat een rol speelde bij zijn motivatie:

"[...] what I wanted to learn about was the conditions of warfare in the field, the comradeship in arms, what fear really was and how to overcome it, and whether I was man enough to take it, in fact, to learn about myself."²⁶

Het leger was als leerschool een cruciaal stadium ('een rite de passage') in het masculiene wordingsproces. Het front wordt opgehemeld als een homosociale gemeenschap waar geen plaats is voor vrouwen of vrouwelijk medisch personeel. Bij de militaire arts Dolbey gaat dit gepaard met een sterk misogyn discours:

"War is essentially a masculine occupation; the idea of woman as the complement of our lives vanishes. She is no more necessary. From the moment of going out to battle [...] the idea of woman as woman is non-existent."²⁷

De artsen willen hun professionele identiteit verenigen met de mannelijke plicht ten aanzien van het vaderland: ten oorlog trekken. Zo eigenen ze zich alsnog een geëxpliciteerde vorm van mannelijkheid toe. Ze dienen het land, als man, als arts. Het gevolg is evenwel – onvermijdelijk – een militarisering van deze professionele identiteit. Dit liet ook zijn sporen na in de taal waarmee ze hun werk definiëren. "[...] for a surgeon this war between nations is only an incident in the war to which he has devoted his life – the war against disease", schrijft Souttar.²⁸ Zo zijn sommige artsen niet tevreden met een 'saai' postje als hospitaalarts, maar willen ze een positie aan het avontuurlijke front. Dearden kan zijn enthousiasme niet onderdrukken wanneer hij wordt overgeplaatst van een hospitaal in het achterland naar een post aan het front. Hij schept op met de directheid, de actie en de lichamelijke beleving van zijn frontervaring (bv. door uitvoerig zijn verwonding door een granaatscherf te beschrijven). Grow plaatste in zijn memoires een trotse foto van zichzelf in de loopgraven. Een illustratie van zijn oorlogservaring met een groot 'reality effect'.²⁹ In wat volgt zal blijken dat dergelijk beeld van de oorlog als een heroïsch martiaal exploit ook terugkeert bij de Franse artsen; het grote verschil is echter dat de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen zich nog wel identificeren als arts.

Deze twee verschillende mannelijkheden >>



Een zaal van het *King George Hospital* for wounded soldiers in London, ca. 1915-1918

zijn evenwel niet zomaar verenigbaar, te meer gezien het feit dat ze morele implicaties hebben. De ethiek van de arts, die menselijkheid, respect voor het individu en zelfbeschikking van de patiënt over zijn lichaam impliceert, conflicteert met de eisen en de collectieve logica van het leger om een zo hoog mogelijke militaire efficiëntie te behalen en mannen dus zo snel mogelijk opnieuw gevechtssklaar te maken.³⁰ Artsen als Cushing of **Wilmot Heringham**, die zich vooral presenteren als

Hij neemt hier deels een humanitair standpunt in tegen de militaire idealen, maar hij denkt anderzijds ook in termen van mankracht en legersterkte.

Bovendien kan, in de hoedanigheid van arts in een oorlogscontext, het gebruik van een deïndividualiserend medisch-professioneel vertoog om lichamen te beschrijven evenzeer worden beschouwd als impliciet militaristisch. De gekwetste en zieke soldaten zijn als onderdelen die moeten worden hersteld om de oor-

is niet geworteld in een intellectuele professionaliteit, maar heeft het lichaam als basis. Ze verhalen hun (lichamelijke) heldendaden en ontberingen aan de zijde van de soldaten en expliqueren hun rol in de militaire ontwikkelingen en manoeuvres. Frontarts **Jacques Le Petit** schrijft in zijn dagboek dat hij tevreden was dat hij dezelfde ontberingen en uitdagingen als de soldaten doormaakte in “de fantastische modderpoel van de Somme”.³⁴ Dussdoende willen ze de oorlog navertellen vanuit het perspectief van de soldaat. Tekenend is dat ze vaak voor de ‘wij’-vorm kiezen om hun belevenissen te verhalen. Hierdoor liëren ze zich als vanzelf met de troepen. “Drukkende zon. Verstikkende warmte in de barakken. Plakkerig zweet kleeft onze kleren aan de huid. We stinken”, schrijft frontarts **Jean Chagnaud**.³⁵ Zijn lichamelijke ervaring van de oorlog is die van de soldaten. **Albert Martin**, eveneens een frontarts, vergelijkt de oorlogservaring van de arts expliciet met die van de soldaat: “Ofwel valt er niets te doen, ofwel is het alle hens aan dek. Een tussenweg is er niet; het is nu eenmaal zo dat dat vrijwel niet anders kan. Voor de soldaat is het net hetzelfde.”³⁶

Dit weerspiegelt zich ook in het genre waarvoor veel Franse artsen kiezen om hun ervaring neer te pennen. Vooral het dagboek versterkt de indruk van de directheid en dus objectiviteit en legitimiteit van de getuigenis. Het schrijven lijkt gestimuleerd door de gebeurtenissen.³⁷ De auteurs geven gedetailleerde en directe beschrijvingen van wat dagelijks voorviel aan het front. Een voorbeeld uit het dagboek van frontarts **Maurice Dide**: “In de sector waar de vijand binnen handbereik is, doet de strijd met granaten wonderen. Op dit ogenblik domineren we de vijand.”³⁸ In dit citaat is de uitdrukking “op dit ogenblik” en het gebruik van de tegenwoordige tijd opvallend. Dide concretiseert zijn ervaring in de tijd en wijst zodoende op de onmiddellijkheid ervan. In contrast hiermee kozen de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen overwegend voor memoires, meer bespiegelend dus dan dagboeken.

De meeste Franse artsen plaatsen hun vooroorlogse identiteit als arts op de achtergrond en hebben het impliciet over hun medische taken tijdens de oorlog. De soldaat verschijnt zo goed als nooit als patiënt. De artsen vermijden een gespecialiseerd vocabularium, omdat dit hen zou onderscheiden van de rest van de troepen. Hun medische activiteiten komen slechts oppervlakkig en terloops aan bod. “De gewonden blijven toestromen”, schrijft frontarts **Paul Voivenel**.³⁹ Nadien geeft hij zijn mening over het weer. Chagnaud bespreekt pagina’s lang de militaire manoeuvres van zijn regiment. Soms onderbreekt hij dit door korte boodschappen als: “Vier gewonden, drie gesneuvelden, tien geëvacueerde zieken, waarvan negen met vrieswonden aan de voeten.”⁴⁰ Hij maakt het medische aspect tot een onderdeel van de militaire strijd. Het wordt niet betrokken op zijn persoon en zijn rol als arts in de oorlog (zoals dit wel het geval was bij de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen). Dide gebruikt eenvoudige en



© Henry Souttar, A Surgeon in Belgium (1915)

Een foto van een stukgeschoten hospitaal te Lier bij Antwerpen genomen door Henry Souttar, 1914

‘arts’, brengen het dilemma nooit expliciet aan de orde. De militaire arts Dolbey, die zich aan de andere kant van het masculiene en ethische spectrum bevindt, kiest volmondig voor de militaire logica. Het valt ook op hoe hij zich de militaire waarden (bv. het pragmatisme en fatalisme ten opzichte van leven en dood) en het militaire jargon toe-eigent (‘hardened’, ‘fallen comrades’).

“One is often asked whether doctors do not get hardened with all the casualties they see. If by ‘hardened’ is meant that we have no time for sentimentality, no time to say, ‘Poor fellow! Does it hurt?’ Only time to ask, ‘Where are you hit? Let me help you; open your mouth, and I’ll put these tablets on your tongue’ then all of us are hard as stone. [...] But we are not really hard; no one is hard; we are only very practical and know that there are things such as death and fallen comrades.”³¹

Niet toevallig komt het hoger gestelde dilemma tussen de medische en de militaire moraal sterker naar voor bij artsen die schipperen tussen de twee mannelijkheidsidealén. Souttar tracht zichzelf te rechtvaardigen door zich een rol toe te dichten in het vermenschlijken van de oorlog.

“In a long war it must be obvious to the most hardened militarist that by the early treatment of a wound many of its more severe consequences may be averted, and that many a man may thus be saved for further service.”³²

logsmachine draaiende te houden.

Ik sluit dit deel over de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen af met een metafoor van Darden welke de ethische impasse treft uitdrukking brengt. Hij is heel kritisch over zijn eigen rol, maar lijkt er zich tegelijk niet van bewust dat hij eveneens de oorlog idealiseert door zijn frontervaringen heel avontuurlijk en begeerlijk weer te geven (zie hierboven).

“I found myself, moreover, unreasonably clumsy at reconciling my present duties with my previous conception of the purpose of my calling. To succour the wounded, that they might with greater celerity return to wound or be wounded on a subsequent occasion, seemed subtly reminiscent of those dreadful ministrations offered to horses at a bull-fight. For there, too, in drab little place within earshot of the cheering, skilful hands patched and prodded agonized creatures back into the arena. And if in my case the patching was better, the prodding more subtle, and the creature itself even willing to return, these facts merely shifted the plane of the whole grim business from the illogical to the insane.”³³

De Franse arts als soldaat

De Franse artsen hebben, in tegenstelling tot hun Britse en Amerikaanse collega’s, veel minder aandacht voor gewonde lichamen. Dit valt te verklaren doordat het gros van hen zichzelf niet als arts presenteert, maar als collega van de soldaat, de verpersoonlijking van de martiale mannelijkheid. Hun mannelijkheid

generieke termen om de wonden te beschrijven: “Eén van hen verloor alle vingers van zijn linkerhand en had daarnaast nog andere, meer ernstige, verwondingen opgelopen.”⁴¹

Logischerwijs is het ethische conflict dat de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen kenden, bij Franse artsen niet aan de orde. Integendeel, ze geven de medische dienst impliciet en ook expliciet een uitgesproken militaristisch karakter: het doel is om de soldaten op te lappen opdat ze terug kunnen vechten.⁴² Daarnaast spreken ze zich ook niet uit over het medisch niveau van hun werk, maar zijn ze daarentegen wel eensgezind in hun voorkeur om aan het front te dienen.

Een nuance is evenwel op zijn plaats. Ook al blijft een medisch-professioneel discours uit, toch presenteren enkele Franse artsen zich soms als arts. Hospitaalarts **Edouard Laval** benadert zijn Angelsaksische collega's nog het meest: “Een gewonde die vanochtend aankwam kermt hartverscheurend. [...] De arme klaagt, want zijn buik zwelt op, het begin van peritonitis.”⁴³ **Henri Aimé**, ook een hospitaalarts, verbergt de aard van zijn oorlogswerk niet: “Mijn werk is niet om te vechten met de wapens in de hand, maar door middel van kunst en wetenschap.”⁴⁴ De militaire arts **François Perrin** presenteert zich op een gelijkaardige manier als de Britse militaire arts Dolbey (zie hierboven). Hij steunt op zijn formele institutionele relatie met het leger om zich sterk te maken over het belang van zijn rol in de oorlog. Ook hij gebruikt een militair register en onderschrijft de militaire waarden waarbij geen plaats is voor sentimentaliteit.

“Er bestaat geen mooier beroep; er bestaat geen ander werk waar men, door nauwgezet zijn plicht te doen, zoveel morele voldoening kan krijgen. Jazeker, er zijn moeilijke momenten. Wanneer tijdens het gevecht de vijand zich heel dichtbij bevindt, wanneer het projectielen regent, waarvan je niet weet welk voor jou bestemd is, dan heb je een zekere koelbloedigheid, ja zelfs moed nodig, om zorg te verlenen, om operaties uit te voeren, zonder ten overstaan van je ondergeschikten de natuurlijke emoties die je bevangen te laten blijken.”⁴⁵

Er waren echter feitelijke begrenzings aan de mate waarin de arts zich met de soldaat kon vereenzelvigen. Volgens het Verdrag van Genève (1906) mochten geneesheren tijdens een gewapend conflict niet vechten. De meeste Franse artsen hullen zich hieromtrent in stilzwijgen. Anderen doen zich echter voor als gefrustreerd, omdat ze niet mochten deelnemen aan de meest ‘viriele’ ervaring. De frontarts **Lucien Laby**, een jonge student geneeskunde, ontwikkelde complexen over zijn professionele identiteit. Hij moest en zou een Duitser doden voor het einde van de oorlog:

“Ik zou woedend geweest zijn mocht ik voor het einde van de oorlog geen Pruis hebben gedood [...]. Ik ben vastbesloten om vieren-



Britse soldaten verblind door traangas wachtend op behandeling (Noord-Frankrijk, 10 april 1918)

twintig uur te gaan doorbrengen in een kleine vooruitgeschoven frontpost, zonder artsenband [herkenteken rond de arm], maar met een ‘Lebel’ [een Frans geweer].”⁴⁶

Pas nadat hij hierin was geslaagd – althans, zo lezen we in zijn memoires – kon hij zich verzoenen met zijn artsenbestaan: “Ik verlangde er reeds lang naar dit te doen. En nu zal ik met meer genoegen mijn werk als arts verrichten.”⁴⁷ De twee hospitaalartsen die ik hierboven aanhaalde, Laval en Aimé, lijken eveneens afgunstig jegens de soldaten. Zij konden hun werk niet evident als krijgshaftig voorstellen. “Strijders, broeders, weet dat tijdens dergelijke buitengewone ogenblikken, zij die door jullie niet-strijders worden genoemd, veel zouden geven om in jullie plaats te zijn, blootgesteld, met een grotere kans te kunnen sneuvelen”, schrijft de eerste.⁴⁸ Henri Aimé noteert dat hij soms een ‘professionele schroom’ voelde. Hij beleefde de strijd namelijk niet zelf, maar enkel door zijn contact met de soldaten, die een meer eerbare rol hadden.⁴⁹

Dat de Franse artsen impliciet en soms expliciet een gebrek aan trots voor het artsenberoep *representeren*, rechtvaardigt nog niet hen een ‘(mannelijke) identiteitscrisis’ toe te schrijven.⁵⁰ Wat wel kan worden besloten is dat het martiale mannelijkheidsideaal in sociaal-cultureel opzicht het evidente en zo goed als exclusieve referentiepunt was in de constructie van hun ervaring. Mijn analyse van de subjectieve constructie van het oorlogswerk onderschrijft zo de stelling van historicus Mark Harisson dat de dienstplicht – die dus al voor de oorlog was ingevoerd in Frankrijk en niet in Groot-Britannië (1916) en de Verenigde Staten (1917) – een meer vergaande militarisering van de medische dienst tot gevolg had, waarbij niet alleen de militaire organisatorische structuren werden overgenomen maar ook de militaire waarden, tradities en principes heel pervasief waren. Daarnaast stelt Harisson dat de dienstplicht tevens voor

een hogere maatschappelijke status van de oorlogsdokter zorgde.⁵¹ Mijn analyse geeft van dit laatste een meer genuanceerd beeld. De Franse artsen verhogen hun maatschappelijke status door hun professionele status te verdoezelen. In die zin spreken de Britsen en Amerikaanse artsen dan ook met *meer* zelfvertrouwen over hun eigen beroep. Met andere woorden, dergelijke vergelijking moet steeds worden gemaakt met aandacht voor de respectievelijke (nationale en professionele) contexten. De meest voor de hand liggende verklaring voor deze tweesprong tussen de Angelsaksische en de Franse artsen zijn dus de verschillende systemen van rekrutering in het leger. Daarnaast lijkt ook het martiale mannelijkheidsideaal nog sterker gearticuleerd in Frankrijk wat te verklaren zou zijn door de nationale (‘mannelijkheids’) crisis waarin het land zich bevond. Ten slotte moet ook de maatschappelijke positie van de arts en de beeldvorming van het beroep in Frankrijk negatiever zijn geweest dan in Groot-Britannië en de Verenigde Staten. Om deze laatste hypothese te staven en de subjectiviteit van artsen tijdens de oorlog te duiden en te politiseren, is verder onderzoek naar de sociaal-culturele positie van de artsen en hun subjectiviteit vóór de oorlog evenwel nodig.

Georges Duhamel: een zeldzame oorlogskritiek

De Franse arts **Georges Duhamel** (1884-1966) vormde een uitzondering ten opzichte van alle andere artsen die ik hiervoor aan bod liet. Duhamel, tevens een gerenommeerd literator en pacifist, presenteert zich in zijn *Vie des Martyrs* (1917) namelijk nadrukkelijk als arts. Dit doet hij echter niet door te wijzen op zijn professionele kunde of kennis. Hij wil, als arts, vooral een steun en toeverlaat zijn voor de soldaten, ‘die onschuldige slachtoffers’.⁵² Elk hoofdstuk brengt het verhaal van een gebroken individu waarmee alle martiale heroïek

van tafel wordt geveegd. Duhamel zelf verdwijnt op de achtergrond als observator.⁵³ Zijn werk moet een getuigenis zijn van het lijden van de soldaten. “Je moest lijden zonder doel en zonder hoop. Maar ik laat niet toe dat al je leed zomaar verloren gaat”, zegt hij tot een soldaat.⁵⁴

In groot contrast met de andere artsen is zijn arts-zijn gebouwd op een paternalistische vorm van humanisme. Het lichaam krijgt hierbij een symbolische rol. Hij bekijkt het niet met een ‘objectieve’ medische bril, maar re-



© The RAMC Muniment Collection/Wellcome Library

Een Britse arts in een basishospitaal, ca. 1914-1918

flecteert expliciet over de betekenis ervan voor oorlog (en vrede). De oorlog had het lichaam niet alleen fysiek veranderd, ook de betekenis ervan was niet meer als voorheen. Hij schrijft dat een bezoeker van het hospitaal opmerkte dat de mannen niet veranderd waren door de oorlog. Duhamel wist beter: “Onder hun verbanden zijn er wonden die u zich niet kan inbeelden. In deze tijd, waarin niets meer lijkt op wat het was, zijn al deze mannen niet meer diegenen die u voorheen hebt gekend.”⁵⁵

Hij hekelt dat het lichaam was verworden tot een medisch object en een instrument in de oorlogvoering. Affreuzen wonden, dat was het enige resultaat van de oorlog:

“Herinner u de tijd waarin het menselijk lichaam gemaakt leek voor het geluk, waarbij elk van zijn organen stond voor een functie en een genot. Nu doet elk deel van het lichaam denken aan het kwade waardoor het bedreigd wordt, en het specifieke leed dat dit meebrengt.

Los daarvan, speelt elk lichaamsdeel zijn rol in het ontzaglijke drama: de voet om de soldaat ten aanval te dragen; de arm om het kanon te bedienen; het oog om de vijand in de gaten te houden of het wapen te richten.”⁵⁶

In bovenstaande passage bespreekt Duhamel het lichaam in zijn algemeenheid (‘het menselijk lichaam’), maar hij heeft het onmiskenbaar over het mannelijk lichaam. ‘Vrouwenlichamen’ worden in de beschrijving indirect gediskwalificeerd. Meer zelfs, ‘vrouwen’ zijn zo goed als afwezig in *Vie des Martyrs*. Het universeel menselijke, dat Duhamel als pacifist bedreigd ziet, blijkt het specifiek mannelijke te zijn.

Bovendien vervat Duhamel zijn oorlogskritiek *niet* in een gegenderde taal, noch neemt hij het mannelijke militaire establishment uitdrukkelijk op de korrel. In dat opzicht verschilt zijn kritiek van deze van sommige verpleegsters, die de mannelijkheid van een gekwetst lichaam in twijfel trokken. Duhamel distantieert zich enkel van de martiale natie en stelt een pacifistisch alternatief voor.⁵⁷ Zijn werk is een oorlogskritiek, geen maatschappijkritiek.

Hierbij stelt hij zich op als een vaderlijke herderfiguur die ‘deze kinderen’ bijstaat tij-

dens hun martelaarschap. Hij geeft zijn contact met de soldaten weer als heel intiem en fysiek: “Ik druk hem tegen mij aan [...]. Ik omhels hem, we omhelzen elkaar; ik geloof dat ook ik wat ween.”⁵⁸ Bij het evoqueren van deze gemeenschap van mannen is religieus-spirituele beeldspraak nooit ver weg. Hij ontwikkelt een dualistische opvatting over lichaam en geest, waardoor hij individualiteit en menselijkheid kan bewaren. “Carré zal zonder twijfel beroep moeten doen op alle kracht van zijn ziel, die het lichaam helpen lijden, wachtend op de genade van de natuur.”⁵⁹ Het is de ‘ziel’ van de soldaten die Duhamel ten allen prijze wil redden. Wanneer die ziel het lichaam verlaat, is de soldaat dood; een “lichaam zonder ziel”.⁶⁰

In deze context drukt Duhamel de culturele ambivalentie uit die er in de betreffende periode heerste rond het dode lichaam. Het was moeilijk te representeren omdat het zich “neither entirely in the Beyond, nor entirely Here” bevond.⁶¹ Ook Duhamel uit deze twijfel. Hij ervoer de lichamelijke aanwezigheid van de dode soldaat in die mate dat hij diens individualiteit niet kon ontkennen:

“Het lijk staat nog zo dicht bij de levende mens dat ik voor mezelf niet kan uitmaken of ik nu alleen ben of niet [...]. Zoals voorheen snij ik het verband met de glimmende scharen. En zoals voorheen sta ik op het punt je te zeggen: ‘Zeg me als ik je pijn doe.’”⁶²

Duhamel *voelde* de lichamelijke aanwezigheid van de soldaat en waande zichzelf daardoor verbonden met hem. Zelfs na de fysieke dood was de soldaat niet volledig tot een lichamelijke object verworden.

Besluit

Het gros van alle oorlogswerken die werden onderzocht, met uitzondering van Georges Duhamel, sluiten aan bij het West-Europese en Amerikaanse romantische discours over oorlog dat in de decennia rond 1914-1918 dominant was. In al zijn particulariteit benadrukt Duhamel te meer de coherente aard van dit discours van de andere artsen. Oorlog was voor hen een heroïsche strijd van goed versus kwaad. Opoffering en leed waren gerechtvaardigd om de overwinning te behalen. Zowel in het geval van de Franse als de Britse en Amerikaanse auteurs werd de oorlog geconstrueerd als een martiaal, patriottisch en intrinsiek mannelijk exploit. De oorlogservaring, de subjectieve identiteiten en het lichaam werden direct of indirect gekleurd door dit discours. Bij de constructie van hun subjectieve identiteit verenigen Franse en Angelsaksische artsen het hegemoniale martiale mannelijkheidsideaal, hun functie in de oorlog en hun (vooroorlogse) professionele identiteit evenwel op een verschillende manier en met een verschillend resultaat. Gender en mannelijkheid als analysecategorieën bleken daarom uiterst geschikt om ‘oorlogswerk’ en professionele, mannelijke identiteiten te onderzoeken.

De Britse en Amerikaanse artsen balanceren individueel en onderling tussen twee idealen van mannelijkheid. Enerzijds presenteren ze zich met een reductionistisch, medisch-professioneel discours over het lichaam als arts. Hun mannelijkheid is de uitkomst van de tegenstelling tussen de louter tot lichaam gereduceerde soldaten en de niet-belichaamde arts. Anderzijds construeren ze hun ervaring naar de als zodanig benoemde, martiale mannelijkheid. Voor diegenen die de middenweg kozen had dit expliciet een persoonlijk ethisch conflict tot gevolg. De Franse artsen reproduceren extensief en exclusief dit laatstgenoemde ideaal. Hetzij door hun ervaring er volledig naar te kneden en het ideaal te imiteren, hetzij door het als de meest ultieme vorm van mannelijkheid te prijzen en hun eigen rol als arts te verdoezelen of te hekelen. Hun directe taal verschilt sterk van het medische jargon van de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen. Aldus leveren ze in aan verstandelijke, ‘elitaire’ professionaliteit en hebben ze bewust zeer weinig aandacht voor het lichaam. De tweesprong die deze analyse aan het licht bracht, maakt aldus duidelijk dat man-zijn tijdens Eerste Wereldoorlog niet evident was, maar steeds bepaald werd door diverse historisch contexten en door (de persoonlijke afweging tussen) diverse configuraties van mannelijkheid. ///

Medische verwijzingen en noten:

- ^I Een varicocèle is een spatader van de bloedvaten van de teelbal.
- ^{II} Een chirurgische ingreep waarbij de borstkas wordt geopend.
- ^{III} Het hartzakje.
- ^{IV} Een ontsteking aan de hartkleppen.
- ^V De hypofyse.
- ^{VI} Een aangeboren cyste aan de hersenen.



© Otis Historical Archives Nat. Museum of Health & Medicine

De 'triage', het sorteren van de gewonden. Frankrijk, ca.1914-1918

- 1 Naast de promotor en copromotor van mijn masterscriptie, respectievelijk Julie Carlier en Antoon Vrints, wil ik ook graag de *Historica*-redactie, en in het bijzonder Stefan Meysman, bedanken voor hun opmerkingen en suggesties.
- 2 L. van Bergen, *Zacht en Eervol. Lijden en sterven in een Grote Oorlog*. Antwerpen, Standaard Uitgeverij, 1999, p. 285.
- 3 Mark Harrison wijst nadrukkelijk op de verknochting van militarisme en humanitarisme. Zo werd ook het verdedigen van de natie en de 'civilisatie' synoniem. M. Harrison, 'Medicine and the management of modern warfare: An introduction', in: R. Cooter, M. Harrison en S. Sturdy (reds.), *Medicine and modern warfare*. Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA, 1999, pp. 1-4; M. Harrison, *The Medical War. British Military Medicine in the First World War*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 1-15.
- 4 Het totaal aantal artsen ligt voor de drie naties tegen het einde van de oorlog rond de 25 000. De cijfers over de precieze verhouding van beroepslegerartsen en civiele artsen lopen uiteen. Ik baseerde me op volgende auteurs: J.A. Verdoorn, B. Hengeveld, M.J. van Lieburg, J. Moll en J.M.P. Weerts, *Arts en Oorlog. Medische en sociale zorg voor militaire oorlogslachtoffers in de geschiedenis van Europa*. Rotterdam, Erasmus Publishing, 1995, p. 333-9; I. Whitehead, *Doctors in the Great War*. Londen, Leo Cooper, 1999; M. Harrison, *The Medical War...*; S. Sarrion, *Le Service de santé des armées Durant la Première Guerre mondiale (1914-1918)*. Montigny-les-Metz, Sébastien Sarrion, 2008.
- 5 Denken we bijvoorbeeld aan de Britse Flora Murray (1869-1923): zij was arts en suffragette. Zie voor Groot-Brittannië: J. Watson, 'War in the Wards: the social construction of medical work in First World War Britain', in: *Journal of British Studies*, 2002, 41, 4, pp. 484-510.
- 6 Bijvoorbeeld M. Harrison, *The Medical War...*; R. Cooter, M. Harrison en S. Sturdy (reds.), *Medicine and Modern Warfare*. Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA, 1999. S. Delaporte, *Les médecins dans la Grande guerre, 1914-1918*. Parijs, Bayard, 2003.
- 7 Ian Whitehead heeft in zijn *Doctor's in the Great War* wel (beperkt) aandacht voor de ervaring van de artsen. Zo slaat hij acht op de geëxpliciteerde motivaties van de artsen om zich aan te melden voor de dienst. Hélène Dequidit richt zich met een artikel volledig op de subjectieve ervaring van Franse *médecins*. Haar artikel is echter sterk veralgemenend door haar strikte opdeling tussen *médecins de l'arrière* en *médecins de l'avant*. Daarnaast neemt ze de inhoud van de egodocumenten al te sterk voor realiteit en heeft ze te weinig aandacht voor hun discursieve bepaaldheid. H. Dequidit, 'La crise d'identité du monde médical français en 14-18', in: *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 1994, 175, pp. 87-101.
- 8 Enkele cruciale studies over mannelijkheid en Wereldoorlog I: J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male. Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*. Londen, Reaktion Books, 1999; M. Roper, *The Secret Battle. Emotional Survival in the Great War*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011; L. Smith, *The Embattled Self. French Soldiers' Testimony of the Great War*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2007.
- 9 Zie bijvoorbeeld: M. Darrow, 'French volunteer nursing and the myth of war experience in World War I', in: *The American Historical Review*, 1996, 101, 1, pp. 80-106 en F. Van Wesemael, "'There are no men here, so why should I be a woman?'" - Franse en Angelsaksische verpleegsters in hun omgang met gewonde soldaten en lichamelijke tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, in: *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies*, 2014, 17, 1, pp. 27-45.
- 10 'Mannelijkheid' en 'vrouwelijkheid' komen namelijk relationeel tot stand. Dit komt nadrukkelijk tot uiting binnen de sociale constructie van medische beroepen. Zie, bijvoorbeeld, het uitstekende A. Bashford, *Purity and pollution. Gender, embodiment and Victorian medicine*. Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000.
- 11 Een historisering van 'het lichaam' is niet altijd evident geweest, ook niet in het historisch onderzoek naar de geslachten. Zowel in deze, als wat betreft de constructie van identiteiten van de artsen volg ik Joan Scotts conceptualisering van

- gender. Mannelijkheid, vrouwelijkheid en seksueel verschil zijn sociaal geconstrueerd en cultureel bepaald, en zijn als dusdanig verwikkeld in discursieve processen en machtsrelaties. Het lichaam is niet de 'natuurlijke' basis van gender, noch de basis van een mannelijke of een vrouwelijke identiteit. J. Scott, 'Unanswered Questions', in: *The American Historical Review*, 2008, 13, 5, pp. 1422-1430.
- 12 Voor de Britse en Amerikaanse artsen bestaat het corpus uit: vijf autobiografieën die tijdens de oorlog zijn gepubliceerd (Dolbey (1917), Grow (1918), Herringham (1919), Martin (1915), Souttar (1915)); twee autobiografieën die claimen tijdens de oorlog te zijn geschreven en (kort) na de oorlog werden gepubliceerd (Cushing (1936), Dearden (1928)). En voor de Franse artsen bestaat het uit: drie autobiografieën die tijdens de oorlog werden gepubliceerd (Aimé (1917), Dide (1916), Duhamel (1917)); twee autobiografieën in dagboekvorm die claimen tijdens de oorlog te zijn geschreven en maar (kort) na de oorlog gepubliceerd werden (Chagnaud (1933), Laval (1932)); vier dagboeken die claimen tijdens de oorlog te zijn geschreven en pas kort geleden (zonder tussenkomst van de oorspronkelijke auteur) gepubliceerd werden (Laby (2001), Le Petit (2009), Perrin (2009), Voivenel (1991)); één bundeling van correspondentie tijdens de oorlog die achteraf werd geselecteerd en recent uitgegeven: Martin (1996).
- 13 J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male...*, p. 30. Zie ook haar werk voor de invloed van lichamelijke verminking op de mannelijke identiteit.
- 14 C. Acton en J. Potter, "'These Frightful Sights Would Work Havoc in One's Brain': Subjective Experience and Trauma in First World War Writings by Medical Personnel", in: *Literature and Medicine*, 2012, 30, 1, p. 63-64; S. Audoin-Rouzeau, 'Préface', in: S. Delaporte, *Les gueules cassées: les blessés de la face de la grande guerre*. Parijs, Noësis, 1996, pp. 26-27.
- 15 H. Cushing, *From a surgeon's journal: 1915-1918*. Boston, Little and Brown, 1936, p. 12.
- 16 R. Dolbey, *A regimental surgeon in war and prison*. Londen, John Murray, 1917, p. 58; A. Martin, *A surgeon in khaki*. Londen, Arnold, 1915, p. 96; H. Souttar, *A Surgeon in Belgium: Graphic and faithful impressions of the work of the British field hospital in Belgium*. Londen, Edward Arnold, 1915, p. 22-23.
- 17 M. Grow, *Surgeon grow. An American in the Russian fighting*. New York, Frederick A. Stokes Company Publishers, 1918, p. 66. Zie daarnaast: H. Dearden, *Medicine and duty. A war diary*. Londen, William Heinemann, 1928, p. 47-8; A. Martin, *A surgeon in khaki...*, p. 63, 135; H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 16, 63-4, 135-136.
- 18 R. Dolbey, *A regimental surgeon...*, p. 58; H. Dearden, *Medicine and duty...*, p. 13, 30.
- 19 H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 92.
- 20 H. Cushing, *From a surgeon's journal...*, p. 95.
- 21 H. Cushing, *From a surgeon's journal...*, p. 13-15, 42-46; H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 22-31; A. Martin, *A surgeon in khaki...*, p. 119, 258, 184-194; W. Herringham, *A Physician in France*. Londen, Arnold, 1919, p.143-152.
- 22 H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 212-213; W. Herringham, *A physician in France...*, p. 44.
- 23 A. Bashford, *Purity and Pollution...*, p. 60.
- 24 H. Souttar, *A Surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 17.
- 25 H. Dearden, *Medicine and duty...*, p. iv.
- 26 M. Esler, Geciteerd in I. Whitehead, *Doctors in the Great War...*, p. 52. Een ander mooi voorbeeld uit H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 2: "I suppose, and I hope, that there is not a man amongst us who has not in his heart wished to go to the front, and to do what he could."
- 27 R. Dolbey, *A Regimental Soldier in War and Prison...*, p. 247
- 28 H. Souttar, *A surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 213.
- 29 M. Grow, *Surgeon Grow...*, p. ii.
- 30 Zie voor de historische aspecten van het oorlogsgeneeskunde ook: J.A. Verdoorn (et al.), *Arts en oorlog*.
- 31 R. Dolbey, *A Regimental soldier...*, pp. 245-246.
- 32 H. Souttar, *A Surgeon in Belgium...*, p. 102. Op p. 135 geeft hij

een gelijkaardige gedachte weer.

- 33 H. Dearden, *Medicine and duty...*, pp. vii-viii. Een ander voorbeeld biedt M. Grow, *Surgeon Grow...*, p. 4.
- 34 Op vraag van de redactie werden alle citaten van de Franse artsen door mezelf vertaald. J. le Petit, *Journal de guerre de Jacques Le Petit, 1914-1919: un médecin à l'épreuve de la Grande Guerre*. Parçay-sur-Vienne, Anovi, 2009, p. 59.
- 35 J. Chagnaud, *Avec le 15-2. Journal et Lettres de Guerre*. Parijs, Payot, 1933, 106
- 36 A. Martin, *Un énergique et enthousiaste 'Homme de coeur' rouennais: Albert Martin (1866-1948). Souvenirs d'un chirurgien de la Grande Guerre*. Luneray, Editions Bertout, 1996, p. 109.
- 37 Zoals Ruth Amossy ook schrijft in haar analyse van de oorlogsmemoires van de Belgische arts Max Deaville. R. Amossy, 'Deaville, ou l'écrivain en médecin du front belge. Témoignage de guerre et "littérature"', in: P. Schoentjes (red.), *La Grande guerre: un siècle de fictions romanesques*, Genève, Droz, 2008, pp. 55-76. Zo zijn ook beschrijvingen van het weer frappant bijvoorbeeld J. Chagnaud, *Avec le 15-2...*, p. 82.
- 38 M. Dide, *Ceux qui combattent et ceux qui meurent*. Parijs, Payot, 1916, p. 103.
- 39 P. Voivenel, *A Verdun avec la 6^{ème} DR*. Nancy, Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1991, p. 108.
- 40 J. Chagnaud, *Avec le 15-2...*, p. 74.
- 41 M. Dide, *Ceux qui combattent et ceux qui meurent...*, p. 230.
- 42 Dide schrijft dit expliciet. M. Dide, *Ceux qui combattent et ceux qui meurent...*, pp. 228-230.
- 43 E. Laval, *Souvenirs d'un médecin-major 1914-1917*. Parijs, Payot, 1932, p. 60.
- 44 H. Aimé, *Le Bandeau sur le front*. Parijs, Cris, 1917, p. 91.
- 45 F. Perrin, *Un toubib sous l'uniforme: témoignage du médecin-major François Perrin, 1908-1918*, Parçay-sur-Vienne, Anovi, 2009, p. 321.
- 46 L. Laby (red. S. Delaporte), *Les carnets de l'aspirant Laby médecin dans les tranchées 28 juillet 1914-14 juillet 1919*, Parijs, Bayard, 2001, p. 75.
- 47 L. Laby, *Les carnets de l'aspirant Laby*, p. 75.
- 48 E. Laval, *Souvenirs d'un médecin-major 1914-1917...*, p. 9.
- 49 H. Aimé, *Le bandeau sur le front...*, pp. 26-27.
- 50 Zoals Dequidit dit doet. H. Dequidit, 'La crise d'identité...'
- 51 M. Harrison, 'Medicine and the management of modern warfare...', p. 5.
- 52 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916*. Parijs, Mercure de France, 1917, p. 207.
- 53 Dit merkte ook Luc Rasson op in *Ecrire contre la guerre: littérature et pacifismes 1916-1938*. Parijs, L'Harmattan, 1997, pp. 53-55.
- 54 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 40.
- 55 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 8-9.
- 56 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 224.
- 57 F. Van Wesemael, "'There are no men here...'
- 58 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 163.
- 59 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, 1917, p. 27
- 60 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 94.
- 61 E. Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992, p. 88.
- 62 G. Duhamel, *Vie des martyrs. 1914-1916...*, p. 94-95.

Fabian Van Wesemael (1991) won met zijn masterscriptie 'Helden in het hospitaal? Een gendergeschiedenis van de ervaring van verpleegsters en artsen in hun omgang met gewonde soldaten en lichamelijke tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog' de Johanna Naberprijs 2014. Sinds maart werkt hij aan een doctoraat over de maatschappelijke impact van de Eerste Wereldoorlog op oudstrijders en hun families (UGent en UNamur).

Contact: Fabian.VanWesemael@UGent.be

Vrouwen in de Grote Oorlog

Dorothy Lawrence (1896-1964)

De Britse Dorothy Lawrence slaagt erin verkleed als soldaat in de loopgraven van de Eerste Wereldoorlog te komen. Maar wanneer uitkomt dat zij een vrouw is, treedt het leger hard op. Tragisch genoeg komt Lawrence in 1925 uiteindelijk in een inrichting waar ze ook sterft.

/ Martine Kouwenhoven /

Dorothy Lawrence wordt geboren in Hendon, Londen. Ze is vermoedelijk een buitenechtelijk kind, wordt op jonge leeftijd wees en krijgt een voogd van de *Church of England* toegewezen. Ze groeit waarschijnlijk op in een weeshuis.

Wanneer de Eerste Wereldoorlog uitbreekt, is Lawrence een jonge, ambitieuze vrouw. Ze heeft een paar kleine artikelen gepubliceerd in *The Times* en nu wil ze als verslaggeefster naar het front. Geen enkele krantenredactie is echter bereid haar aan te nemen.

In 1915 vertrekt Lawrence op eigen gelegenheid naar Frankrijk. Nadat ze wordt afgewezen als vrijwilliger voor het *Voluntary Aid Detachment* (VAD) – een Britse organisatie die verpleging aan het front verzorgt – besluit ze om de oorlogszone te betreden als freelance oorlogscorrespondent. Maar nog voor het bereiken van de frontlinie arresteert de Franse politie haar en noodgedwongen keert ze terug naar Parijs. Daar besluit Lawrence dat ze alleen in vermomming haar doel kan bereiken.

In een café raakt ze bevriend met twee Britse soldaten, “the khaki accomplices”.¹ In hun wasgoed smokkelen ze een legeruniform voor haar. Ook leert ze een aantal basiscommando’s en hoe ze moet marcheren. Ze knipt haar haar, verbergt haar zandloperfiguur met een zelfgemaakt korset en vult haar schouders op. Ook scheidt ze haar wangen in de hoop op uitslag. Haar militaire identiteitskaart schrijft Lawrence zelf, op naam van *Private Dennis Smith*. De handtekening van de commandant vervalst ze en ze kan de kaart overal zonder problemen gebruiken. Zo vertrekt ze opnieuw richting het front.

Uiteindelijk komt Lawrence terecht in de plaats Albert aan de Somme. Daar helpt Tom Dunn haar, een soldaat bij de *Royal Engineers Lancashire Regiment*. Zo ziet ze kans om zich aan te sluiten bij een groep mijnleggers en tunnelgravers en ze trekt mee naar de voorste loopgraven. Omdat Dunn vreest voor Lawrence’s veiligheid als enige vrouw in een groep soldaten, vindt hij voor haar een verlaten huis-



bron: Dorothy Lawrence, *Sapper Dorothy Lawrence* (1919)



bron: Dorothy Lawrence, *Sapper Dorothy Lawrence* (1919)

je om in te slapen.

Tien dagen weet Lawrence zich te handhaven in de frontlinie, maar haar lichamelijke conditie verslechtert snel. Haar werk en het verbergen van haar ware identiteit eisen hun tol. Lawrence lijdt onder constante koude rillingen en reuma en valt herhaaldelijk flauw. Ze is bezorgd dat de medische hulp haar zal ontdekken en dat dit uiteindelijk haar vrienden in gevaar brengt. Lawrence besluit om de bevelvoerende sergeant in vertrouwen te nemen, die haar meteen arresteert.

In het hoofdkwartier van de British Expeditionary Forces ondervraagt een kolonel haar als spion en Lawrence wordt krijgsgevangene. Daarna wordt ze naar het (Britse) *Third Army*-hoofdkwartier in Calais gebracht, waar zes ge-

neraals en ongeveer twintig officieren haar ondervragen, om vervolgens in Saint-Omer opnieuw een kruisverhoor te ondergaan.

Deze zware verhoren brengen haar op de rand van een zenuwinzinking. Ze wordt overgebracht naar de strenge kloosterorde *Le Convent de Bon Pasteur*, waar Lawrence een beëdigde verklaring moet ondertekenen dat ze niet over haar ervaringen zal schrijven. Het leger is door deze vrouw ernstig in verlegenheid gebracht en men vreest dat meer vrouwen haar voorbeeld zullen volgen. Daarom moet Lawrence gedwongen in Frankrijk blijven tot na de slag bij Loos (Noord-Frankrijk, september-oktober 1915).

Dan moet Lawrence terug naar Engeland. Ze komt berooid, dakloos en zonder enig professioneel toekomstperspectief in Londen aan. Ze probeert wel over haar ervaringen te schrijven, maar moet afzien van publicatie in opdracht van de *War Office*.

In 1919 publiceert ze dan toch *Sapper Dorothy Lawrence: The only English woman soldier, late Royal Engineers, 51st Division, 179th Tunnelling Company, B.E.F.*² Maar het boek staat nog steeds onder strenge censuur van de *War Office* en waarschijnlijk ook zelfcensuur. Lawrence rept met vrijwel geen woord over de loopgraven. Wel schrijft ze dat het Britse leger er bij haar arrestatie zwaarder aan tilde dat ze een vrouw was, dan eventueel een spionne. Het boekwerk wordt niet het commerciële succes waar Lawrence op heeft gehoopt.

Haar einde is tragisch en vooraan met onduidelijkheid omgeven. In 1925 wordt Lawrence gedwongen in een inrichting opgenomen en belandt ze uiteindelijk in het Colney Hatch Mental Hospital in Londen. Dit gebeurt nadat ze haar voogd heeft beschuldigd van verkrachting in haar tienerjaren. Er kunnen meerdere oorzaken voor de opname zijn: misschien wil de Anglicaanse kerk de zaak in de doofpot stoppen of heeft Lawrence door haar oorlogservaringen psychische problemen gekregen. Of wellicht is er druk van buitenaf geweest om haar het zwijgen op te leggen, bijvoorbeeld, vanuit het Britse leger.

Zoals meerdere patiënten uit die tijd zal Lawrence het gesticht nooit meer verlaten; ze wordt 76 jaar oud. Men begraaft haar in een anoniem armengraf op de Great Northern Cemetery in Londen.³ Opmerkelijk genoeg is er in de National Archives wel een Medal Card van ‘Dorothy Lawrence, sapper’ te vinden. Hoe en wanneer de medaille is uitgereikt is niet duidelijk.⁴ ///

Noten

- ¹ Dorothy Lawrence, *Sapper Dorothy Lawrence: The only English woman soldier, late Royal Engineers 51st Division 179th Tunnelling Company B.E.F.* London, 1919.
- ² D. Lawrence, *Sapper... Een 'sapper' is een soldaat die militaire constructiewerkzaamheden uitvoert, zoals het bouwen van bruggen, ruimen van mijnenvelden en het aanleggen en repareren van wegen.*
- ³ London Metropolitan Archives, *Chaplain Records: Journals, 1941-1972, H12/CH/G/02*
- ⁴ The National Archives in Kew, *Medal Card of Lawrence, Dorothy Corps, WO/372/23/24378*

Madame Tack is tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog in het West-Vlaamse dorpje Nieuwkapelle aan de IJzer als een moeder voor de daar geleverde soldaten. Ze bezoeken haar geregeld in haar Villa Marietta, die in de eerste Belgische linie ligt.

/ Martine Kouwenhoven /

Marie Thérèse Louisa Tack wordt geboren in een gezin van elf kinderen in het West-Vlaamse Nieuwkapelle. De familie Tack is een welgestelde familie, met veel aanzien in de streek.¹ In 1859 trouwt Madame Tack met Franz Favarger de la Favarge, een tot Belg genaturaliseerde Zwitser uit Veurne die later kapitein bij de artillerie zou worden.² Het stel trekt naar Brussel, waar ze één kind krijgen: hun dochter Marietta. Na het overlijden van haar echtgenoot besluit Tack terug te keren naar Nieuwkapelle, waar zij samen met haar ezelin Paula, het poedelhondje Chéri en de papegaai Coco de Villa Marietta nabij de IJzer betreft.³

Wanneer de Eerste Wereldoorlog uitbreekt, ligt Nieuwkapelle in de eerste Belgische linie. Burgers uit het bewoonde gebied worden met spoed geëvacueerd, maar Madame Tack blijft haar motto trouw: 'Tack plooit nooit'. Ze weigert te verhuizen, ook al staan de soldaten letterlijk in haar voortuin opgesteld.

Ze is erg gastvrij voor de passerende soldaten en officieren en haar aanwezigheid is van groot psychologisch belang voor de soldaten die in de regio vechten. Dit blijkt ook uit de



Madame Tack omringd door 'haar soldaatjes'

diverse benamingen en eretitels die de soldaten gebruiken om haar aan te duiden, zoals 'Soldatenmoeder', *Maman des Tranches*, *Dame de l'Yser*, *de Dame van de Loopgraven...* Madame Tack spreekt van 'mijn soldaatjes'.

Voor de soldaten vormt Madame Tack een laatste schakel met de bekende wereld. Het wordt al snel de gewoonte om zo gauw het maar kan 's avonds bij haar langs te gaan. Zowel soldaten als officieren ontvangt zij in haar keurige huiskamer,⁴ waar ze sigaretten presenteert of een eigengemaakt likeurtje inschenkt.⁵ Ook bezoekt Tack soldaten in de loopgraven en voorziet hen van voedsel en sigaretten.⁶ Ze biedt de soldaten een rustpunt in de chaos en waanzin van de oorlog, een mentale houvast en ze is de concrete belichaming van waar men voor vecht.

De waardering die de soldaten voor haar koesteren blijkt ook wanneer Villa Marietta in 1916 beschadigd raakt en onbewoonbaar wordt: de mannen hebben de villa binnen twee dagen zodanig opgeknapt, dat Madame Tack bij hen terug kan keren. Uiteindelijk wordt de oorlogssituatie in de herfst van 1917 toch te gevaarlijk: haar huis wordt onherstelbaar kapotgeschoten en Tack evacueert naar kustplaats De Panne, waar talrijke militairen haar opzoeken.

Al tijdens de oorlog krijgt Madame Tack erkenning voor wat zij betekent voor de soldaten. Op 20 juni 1916 wordt het Ridderkruis van de Orde van Leopold II aan haar uitgereikt door generaal De Ceuninck met officie-

ren van zijn staf.⁷ En in haar gastenboek hebben niet de minste gasten getekend: niet alleen soldaten en officieren, maar ook de Belgische koning Albert I en diens vrouw Elizabeth, de Britse koning George V en de Franse president Raymond Poincaré.⁸

In 1927 sterft Madame Tack een natuurlijke dood, 91 jaar oud. Een onderwijzer uit Nieuwkapelle, Verthé, schrijft daarop een lang en sentimenteel treurdicht, waarvan een strofe luidt: *Ze stond hier aan den IJzer, Als moeder van elkeen, Geen enkle van den IJzer, Die haar geen kind'ren scheen...*⁹ ///

Noten

- 1 A. Dawyndt A., 'Mevrouw Tack, de soldatenmoeder 1914-1918 uit Nieuwkapelle', in: *Bachten de Kupe*, 33, 1 (jan-feb 1991), pp. 8-12.
- 2 M. Messiaen, 'Madame Tack, moeder van de soldaten 1914-1918', in: *Bachten de Kupe*, 34, 1 (jan-feb 1992), pp. 8-20.
- 3 M. Messiaen, 'Rustig gelegen, dieper dan de weg langs de IJzerstroom, weggedoken in de bomen. Paradijsachtig in een groene zone.' p. 9.
- 4 'Met oprechte smaak heeft zij weten van haar kleine villa met den kleinen tuin een aangenaam buitenje te maken. Het is er oprecht 'confortable' ..., alles draagt het kenmerk van netheid en zorg.' L.G., 'Uit een dagboek van een leerling-doktor aan het front', in: *Echo de Belgique - de Stem uit België*, 8 augustus 1915.
- 5 'Zij ontving graag officieren en soldaten die haar kwamen groeten in haar villa. Zij vergastte hen op een roemer wijn en presenteerde likeuren die zij zelf uit planten van haar tuin trok.' M. Messiaen, 'Madame Tack, ...' p. 14.
- 6 <https://inventaris.onroerendergoed.be/woi/relict/237>
- 7 Marcel Messiaen, 'Madame Tack, Moeder van de soldaten 1914-1918', p. 13.
- 8 Daniel Vanacker, 'Madame Tack', in: *Het 14-18 boek. De kleine Belgen in de Grote Oorlog*. Zwolle, 2006, p. 108.
- 9 A. Dawyndt, 'Mevrouw Tack...', pp. 10, 12.



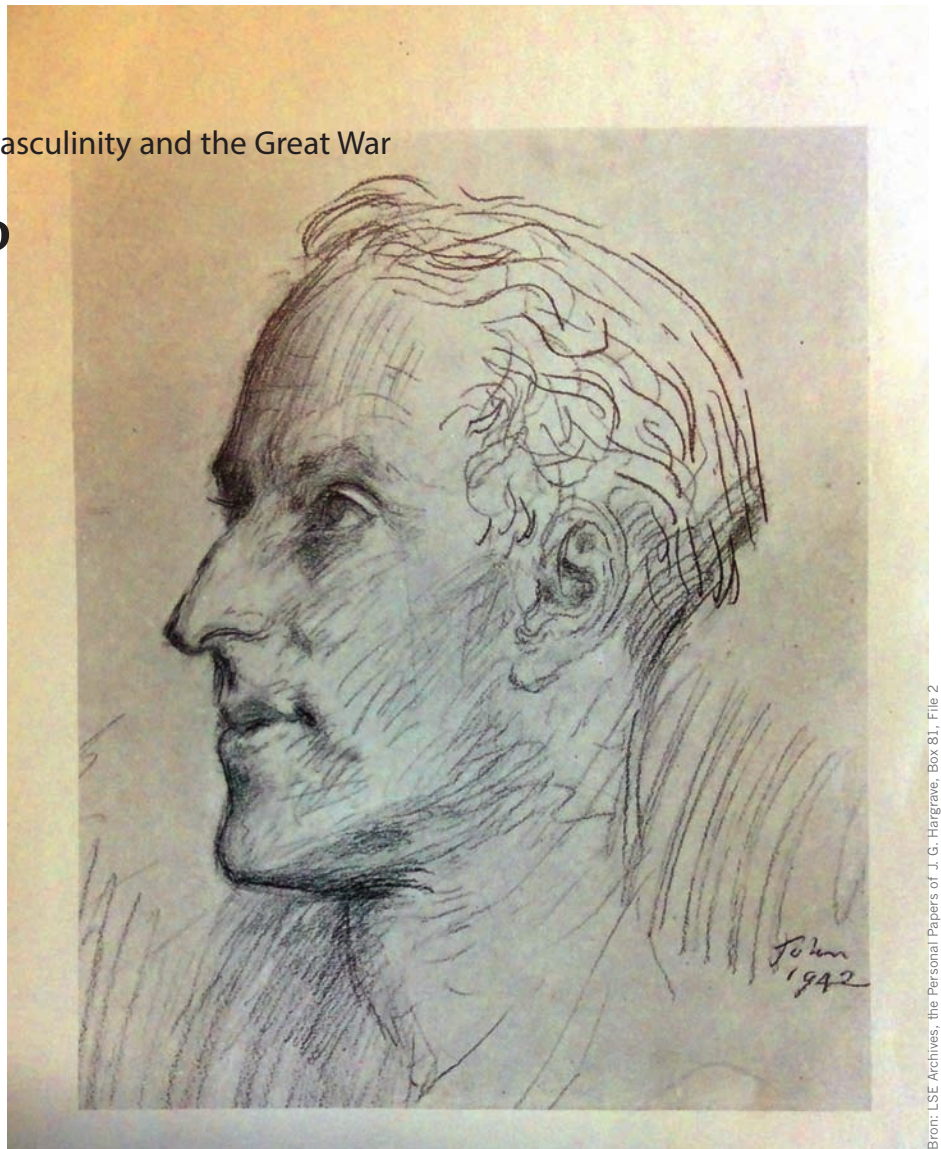
Martine Kouwenhoven (1968) studeerde voor vertaler Engels, Duits en Deens aan de Universiteit van Antwerpen. Ook voltooide zij de studie politieke en sociale wetenschappen en haalde zij de lerarenbevoegdheid. De afgelopen jaren ontwikkelde en doceerde zij literatuuronderwijs en cultuurgeschiedenis aan volwassenen en publiceerde een aantal artikels. Ook maakte zij een lessenreeks over 'Vrouwen in de Grote Oorlog', te vinden op www.martineleest.be. Momenteel werkt ze aan een boek over Dorothy Lawrence.

Contact: martine@martineleest.be

A Scout's perspective on British masculinity and the Great War

Boys to Men?

When war broke out in 1914, artist and author John Gordon Hargrave (1894-1982) joined the many young British men who responded to the call to arms. Like his peers, he fought for King and Country. But uniquely he also fought at the behest of the Boy Scouts. The organization played a prominent role in preparing male youths for military service during the Great War. It as such conveyed an evocative narrative for the passage from boyhood to manhood, which Hargrave explored in his 1916 book *At Suvla Bay*. Weaving his biographical particulars with a close reading of the text, this essay argues Hargrave's first-hand account of the Dardanelles Campaign offered a conscientious, ambivalent portrayal of British masculinity. He championed certain Boy Scout fundamentals while objecting to others, leading him to seek his own version of the masculine Scout ideal.



Bron: LSE Archives, the Personal Papers of J. G. Hargrave, Box 81, File 2

Hargrave, self-portrait, 1942

/ Hana Qugana /

At Suvla Bay. We dressed as much like Boy Scouts as possible,” reads a caption from *At Suvla Bay* (1916), a first-hand account of the Dardanelles Campaign of the First World War. It accompanies side-by-side drawings of a male youth, the first in which he is wearing a Boy Scout uniform. In the second, he sports a military fatigue, although little physically distinguishes one figure from the other. Together they express a sentiment that resonated with the era in which the text was written – that soldiering, for many of the young men serving in the British military, was an intuitive extension of scouting. For the book’s twenty-two year-old author John Gordon Hargrave (1894-1982) in particular, the war had reinforced that

Dardanelles Campaign (1915-1916)

A ten month-long battle that took place on land and sea in the Middle Eastern theatre of the First World War. The Allied powers Britain and France were fighting against the Ottoman Empire (supported by Germany and Austria-Hungary) for control of the Dardanelles, a water passage in what is now Turkey leading to what was then the Russian Empire, an Allied ally. The campaign ended in failure for the Allies, who retreated to Egypt after incurring casualties upwards of 180,000 men (dead, wounded, missing and captured).

“those who had from boyhood been trained in scouting and scoutcraft came out top-dog.” By contrast, those men who “laughed at the boy scout in his shirt and shorts,” who failed to properly read a map, navigate using the stars, stalk the enemy in the harsh terrain and stay silent amidst hidden snipers inevitably perished.¹ The more Britain’s fighting men emulated scouts then, the better, Hargrave’s illustration seemingly implies. Their survival depended on it and not just in a fashion sense.

The translation of scouting into soldiering extended beyond considerations of dress and practical skills. Its implications for British masculinity – “the way [British] men assert what they believe to be their manhood”² – have interested a number of scholars especially. Historian Paul Ward, for one, has acknowledged the Boy Scouts as a significant force in constructing “Man’s ultimate function [...] as the conquest, extension and defence of the ‘Greater Britain’ of the Empire.” Robert Baden-Powell said as much in his 1908 *Scouting for Boys*, which outlined key directives of what would, by the outbreak of the war six years later, be a burgeoning movement: “We have had this enormous Empire handed down

to us by our forefathers, and we are responsible that it develops and goes ahead, and above all that we make ourselves fit and proper men to help it to go ahead. [...] we must be careful to keep [the Armed] Services supplied with good men who, like scouts, must BE PREPARED to give their lives for their country at any time.”³ Under his influence, the Scout leadership would construe military service as the culmination of a scout’s training, simultaneously creating a compelling narrative for the passage of British males from boyhood to manhood. A *Boy Scout* fulfilled his patriotic duty to the Empire by becoming a *soldier*. And, as a scout-soldier, he became a *man*.

Ten years after Baden-Powell’s canonical

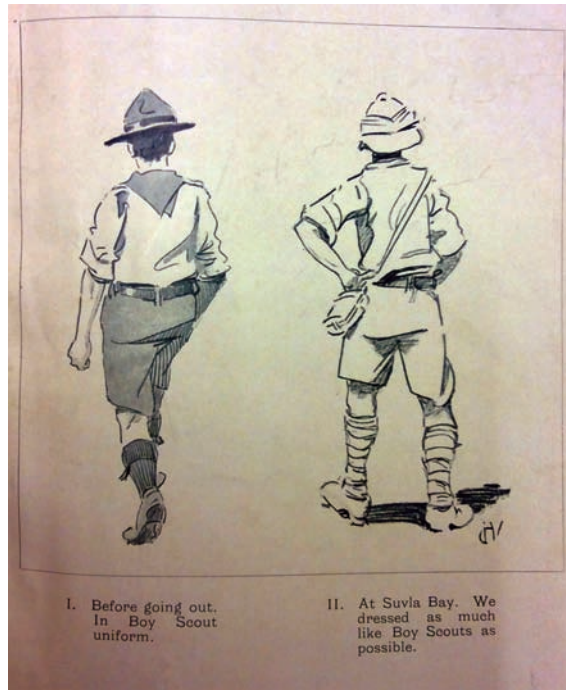
Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941)

Principally known as the founder of the Scouting movement, though he had also been a lieutenant-general in the British Army and a writer. Drawing from his military experience primarily in South Africa and work on previous training manuals, he wrote *Scouting for Boys* to appeal to a younger readership. Its publication in 1908, along with the first Scouts rally at Crystal Palace, London in 1909, is widely regarded as the impetus of the movement, which popularized knowledge and skills necessary for life in the great outdoors.

text, the Great War had come and gone, but not without this paradigm losing some of its luster. The optimism it once inspired for soldiering in the service of Empire was replaced by ambivalence. Britain itself became rendered (borrowing from literature scholar Alison Light) “the place where it [was] no longer possible to be properly male – a country gelded [...] and emasculated by the aftermath of war.” Women, who had in large numbers assumed the positions vacated by fighting men in the workplace, did not easily retreat back to their ‘separate sphere.’⁴ Correspondingly, historians have tended to discuss the demise of the masculine ideal promoted in Scouting’s early years as a consequence of the altered social dynamics at home in postwar Britain.

The home front in the aftermath is undoubtedly an important context for considering the impacts of the war on conceptions of masculinity. But fixating excessively on it can also obscure evidence from the war itself and give the impression of ruptures where there might have been continuities. *At Suvla Bay* is a case in point. Published in 1916, it holds the distinction of being one of the first memoirs of the First World War. Owing perhaps to its proximity to the event (which had not yet concluded), the book has been treated more so as a source of details for a battle that now stands out as one of Britain’s biggest blunders of the war.⁵ It has also largely been left out of discussions over Hargrave’s break with the Boy Scouts in 1920.

Nonetheless, this essay argues, a discourse on British masculinity is indeed present in the text. Throughout *At Suvla Bay*, Hargrave championed certain qualities of Boy Scout training



“As much like Scouts as possible,” opening illustration *At Suvla Bay*

Bron: John Gordon Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*, London, 1916, p. 1.

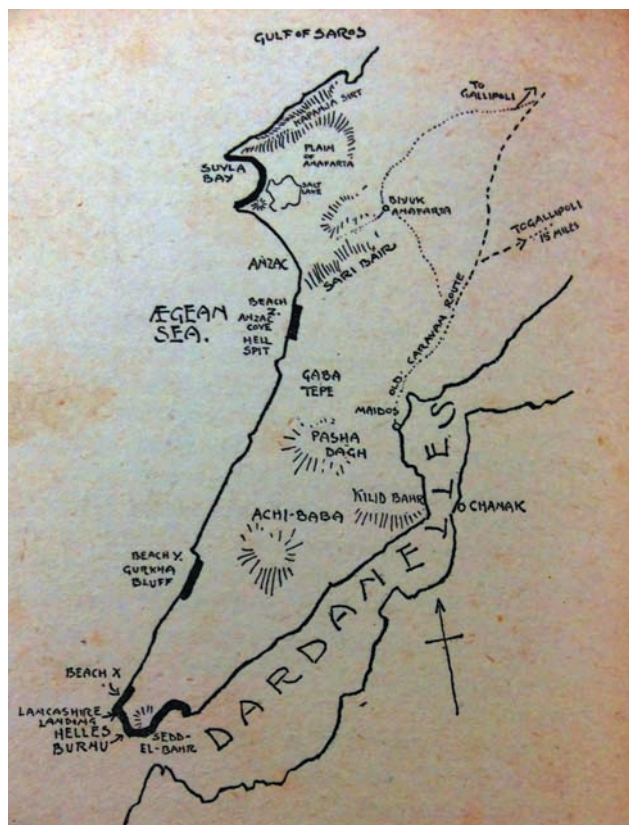
and ideology, while challenging others. He acknowledged the edge they gave former scouts in terms of physical fitness, survival in unforgiving environments and leadership. Yet, in other instances, Hargrave bemoaned the Scout administration for presenting a misleading, romanticized portrayal of war, which often collided with his experiences in the Dardanelles. These opinions played out in a juxtaposition of male types derived from diverse corners of the British Empire – the Oxbridge Man, the old

imperial Soldier of fortune, and rugged, tough Men of the Outback (Australia and New Zealand) and the Orient to name a few. As such, the book did not just offer a critique of Boy Scout attitudes, but British masculinity overall. It alluded, moreover, to alternative masculine ideals that did not necessarily antagonize women, and which Hargrave (among others) would explore in the 1920s.

Scout’s beginnings

At Suvla Bay’s author John Hargrave was born in the parish of Midhurst, West Sussex in 1894 (d. 1982). He was the second of three boys born to Gordon Hargrave, “an artist, poet and thinker, a student of the Bible,” and Babette (formerly Bing) Hargrave, also an artist. For much of his youth, the Hargraves moved around the Lake District. Initially, his older brother Ellwood was “the promising artist” in the family, while Hargrave attended Hawkshead, a prestigious grammar school in Lancashire. (The youngest Dudley did not live beyond nineteen months.)⁶ Any aspirations his parents might have entertained of John becoming a ‘scholarship boy,’ however, were soon dashed by Ellwood’s death in 1906. Assuming his brother’s role in supporting the family, Hargrave left school for employment at the age of fourteen as a commercial artist, finding early success illustrating books and periodicals and later, selling standalone pieces in exhibitions, working as Chief Cartoonist for the *London Evening Times* and joining the staff of publishing company C. Arthur Pearson in 1914.⁷

Of his youth, Hargrave would later recall his affinity with the English countryside. In this setting, Gordon imparted on his son his brand of amateur intellectualism, teaching him about anthropology, archeology and the



Bron: John Gordon Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*, London, 1916, p. 1.

Map of Suvla Bay

>>

communion of science and nature. And, it would be this typically romanticized space to which he would escape after moving closer to London to pursue his career when he joined a Boy Scout troop in 1908 just northwest of the city in Buckinghamshire. In those early days, Hargrave was perhaps more 'suburban' than 'country,' a notion mirrored in a photograph of the young Scout and his mother, a large house conspicuously looming in the background. Even so, contributions to the Scout magazine *The Trail*, often under the pseudonym 'White Fox,' cultivated his reputation to great effect within scouting circles as an expert outdoorsman with a marked proficiency in solitary situations.

Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946)

A renowned British woodcrafter and Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of America between 1910 and 1915. Much to the chagrin of Baden-Powell, who preferred the imperialist pomp of military uniforms and training, he introduced Native American elements into the BSA. His writings about animals and the great outdoors have incited the imagination of youths ever since.

His popularity increased with the 1913 publication of his first book *Lonecraft*. It drew extensively from the work of another early figure in the movement named Ernest Thompson Seton, so much so that, much to the surprise of Hargrave and Otto Kyllmann, the senior director of his publisher Constable & Co., Seton would later accuse his admirer of plagiarism. (Coincidentally, Constable was then also Seton's publisher in Britain, putting Kyllmann in an awkward situation; he chose to support Hargrave in spite of the potential financial repercussions.)⁸ In any case, those who have written about Hargrave commonly characterize this period in his life as one in which his leadership style and qualities as a writer began to take shape side-by-side, eventually coming to the attention of Baden-Powell's administration.

Of course, the Boy Scouts were not the only influence on young men in Britain at the time. Other institutions, such as schools and Church Lads' Brigade (the male youth arm of the Church of England) helped to shape them too. But the scouting movement was perhaps the most visible. As Paul Wilkinson has stated, "34 percent of males born between 1901 and 1920 claimed to have belonged to the Boy Scouts." (Note that the official organization did not sanction Girl Scouting at this time.) The only text to outsell *Scouting for Boys* in the English-speaking world until after World War II was the Bible.⁹

By extension, Hargrave's blossoming in the prewar movement can be viewed as a Scouting success story. While the organization formally reached out to all classes and races of the Empire, its core demographic in actuality was white, lower middle-class males. Unlike the 'sons of toil,' this group had time to pursue extracurricular activities. It therefore stood to gain the most from the Scouts' host of initiatives designed to "form character in the

boys-to make them manly, good citizens." To recall, chief among its objectives was to make the nation's young men combat ready, which arose amidst concerns since the turn of the century over the population's physical condition.¹⁰ Brought up in a lower middle-class household in provincial England, Hargrave was the perfect spokesperson for Baden-Powell's program. He credited it for helping him outgrow his tendencies as a "silent, pale-faced child," eventually reaching a height of five feet and ten inches and peak fitness, in addition to his nascent leadership abilities.¹¹

392 (xvi) KR classification, or in layman's terms, "being no longer physically fit for war service." Nevertheless, he returned to England as a war hero. In large part, this was due to pieces he had written from the front for scouting publications, which familiarized readers with his name and White Fox alias. To many of them, "Hargrave," Wilkinson writes, "proved the value of Boy Scout resourcefulness and practical training, loyalty and dependability."

His homecoming, however, was bittersweet. As also expressed by Wilkinson, despite coming back "a hero, a veteran of the Suvla Bay



Bron: Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 73 [Family Photos]

'White Fox' and his mother, circa 1908-1912

The movement's values would be tested when Britain entered the war in August 1914. By this time, Hargrave was writing and producing artwork for *The Scout* magazine. The following month, he enlisted in Marylebone, London, making good on his oath, as stipulated in his "Buckinghamshire Corps of Guides," to "in the event of invasion, or of the mobilization of the Military Forces in the United Kingdom, [...] undertake to act as a Guide to the Troops of His Majesty the King if so required by the Military Authorities." In accordance with the pacifism of his Quaker roots (despite insisting that he was not religious),¹² he served in a non-combatant capacity in the Royal Army Medical Corps and the 10th Irish division. As part of the 10th's 32nd field ambulance, he saw action at Gallipoli, Turkey and Salonika, Greece, after which he contracted malaria and was discharged on the 14th of September 1916 with the rank of Sergeant.

Invalidation

Given how well he personified the Scouts' archetypal male, it seems ironic that Hargrave's war would end with invalidation under the Para

landing," "there is no doubt that there was tension between him and the more orthodox leaders." They sensed (quite rightly) that all was not well with Hargrave. As one of the mere 6,000 troops out of the original 25,000 to survive the battle, the guilt must have been unnerving, let alone the shock of it all. (He was also the only non-commissioned officer in his Section left.)¹³ Before anything else, indicates Matthew de Abaitua, he "set about cleansing himself of the conflict" in a manner not sanctioned by the Boy Scouts (but akin to that of many recently discharged Israeli conscripts today) – backpacking and experimenting with unconventional, especially non-Western ideas and practices. He had already expressed a keen interest in Native American culture before the war, thanks, in large part, to Seton's influence. But it now became more pronounced, as it complemented his growing appreciation for (among other crazes of the age) yoga, Kabbalah and the teachings of ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tze.¹⁴ Thirty years later, his publisher Kyllmann would testify that Hargrave had never truly gotten over what he had seen in the Dardanelles.¹⁵ He was thus also perceived as a volatile figure that,

once settled, might or might not fall in line with the Boy Scout administration.

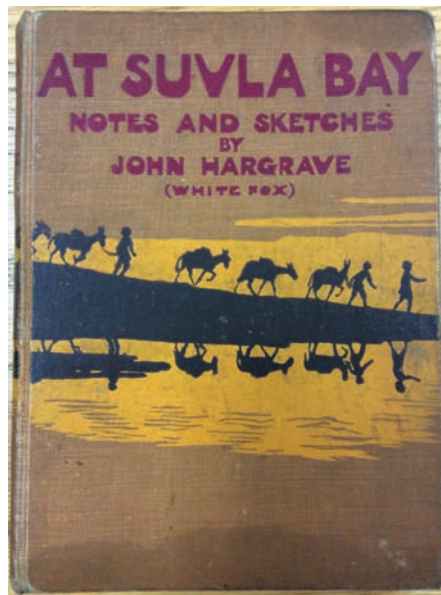
At Suvla Bay's structure took shape in this context of concurrent, yet polarizing statuses of scouting idol and potential pariah. Hargrave had already mentioned to Kyllmann in October 1915 that he had "a good record in sketches, notes & sketch maps of the Suvla Bay embayments which will be of interest when [he was] lucky enough to reach England once again." Having now returned, these documents would serve as the basis for a book that promised readers "scenes, characters and," above all, "adventures" from the military operation. Its opening line gestured to the wider body of Boy Scout literature. Hargrave's 'adventure' began with the following: "I left the office of *The Scout*, 28 Maiden Lane, W.C., on September 8th, 1914, took leave of the editor and the staff, said farewell to my little camp in the beech-woods of Buckinghamshire and to my woodcraft scouts, bade good-bye to my father, and went off to enlist." In the spirit of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, another reoccurring trope in Baden-Powell's writings, he devoted himself to "noticing small details and remembering them, [...] a most important point in the training of a scout."¹⁶ It was to be, in other words, a Scout's perspective on the war. To what ends, however, remained to be seen.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

An English writer known for his short stories, poems and books set in British India, such as *The Jungle Book*, *The Just So Stories* and "The White Man's Burden." His novel *Kim*, published in 1901, tells the story of the titular character, an Irish boy left orphaned and destitute in British India at the time of the "Great Game" at the end of the nineteenth century - a period of Anglo-Russian enmity in central Asia. Kim represented Baden-Powell's ultimate hero, blending the most virtuous and resourceful inheritances from the imperial experience.

In the first instance, *At Suvla Bay* espoused a sense of complicity in the Scout leadership's designs for Britain's men. Hargrave highlighted on multiple occasions transferable skills from which all young soldiers could profit. Such was his "[ability] to instruct the signaling squad" during basic training in Ireland, which he attributed to "having been a scout." Likewise, the physical rigors of scouting manifested positively in the book. In Hargrave's initial medical examination, "very few looked fit" among the recruits for example. His pristine physical condition (again, credited to his scout training) subsequently surprised the doctor, who declared him "the sort we want." The lesson concluded in Chapter XXV "A Scout at Suvla Bay" when he proclaimed: "Carry on, Boy Scouts! Bad scoutcraft was one of the chief drawbacks in what has been dubbed 'The Glorious Failure [the Dardanelles Campaign].'"¹⁷

Hargrave's position, however, was more complex. Recalling what literature scholar Samuel Hynes has termed "the Myth of the War," the book fits well as a precursor to the early work of the war poets – namely,

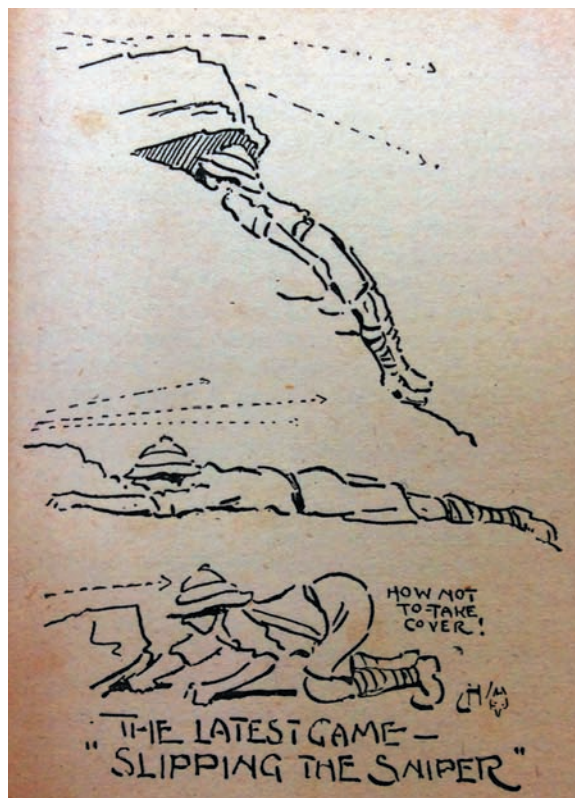


Book cover *At Suvla Bay* (1916)

Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Wilfred Owen – insofar as it 'revised,' as opposed to 'rejected' the "traditional celebration of military heroism." Symptomatic of the 'traditional', militarism was central to the Boy Scouts' vision of manliness. As Baden-Powell asserted in *Scouting for Boys*, "We ought really not to think too much of any boy, even though a cricketer and footballer, unless he can also shoot, and can drill and scout." Hargrave too believed in discipline (as achieved through drills) and scoutcraft; however, his perception

of heroism markedly did not require shooting. He did not even recall medical personnel being permitted guns. The point of 'the latest game' (which, in hindsight, was not really a game at all) was not to shoot, but to 'slip [as in slip past or avoid] the sniper.' *At Suvla Bay*'s sense of adventure, moreover, did not lie in tales of armed, military combat, but in "marvelous escapes and 'cute encounters, secret scoutings and extraordinary expeditions.'"¹⁸ Adeptness in survival, he argued, could be manly too.

In a similar vein, the book deconstructed the patriotism inherent to the Boy Scout administration's attitudes towards masculinity. A more conformist scout would have otherwise glorified images of Britain's men in battle regardless of soldier competencies – that responding to the call and fighting on behalf of one's country was honorable enough in itself. Alternatively, Hargrave suggested promoting such lionized portrayals was irresponsible, as it did not warn the nation's males of the harsh, unnecessarily tragic realities of war. Sacrifice could be done stupidly, as was the case with many of the soldiers he treated. Men were 'lost' pointlessly, such as a substantial section of his ambulance, prompting Hargrave to name the corresponding chapter "Adventure of the Lost Squads" – the term 'adventure,' in this case, invoking cynicism. He did not shy away from the war's brutality, neither the seeming futility of it all. Instead, he conveyed these sentiments visually through gruesome sketches of dead soldiers from both sides, mourning them collectively. Grim tales of "hard and metallic, steel-studded and shrapnel-toothed" 'Mechanical Death' doled out by >>



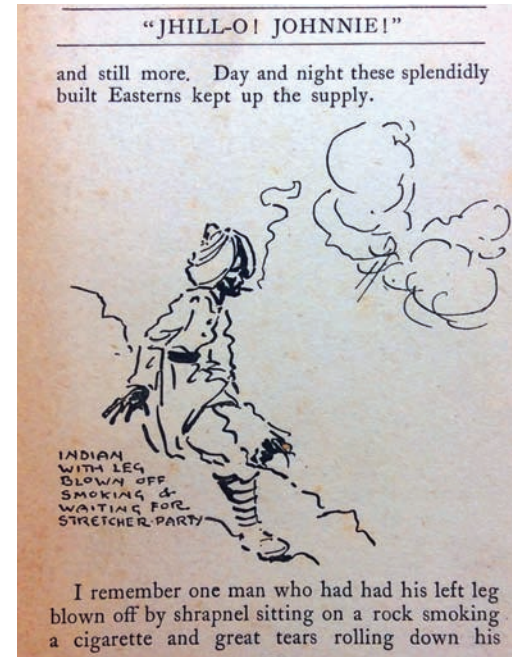
"Slipping the Sniper," illustration *At Suvla Bay*

From: Hargrave, At..., 93



The Empire's 'real' men, illustrations, *At Suvla Bay*

Bron: Hargrave, *At...*, 152 and 129



guns and artillery sprinkled the second half of the text, underlining its indiscriminate manner. From the battlefield, Hargrave and the other medics would bring back “pieces of men” – masculinity literally dismembered.¹⁹

Soldiering thus turned out to be very different from scouting. More evocative of Robinson Crusoe than Kim, the “awful-cut-off [...] feeling-no letters from home, no newspapers, no books . . . sand, biscuits and flies; flies, bully and sand” prevailed. Hargrave disparaged the Boy Scout sense of duty in saying, “I had lost all my old-time freedom: I could no longer go on in my old camping and sketching life. I was now a soldier – a ‘tommy’ – a ‘private.’” Even before leaving England, he would declare, “the spark of patriotism which was in each man when he enlisted was dead.”²⁰

Britain's men

An interesting way in which these sentiments played out in *At Suvla Bay* was through its various male characters. In light of his own thwarted path to higher education, it is not surprising that Hargrave instinctively drew out officers from privileged backgrounds – that is, the alleged pinnacles of British masculinity, or Paul Deslandes' prototypical ‘Oxbridge Man.’ He would make cruel examples of them. The Edwardian upper classes tended not to be very keen on Scouting, associating it negatively with middle-class social crusade-ism. For one officer in *At Suvla Bay*, his lack of scouting prowess and strength would have serious repercussions: “This particular young lieutenant was left on Lemnos sick. [...] He recovered to some extent of the fever, and joined us one day at Suvla. [...] I remember him now, pale and sickly, with the fever still hanging on him, and dark, sunken eyes. [...] the young officer, coming fresh to the place,

did not know where the British lines ended and the Turks' began, and he marched his squads into that bit of No Man's Land beyond the machine-gun near ‘Jefferson's Post,’ and was either shot or taken prisoner.”²¹

Rather than idolize officers, Hargrave found a role model initially in “the old soldier” of Empire named Hawk. Hawk, he wrote, “knew all the ins and outs of army life. [...] although he had the reputation of a bold, bad black guard, he never led any one else on the ‘wrong trail,’ and his advice to young soldiers in the barrack-rooms was wonderfully clear and useful.”²² Conceivably, Hargrave saw in him the ideals of Boy Scouting – strength, skills, leadership and adventure – perhaps even a glimmer of Baden-Powell himself, who had been a distinguished military man in his younger days. Like Kim, Hawk “never missed noticing small things.” He was further “an extraordinary specimen of virile manhood.” But while Hawk would survive Suvla Bay, he did not do so gracefully. By the end of the battle, Hargrave would associate him with disillusionment. When the final retreat was called, Hawk “was full of drink, and in his hurry to look after ‘things’ (mostly bottles) he lost some of his own kit and my field-glasses. [...] Every now and then he loomed up like some great khaki-clad gorilla, only to fade away again to the secret hiding-place of a bottle.”²³

With Hawk's demise, Hargrave witnessed the fading of the Boy Scouts' masculine ideal. By then he had come to admire their Turkish foes “who were *born* scouts.” These real men had “the graceful gait of those accustomed to the outdoor life.” As such, they knew instinctively how to keep silent, still and their heads down under pressure and how to modify their gear to suit present conditions. They were excellent navigators and never got lost. In stark contrast, Hargrave “[remembered] a lot of fresh [British] men landing in high spirits and

keen to get up to the fighting zone. They marched along in fours and whistled and sang; but the Turks in the hills soon spotted them and landed a shell in the middle of them.”²⁴ Before one can fight, he asserted, one must first survive.

Hargrave spotted such qualities in men not from England, but the Empire at-large. Among them was a pair of Australian sharpshooters that had stumbled across a lost lance corporal, or ‘lance-jack’ from Hargrave's unit. While the lance-jack (“a young lad of the middle-class, with a fairly good education”) was “a weedy specimen” whom Hargrave “doubted whether he could pull through if escape should mean a fight with Nature for food and water and life itself,” the Australians were “well-built men, one short and the other tall, with great rough hands, sunburnt faces, and bare arms.” In this situation, they brandished rifles, but it was implied that they would have been fine without them (quoting Hargrave, in turn, quoting one of the Australians): “we jist done it fer a bit of sport. Rightly we don't carry a rifle; we belong to the bridge-buildin' section. We've only borrowed these rifles from the Cycle Corps.” Suggestive of their natural or even primal scout instincts, Hargrave restated from the pocket-book, which he kept during the war: “The Australians have the keen eye, quick ear and silent tongue which evolves in the bushman and those who have faced starvation and the constant risk of sudden death, who have lived a hard life on the hard ground, like the animals of the wild and come through. Fine fellows.”²⁵ It is not difficult to imagine which type of man, as embodied by the lance corporal or the Australians, Hargrave preferred.

Another informative encounter occurred between Hargrave and the Indian Pack-mule Corps. Of his Oriental Others, he thought very highly: “a beautifully calm race, the Hindus. They did wonderful work at Suvla Bay. Up

and down, up and down, hour after hour they worked steadily on. [...] Day and night these splendidly built Easterns kept up the supply.” True, this comment was somewhat patronizing with ‘beautiful’ alluding to a feminine quality. But Hargrave tempered it, recalling “one man who had his left leg blown off by shrapnel sitting on a rock smoking a cigarette and great tears rolling down his cheeks. But he said no word. Not a groan or a cry of pain.”²⁶ This Indian was not only a proverbial badass. He expressed a virtue Hargrave believed Britain’s men shamefully did not possess: the ability to stay silent under duress. He thus also epitomized Hargrave’s revised notion of masculine heroism.

‘Great Strength’ and alternative masculinities

After *At Suvla Bay*, Hargrave began to settle, but the place on which he would settle would not be with the Boy Scouts. Instead, he capitalized on his expanding profile within and outside of this community. For the next few years, he continued to write scouting texts that emphasized survival techniques over military skills, several of which would appear in German, French, Dutch and Czech.²⁷ He further launched a modestly successful career as a ‘middlebrow’ novelist and socio-political pundit that would extend into the 1930s. Baden-Powell’s appointment of Hargrave as the Commissioner for Woodcraft and Camping in 1917 has largely been viewed as an attempt at appeasement. But with its strong, often opposing views, his 1919 book *The Great War*

Brings It Home proved to be a step too far and signaled a cutoff point for Hargrave’s involvement in the mainstream movement. By the 1930s, he would largely give up any form of scouting, as he embraced his newfound calling as a socio-political activist advocating initially international peace through cultural diversity and inclusion, and later, a ‘third-way’ economic philosophy called Social Credit.²⁸

At Suvla Bay was the springboard for these developments. Traces of it manifested in the movement he founded in 1920 and for which he is most known today – the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. ‘Kibbo Kift’ reputedly meant ‘great strength’ in Old Kentish, a point not lost on Hargrave. The program of camping activities, cultural pursuits, education schemes and intellectual advancement he envisaged embraced a form of patriotism that differed from the Boy Scouts, yet was still strong and normatively masculine. This patriotism was (borrowing from Samuel Hynes) “without the [British imperial] flags and the martial music, but not without values.” Men could still “be tough, stoical, and humorous under stress, they [could] be loyal to each other, they [could] feel pity, and they [could] perform their [...] duties faithfully and with skill.”²⁹ The Kindred, moreover, would lead by example and not impose their values by force, but rather, osmosis. The group’s strong presence in British interwar intellectual life – suffragette Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, sexologist Havelock Ellis, evolutionary biologist Julian Huxley and writer H. G. Wells being only a few of the illustrious individuals associated

Emmeline Pethick Lawrence (1867-1954)



A leading British women’s rights activist. She campaigned on behalf of a host of organizations, such as the Espérance Club, Women’s Social and Political Union, and

the United Suffragists, in addition to Hargrave’s Kibbo Kift group and founding the periodical *Votes for Women*. In solidarity with Emmeline, her husband Fredrick notably also adopted the name Pethick-Lawrence, a combination of their last names.

with the Kibbo Kift – testifies to the success of this approach.

An intriguing facet of the Kibbo Kift was its commitment to coeducation for men and women. Fearing scouting would turn girls (quoting Rose Kerr, a key figure in the early Guiding movement) into “a sort of Amazon Cadet Corps” prone to suicidal tendencies and bodily indecency, Baden-Powell separated them and their curriculum from that of the boys by making girls ‘Guides’ instead of Scouts. In seeming defiance, Hargrave dedicated *At Suvla Bay* to Minobi, otherwise known as Ruth Clark and later, his first wife.³⁰ A poem accompanied it that, like the rest of the book, was just the sort of violence and grieved impotence the Scouting leadership did not want women to see. This act subsequently symbolized his admittance of her into his sphere. And later, they would unite through the Kindred to pursue national regeneration together. Thus, what the book offers us is something more ambiguous than a glowing affirmation or conversely, condemnation of British masculinity. While little differentiates the soldier and scout in the opening illustration, their backs are turned and they are ready for action, poised to redraw the line between boys and men. ///

Hargrave as the leader of the Kibbo Kift in the 1930s



Bron: Hargrave, Personal Papers, b. 45, Papers of Alan Yates, “Die Artgenossen Kibbo Kift...”

Hana Qugana (1987) is promovendus aan het University College London (UCL), waar ze Britse intellectuele geschiedenis in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw onderzoekt. Ze werkt momenteel aan haar proefschrift getiteld “The Cultural Politics of Englishness: John Hargrave, the Kibbo Kift and Social Credit, 1920-1939.”

Contact: h.qugana.11@ucl.ac.uk

The author kindly acknowledges the Kibbo Kift Foundation, John Hargrave’s literary executor Chris Judge Smith and copyright holder Adrian Bates for granting permission to use the images in this article.

Notes

- ¹ John Gordon Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay: Being the notes and sketches of scenes, characters and adventures of the Dardanelles Campaign*. London, 1916, p. 157. The book successfully launched Hargrave's writing career.
- ² George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*. Oxford and New York, p. 3.
- ³ Paul Ward, *Britishness since 1870*. London, 2004, p. 38. Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*, The Original 1908 Edition, ed. Elleke Boehmer. Oxford and New York, 2005, pp. 276 and 288.
- ⁴ Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature, and Conservatism in Inter-war Britain*, 2nd Reprinting. London and New York, 2001, p. 7. A common narrative of gender in the Victorian and Edwardian eras separates men and women into separate public and private spheres; for a recent discussion on its merits, see Ward, *Britishness...*, pp. 37-53.
- ⁵ e.g. see London School of Economics (LSE) Archives, The Personal Papers of John Gordon Hargrave, Box 49, miscellaneous correspondence, note from Bill Tacey to Hargrave's second wife Diana, 30/04/1990, on copy of Ferdinand Mount, "Churchill Capsized: On the anniversary of Gallipoli, Ferdinand Mount re-examines a fatally misjudged campaign," in: *The Spectator* (14/04/1990), pp. 8-11.
- ⁶ [Records, "HARGRAVE, Gordon, 1895-1926"] at the Library of the Religious Society of Friends, Friends House, London, United Kingdom. Hargrave mentioned his mother painted flowers and still-lives in a letter to the modernist poet Ezra Pound; Beinecke Library, Yale University, YCAL MSS 43 Ezra Pound Papers, Box 21, Folder 2, Letter from John Hargrave to Pound, 26/01/1935. Other accounts do not mention Hargrave's second brother Dudley. The archive from which this information comes was only catalogued in 2011; LSE Archives, Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 73, miscellaneous correspondence.
- ⁷ Reference to Hargrave's time at Hawkshead grammar school and illustration work has been made in H. F. Oxbury, 'Hargrave, John Gordon (1894-1982)', rev. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* in: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31199>. Hawkshead's records corroborate his attendance for the 1906-1907 academic year at least. Most studies give his age as fifteen when he started work, but I have opted for fourteen, as it is the age Hargrave gave himself, e.g. YCAL MSS 43 Pound Papers, b. 21, f. 2, 26/01/1935 Letter.... He reported on one exhibition of his work to his father; Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 65, Letter from Hargrave to Gordon Hargrave, 12/[?]/1912.
- ⁸ Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 65, correspondence between Hargrave, Ernest Thompson Seton and Otto Kyllmann, letters between 15/11/1919 and 23/04/1922.
- ⁹ Paul Wilkinson, "English youth movements, 1908-30," in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4 (April 1969) 2, pp. 3-23, p. 3; Elleke Boehmer, "Introduction," in: Baden-Powell, *Scouting...*, pp. xi-xvii.
- ¹⁰ Baden-Powell, *Scouting...*, p. 317. For an interesting recent discussion on the Boy Scouts and race in the British colonies, see Timothy H. Parsons, *Race, Resistance and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa*. Athens, Ohio, 2004. Jay Winter and more recently, Helen Jones have discussed prewar 'fitness for military service'; e.g. Jones, *Health and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain*. New York, 2013.
- ¹¹ Smith, *John...*, 1995. His Army papers list his height; Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 47.
- ¹² Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 47, 1916 "Buckinghamshire Corps de Guides" booklet. Contrary to most accounts of his life and work, Hargrave's own recollections suggest his service in a non-combatant capacity was more a result of the disorganized situation, than of him asserting any Quaker beliefs; see Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 3-4.
- ¹³ Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 47, Army papers; Wilkinson, "English..." pp. 15 and 19. Hargrave gave these casualty figures in *At Suvla Bay*. As an indication, each Field Ambulance was composed of 10 officers and 224 men split into three sections. His section had sixty-five men in total.
- ¹⁴ Matthew de Abaitua, *The Art of Camping: The History and Practice of Sleeping Under the Stars*. London and New York, 2011, p. 100. A chapter in my forthcoming doctoral thesis discusses how he appropriated aspects of non-Western cultures and thought for the purpose of reconfiguring Englishness corresponding to his emergent cosmopolitan worldview.
- ¹⁵ Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 73, miscellaneous correspondence, Letter from Kyllmann to (then) Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, 26/07/1957.
- ¹⁶ Hargrave Personal Papers, b. 65, miscellaneous correspondence, Letter from Hargrave to Kyllmann, 20/10/1915; Hargrave, *At...*, p. 1; Baden-Powell, *Scouting...*, p. 15.
- ¹⁷ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 15, 1-2 and 162.
- ¹⁸ Samuel Hynes, *The Auden Generation*. London, 1992, pp. 22-23; Baden-Powell, *Scouting...*, 283; Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 181.
- ¹⁹ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 61 and 87.
- ²⁰ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 180, 4 and 19.
- ²¹ Paul R. Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men: British Masculinity and the Undergraduate Experience, 1850-1920*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2005. Hargrave, *At...*, pp.99-104.
- ²² Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 29. The British Armed Forces were racially integrated at this point, largely owing to the realities of imperial governance. On the other hand, regiments during the First World War were commonly composed of people from the same region, so there would not have been a lot of integrated ones in practice. It is, moreover, unclear whether Hawk was black-skinned or if, by the term, Hargrave merely meant to indicate him as a social Other. A member of Hargrave's Kibbo Kift group in the 1920s named C. S. Dixon also went by the name Hawk, but there is no evidence that this was the same man.
- ²³ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 30, 55 and 173.
- ²⁴ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 157, 152 and 159.
- ²⁵ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 152-155.
- ²⁶ Hargrave, *At...*, pp. 128-130.
- ²⁷ Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence and ecologist campaigner and youth leader Rolf Gardiner (1902-1971) were the ones primarily responsible for translating Hargrave's works into German. His books in translation included *The Wigwam Papers* (1916), *The Totem Talks* (1918), *Tribal Training* (1919), and *The Boys' Book of Signs and Symbols* (1920).
- ²⁸ For more on Hargrave's social credit encounter, please see John L. Finlay, *Social Credit: The English Origins*. Montreal and London, 1972. Social Credit was one of many alternative economic ideologies popularized between the wars. Originally conceived by Scottish engineer-turned-amateur economist C.H. Douglas, it attributed poverty to a discrepancy he discovered between production costs and employee wages during the First World War. Essentially it argued workers did not earn enough to pay for the things they made, let alone build credit. As a Social Creditor, Hargrave advocated for economic controls on purchasing power (i.e. price adjustments) monitored by a governing body and a dividend to be paid out to every individual to supplement their earnings.
- ²⁹ Hynes, *The Auden...*, pp. 22-23.
- ³⁰ At best, the term 'guides' conveyed the exotic strength of "famous corps of Guides in India." But, more often than not, it conceded to their supposedly domesticated nature; Simon Featherstone, "Reviving England," in *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English Identity*. Edinburgh, 2009, pp. 28-46. Ruth Clark (1899-1964) was an early figure in the Campfire Girls, a woodcraft-scouting group. She is best known for her 1919 *Camp-Fire Training for Girls*, the first woodcraft book for girls. As such, it complimented Hargrave's early work. It also notably featured a foreword by Robert Baden-Powell's wife Olave.

Richtlijnen voor auteurs

Een artikel voor *Historica* bevat:

- een titel, ondertitel, een korte *lead* (pakkende introductie die aan het artikel voorafgaat) en enige tussenkopjes.
- eindnoten (maximaal twintig voor een artikel van 3400 woorden, maximaal vijftientig voor een artikel van 4250 woorden, maximaal dertig voor een artikel van 5200 woorden).
- titelbeschrijving boek: Elsbeth Etty, *Liefde is heel het leven niet. Henriette Roland Holst 1869-1952*. Meppel, 1992.
- titelbeschrijving artikel: R. Dekker, 'Vrouwen in middeleeuwen en vroegmodern Nederland', in: G. Duby en M. Perrot, *Geschiedenis van de vrouw III. Van renaissance tot de moderne tijd*. Amsterdam, 1992, pp. 415-443.
- titelbeschrijving archiefstuk: eerst bewaarplaats, dan benaming van het archiefbestand. Bv. Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussel, Regie voor Telegrafie en Telefonie.
- bij herhalingen: auteursnaam of archiefbestand, eerste woorden boek of titel, pp. X-X. Bv. R. Dekker, 'Vrouwen in middeleeuwen en ...', pp. 415-443.
- enige personalia van de auteur (een of twee zinnen, met daarin o.a. vermeld naam, functie, geboortjaar), adres en e-mailadres van de auteur.
- illustraties met onderschriften en bronvermelding;
- digitaal aangeleverde illustraties bij voorkeur wegschrijven als tiff-bestand en gescanned op minimaal 300 dpi. Bij een artikel van 3400 woorden worden vier illustraties aangeleverd, bij 4250 woorden vijf illustraties en bij 5200 woorden zes illustraties.
- de officiële spelling (zie Woordenlijst Nederlandse Taal).
- een artikel van zes pagina's bevat maximaal 5200 woorden, een artikel van vijf pagina's bevat maximaal 4250 woorden een artikel van vier pagina's 3400 woorden, een recensie (één pagina) 850 woorden.
- citaten staan tussen dubbele aanhalingstekens ("en"), in andere gevallen worden enkele aanhalingstekens (' en ') gebruikt.

Aanlevering van kopij:

- Per e-mail sturen naar het redactieadres: historica@gendersgeschiedenis.nl.

Deadlines:

- nummer 1: 1 oktober
- nummer 2: 1 februari
- nummer 3: 1 juni

Remembering the visits of British soldiers to brothels during the Great War

‘Sexing up the First World War Centenary’

In June 2014, I spoke at the UCL Lunch Hour Lecture series on the visits of British soldiers to *maisons tolérées*, or licenced brothels, in the First World War. My lecture uncovered soldiers’ reasons for visiting brothels, their reactions to them and the prostitutes, and how they dealt with the potential consequences: venereal disease. I also discussed how it is important to remember this subject as part of the Centenary, since it questions some of today’s dominant narratives of the First World War.

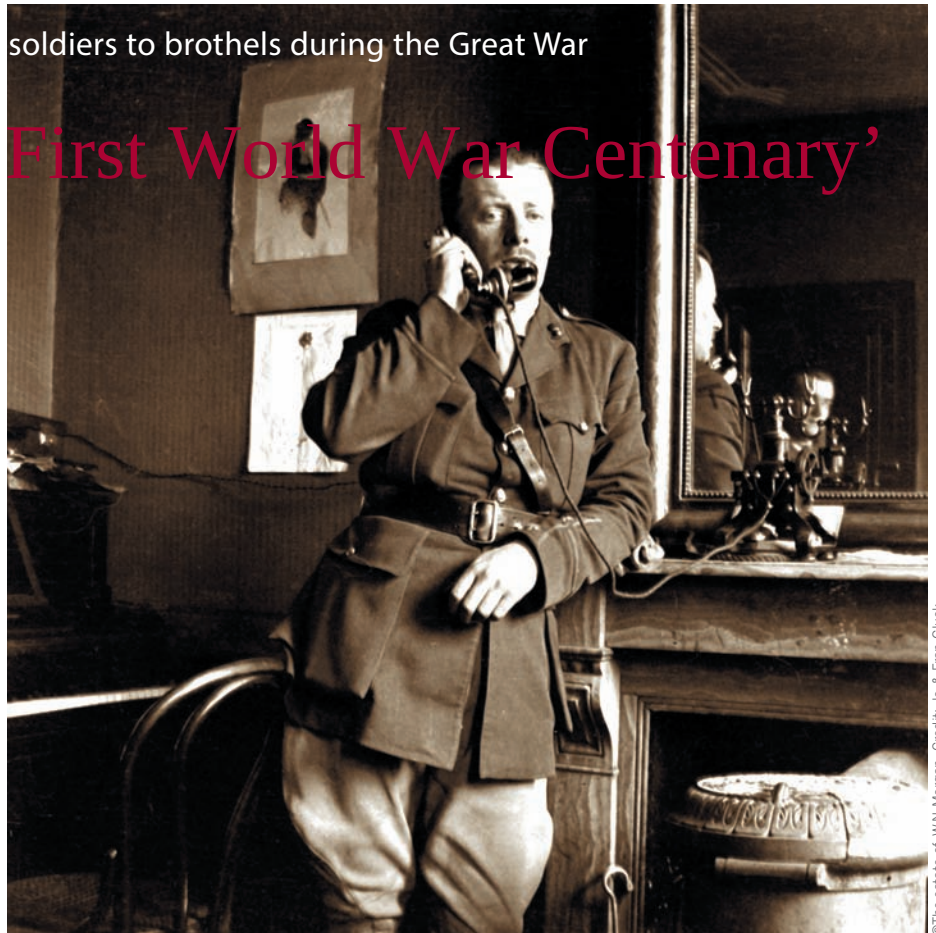
/ Clare Makepeace /

As a cultural historian of war, gender is absolutely crucial to my work. I think it is practically impossible to write a history of war without some consideration of gender, because war is constructed through gender and gender is constructed through war. For example, many societies, past and present, have developed concepts of masculinity that induce and motivate men to fight. Equally, conceptions of manhood have been, and often still are, linked to performance in battle.¹

In British history, there is now a plethora of studies that explore the extent to which the First World War changed the men who fought in it, and how it altered theirs and others’ conceptions of what it meant to be a man at this time.²

Warfare also offers historians something else. It does not just provide us with an opportunity to look at how war changes men; it also gives us a chance to find out much more about who these men were in the first place. During the First World War, many men wrote about their daily lives in a way that they never had before, and never would again. Their physical separation from loved ones necessitated the writing of letters home. Their extraordinary experiences meant some exceptionally kept a diary. Having been part of such a momentous historical event encouraged a number to write a memoir on their wartime service, or record an oral history afterwards.

Fighting on the Western Front also resulted in a handful of these men writing about one particular aspect of their lives that, otherwise, is extremely elusive in any other primary historical material. Rarely can we hear the voice of the prostitute’s punter in any period of British history. Rarely has he recorded his experience of the brothel visit. But the dislocat-



British lieutenant William Noel Morgan makes a phone call from inside a brothel.

ing circumstances of the First World War provided a handful of British men with an excuse or a reason to write about these visits.

Their writings were the focus of my recent UCL Lunch Hour Lecture, hosted at The Guardian offices in London, to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War.

Licensed brothels in France, or *maisons tolérées*, had been placed in bounds (*ed. allowed*) to British soldiers at the start of the war, and remained so until March 1918.³

Lord Kitchener, Britain’s Secretary of State for War, had reservations about such liberal measures. He provided each man with a leaflet offering him some homely advice on the matter. In it, Kitchener reminded men that the honour of the British Army depended on their conduct, and advised them of how their duty could not be done unless their health was “sound”. “So keep constantly on your guard against any excesses”. He warned: “In this new experience you may find temptations both in wine and women. You must entirely resist both temptations, and, while treating all women with perfect courtesy, you should avoid any intimacy.”⁴

According to one of the recipients, Private Frank Richards, a reservist soldier who had been called up the day after war broke out, little notice was taken of Kitchener’s words.

Richards recalled in his memoir how the guidance “may as well have not been issued for all the notice we took”.⁵

The available evidence suggests Richards’ summary of his compatriots’ behaviour was a fair one. Statistics indicate that at least a significant minority of British soldiers indulged in brothel visits during the war. Venereal disease rates are typically drawn upon to offer some indication of sexual activity. In the British Army, during the Great War, 400,000 cases were treated. For a snap shot of the numbers actually purchasing sex, we can turn to a medical history of the First World War. The history details how British medical authorities were involved in an experiment in Le Havre to limit rates of infection and, as a result, they surveyed one street in the town over a fifty-seven week period. They recorded 171,000 men attending the brothels there.⁶

My UCL Lunch Hour Lecture explored the brothel visit at three stages in order to understand what it meant to be a British man in the First World War.

Motivations for visiting *maisons tolérées*

The first stage I looked at was soldiers’ reasons for visiting a brothel. A prominent motive was that men considered regular intercourse neces-

sary for their health. This idea had been dominant in the Victorian era, creating a sexual double standard for men and women. It was still widespread during the war. Private Stephen Graham recorded in his memoir, written in 1919, that “sexual intercourse was regarded as a physical necessity for the men”.⁷ His view was supported by other organisations. The Report of the Cairo Purification Committee (a civil–military body appointed to recommend ways to reduce VD among troops) noted “the entirely erroneous idea... still current that sexual intercourse is necessary to health”.⁸

Other men linked their behaviour specifically to the conditions of war. For some, having intercourse was part and parcel of fighting. As Lieutenant R. Graham Dixon, who spent the final year of hostilities on the Western Front, wrote in his memoir “We were not monks, but fighting soldiers and extraordinarily fit ... certainly with an abundance of physical energy ... and if bought love is no substitute for the real thing, it at any rate seemed better than nothing. And in any case it worked off steam!”⁹

Other soldiers similarly framed their indulgences within the conditions of war, but they visited the brothels more as a refuge from the slaughter of the trenches and imminent death. The war poet, Captain Robert Graves recorded how this particular life experience was more urgent for some: “There were no restraints in France; these boys had money to spend and knew that they stood a good chance of being killed within a few weeks anyhow. They did not want to die virgins”.¹⁰

Many more men, who speak of this subject in their testimonies, described how they resisted this encouragement. Given the taboo nature of this behaviour, one probably should expect little reticence from men in avowing to their continence and their reasons for abstaining were varied, from having a more urgent need for food and sleep to staying faithful to their wives to suspecting these women were spies.¹¹ These men provide a diverse range of explanations, unlike those men who indulged, for whom there were just a few acceptable justifications available to explain their actions.

Extramarital virility, therefore, was not an unacceptable part of being a British man, but neither was it essential.

Inside the red and blue lamps

My lecture then turned to explore soldiers’ reactions to the brothels, and how these visits



varied between different groups of men. I played to the audience an extract of one of the nine oral histories I have used to inform my research.

I chose an interview with Private Sidney Albert Amatt, recorded in 1985 by the Imperial War Museum. Amatt served on the Western Front during 1916 and 1917. His interview is typical of other men who discuss brothel visits. Amatt drifts into a tale and then checks as to the appropriateness of the subject, posing the question to his female interviewer: “Do you want me to go on?” She encourages him, so Amatt continues to describe his time at “The Garden of Eden”. He paints the scene that greeted him. There was a man seated at the door, whom one had to pay to enter, and inside was a bar with plenty of troops. Amatt spoke of there being “a dozen girls... with hardly anything on and high heeled shoes. And they had little what they called chemises then. And they were sitting about on the troops’ knees in all sorts of places”. If a man “fancied any girl” he had to buy her a drink, pay the madame, take the girl upstairs, and then pay the girl as well. For Amatt, all he could afford was “a drink and a look round” before he came back out.¹²

This is what a licensed brothel in a port town was like. Here professional prostitutes worked under a madame and were subject to regular medical inspections. By 1917, there were at least 137 such establishments spread across 35 towns in France.¹³

They were not equally open to every soldier in the British Expeditionary Force. ‘Red lamps’ accommodated other ranks; the more luxurious ‘blue lamps’ were reserved for officers. According to the professional soldier Brigadier-General Frank Crozier, British officers were actually more ready to bed the prostitutes of their German enemy than share the same women with their own men. They took over the high-class prostitutes of the German Army at the close of the war.¹⁴

It was also considered more acceptable for married men to visit the brothel. Lance Corporal Bert Chaney, writing fifty years after the Armistice, remembered how, as an eighteen year old, he was told that brothels “were not for young lads like me, but for married men who were missing their wives”.¹⁵ This may seem perverse to us now but this thinking reflects the idea that intercourse was a physical necessity for men. These men had become accustomed to sex in the marital bed

For 75 years, the negatives of the photos in this article were kept by William Noel Morgan in a biscuit tin and were discovered only a few years ago by Lieutenant Morgan’s granddaughter and her husband. They are believed to be the only photographs to surface of British officers inside a “blue lamp” during the First World War.



Unknown French woman (most likely a prostitute) inside a "blue lamp" - a brothel reserved for officers

and now, deprived of this regular satisfaction, the brothel was regarded as an acceptable alternative.

Meanwhile, British, dominion (*ed. from Australia, New Zealand and Canada*) and colonial soldiers all had differing levels of access to prostitutes. Dominion soldiers were paid more than their British counterparts and so got the younger prostitutes. Colonial soldiers and labourers, meanwhile, were completely prohibited entry. They were ranked below the white female prostitute, suggesting the limits of even a licensed brothel as a patriarchal institution.

Dealing with the consequences: venereal disease

Finally, my lecture turned to how soldiers dealt with the potential consequences of the brothel visit: venereal disease. In 1916, one in five of all admissions of British and dominion troops to hospitals in France and Belgium was for VD.¹⁶ Venereal disease is more of a marker of extramarital behaviour than commercial sex itself, but how men reacted to VD tells us about British manhood at this time.

Both the personal testimonies of these sol-

diers, and the regulations put out by the British authorities, suggest that catching VD was not something that was considered to be wrong, but nor was it something that men readily discussed. No man in these testimonies admits to suffering from venereal disease, nor is he aware of any of his fellow soldiers being afflicted. They were confident that the disease could easily be controlled or avoided. According to Private James Dixon in his oral history, despite VD being common in the army, "you kept yourself clean", whilst Lieutenant Harold Mellersh remembered how the "Sandhurst pups"¹⁷ spoke airily of ways to avoid" it.¹⁸

Yet, this is not to say that contracting VD was unwelcome to every man. The few overt references to men infected with venereal disease in these testimonies are to those who actively courted the disease to avoid further action. Driver Rowland Myrddyn Luther observed in his memoir, written some thirty years after the Armistice, that "a great many soldiers were prepared to chance venereal disease, rather than face a return to the front... In fact contraction of such a disease seemed to be sought after, even if only to keep a man from the front during treatment".¹⁹ This be-

haviour provides an important insight into the lengths a man might go to have a respite from the carnage of the front line.

And once men were on a permanent respite from the front line, once the war had ended, did this sexual behaviour continue into peacetime? That question is hard to answer because the first-hand accounts close with the end of the war. A couple of testimonies do suggest this behaviour was confined to the extraordinary circumstances of war. Private William Holt wrote of how "the 'Red Lamps' amused and disgusted me and then faded away completely when I left the towns". Similarly, for Lieutenant Dixon "the business was compartmentalised - it was, as it were, shut off from normal human relationships, and belonged to this lunatic world of war and to nowhere else".²⁰

Sex and the centenary

It is important, as part of the First World War Centenary, to remember this aspect of the "lunatic world of war", because this subject so strongly questions some of the dominant terms in which we think of it. For example, we readily imagine soldiers going over the top, waiting in fear for that moment. We do not think of the very unidealistic or unsentimental way in which many men reacted to that prospect: they had sex with prostitutes.

Or the ideas we have about fraternisation or comradeship are suddenly thrown askew when we consider that different classes of brothels were created for British officers and British other ranks; and when we remember that British officers were more prepared to share prostitutes with their German counterparts than with their own men.

These are not the only ways in which this subject questions dominant narratives of the First World War. I started off this article by suggesting that warfare offers us an opportunity to hear voices and stories that would, otherwise, be lost. Yet, there is one voice, central to this history, but altogether absent from it: the voice of the prostitute. I do not discuss prostitutes in my lecture, nor do I write about them in my research, for the simple reason that I can find no account produced by a prostitute on what she went through during the First World War. I have only found one account, from the various trawls I have carried out in the archives, in which a soldier reflects upon what these women went through.

This account of what one particular group of prostitutes went through is harrowing to read. I have read many awful descriptions of the suffering of soldiers, the bodily pain they experienced, their emotional upheaval, but I think this account is particularly striking because it could not be further from how we imagine life in the Great War.

I ended my lecture with this account because the last thing I wanted was for my audience to assume that my silence on the prosti-

>>

tutes' experiences meant I thought of them as some sort of passive, unfeeling objects. I also ended with this passage because there is no heroism here, no bravery or compassion, and no sacrifice from the soldiers. Here we are being told about a very different type of suffering the war entailed.

In his memoir, written fifty years after the end of the war, Lance Corporal Bert Chaney wrote:

'It was said the girls, and not all were young either, were making a fortune, they had never had so many costumers before, and were completely exhausted by the end of each day. They were sent home in cabs each night as by that time most of the girls were unable to walk. In some cases, it was whispered, they could not even close their legs after the rough treatment from some of their more impatient customers.'²¹ ///



©The estate of W.N.Morgan. Credit: Jo & Fran Gluck

A British officer playing the piano in a French brothel

Dr Clare Makepeace is a Teaching Fellow at University College London and a cultural historian of warfare. She has published on masculinity in the First World War, feminism in the inter-war years and prisoners of war in the Second World War.

Contact: c.makepeace@ucl.ac.uk or <http://www.warfarehistorian.org/contact-clare-makepeace/>

Clare Makepeace's UCL Lunch Hour Lecture, 'Sex and the Somme' was recorded on the 18 June 2014, and can be watched in full here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VllvE7OdQbk&list=PL3pa6ekyhtl1BVwSARDWzZY7r7HHKGu0B>

Thanks are due to Leeds University Library for permission to reproduce the extracts held in their collections; and to the trustees of the Imperial War Museum for access to each of the copyright holders and the copyright holders' assent in using their relatives' material. While every effort has been made to contact copyright holders for the material used in this article, the author and the Imperial War Museum would be grateful for any information which might help to trace the family of Lieutenant R. Graham Dixon.

Notes

- 1 J. S. Goldstein, *Gender and War: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge, 2001, p. 252, 331.
- 2 See for example J. Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain*. Basingstoke, 2009; J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male. Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*. London, 1999.
- 3 The government placed brothels out of bounds following mounting domestic pressure; see K. Craig Gibson, 'Sex and Soldiering in France and Flanders: The British Expeditionary Force along the Western Front, 1914–1919', in: *International History Review*, 23 (2001), p. 544.
- 4 G. Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener, volume 3*. New York, 2007, pp. 26–7.
- 5 F. Richards, *Old Soldiers Never Die*. London, 1933, p. 11.
- 6 L.W. Harrison, 'Venereal Diseases', in: W.G. Macpherson (ed.), *History of the Great War Based on Official Documents: Medical Services Diseases of the War, volume II*. London, 1923, p. 118, 125.
- 7 S. Graham, *A Private in the Guards*. London, 1919, p. 256.
- 8 The National Archives, London (TNA), FO 141/466/2 – Part I, Report of the Cairo Purification Committee, Cairo, 1916, p. 14.
- 9 Imperial War Museum (IWM) 92/36/1, R. G. Dixon, 'The Wheels of Darkness', p. 58.
- 10 R. Graves, *Goodbye to All That*. London, 2000, p. 195.
- 11 For these explanations and more, see Bourke, *Dismembering...*, pp. 160–161.
- 12 IWM Sound Archive (SA) 9168/28/5, interview with S. A. Amatt, 1985.
- 13 M. Harrison, 'The British Army and the Problem of Venereal Disease in France and Egypt during the First World War', in: *Medical History XXXIX* (1995), p. 142.
- 14 F. P. Crozier, *A Brass Hat in No Man's Land*. London, 1930, p. 236.
- 15 Liddle Collection, Leeds (LIDDLE)/WW1/GS/0289, Lance Corporal A. Chaney, p. 22.
- 16 P. Simkins, 'Soldiers and civilians: billeting in Britain and France', in: I. F. W. Beckett and K. Simpson *A Nation in Arms. The British Army in the First World War*. Barnsley, 2004, p. 185.
- 17 *Ed. at the time of WW1 Sandhurst is the prestigious Royal Military College for training infantry and cavalry officers, located south-west of London*.
- 18 IWM SA 11047/4, interview with J. Dixon, 1989; H. E. L. Mellersh, *Schoolboy into War*. London, 1978, p. 58.
- 19 IWM 87/8/1, R. M. Luther, 'The Poppies are Blood Red', p. 38.
- 20 W. Holt, *I Haven't Unpacked Yet: An Autobiography*, London, 1939, pp. 72–3; IWM 92/36/1, Dixon, p. 58.
- 21 LIDDLE/WW1/GS/0289, A. Chaney, p.22.



© Richard Storch

Clare Makepeace giving her UCL Lunch Hour Lecture, June 2014

Genderview Michael Roper

Historians should see the two spheres of home and trench together

Michael Roper (1959) is professor at the Department of Sociology at the University of Essex. He was born in Australia and studied history at the University of Melbourne and Monash University before coming to Great Britain on a Commonwealth Scholarship. His interest in the historical study of masculinity resulted in a PhD project studying masculinity and management culture in Britain after 1945, which was published as *Masculinity and the British organization man since 1945* (1994). Together with John Tosh, he is co-editor of *Manful assertions: masculinities in Britain since 1800* (1991). Although gender and specifically masculinity is still present in his research, his focus has moved towards war, psychoanalysis, emotion and the history of subjectivity.

/ Rose Spijkerman¹ /

T*The secret battle. Emotional survival in the Great War* (2009) is a good example of these different interests, as it examines the role of the home, domesticity and mother-son relationships, as well as the emotional and psychological strains of the First World War in the life of British soldiers on the Western Front.² War continues to play a role in his current research: “The generation between’: growing up in the aftermath of war, Britain 1918-1939’. This project investigates the various ways in which the First World War influenced the lives of children born in the 1920s.

In deze rubriek brengt *Historica* een onderzoeker voor het voetlicht die vanuit haar of zijn discipline reflecteert op de (mogelijke) meerwaarde om te werken vanuit een genderperspectief. Op de *Historica*-pagina van de website van de Vereniging voor Gendergeschiedenis (VVG) kunnen reacties op deze rubriek worden gepost. Op die manier willen *Historica* en de VVG actief het wetenschappelijke én publieke debat rond genderonderzoek stimuleren.



© Marjolijn Van Bavel

In the preface of *The secret battle* you mention a direct connection with the First World War in your family, which has inspired you to investigate the emotional experience and impact of the war. Can you explain this personal attachment?

My grandfather was someone who had a prominent role in my childhood, and whom I have very positive memories of. During the war he served in Gallipoli and Palestine and he was someone who did talk about the war. From quite a young age he told me graphic stories about the First World War which were upsetting to a child and would not be seen as appropriate now for a boy who is seven or eight. When I was about ten I went with him to a reunion on ANZAC day (originally a national day of remembrance of the First World

War to honour the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, held on the 25th of April). One of his mates asked if I was going to join the army and my grandfather responded: ‘The army? Ruddy Salvation Army more like.’ It felt like an insult, that I was not very hard in his view and could never be a soldier like him. That hurt of course, but his views and stories also turned me away from war. This is actually something in the book which is an example of the split legacy of my grandfather. In the 1980s I interviewed my grandfather and it is embarrassing, because he knew much about his experiences in the war, he did a lot of historical reading and I was so ignorant in the interview. I was quite anti-war and although interested in my position, he was more divided. These experiences with my grandfather were an important con-

>>

nection to my interest in the First World War.

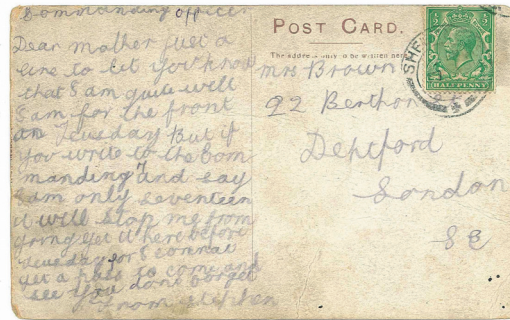
Why did you at a certain point start investigating and writing about the war?

I have done quite a bit of thinking on this topic. Sometimes you come back to experiences later in life that were part of your earlier life, but you do not think of them historically at that time. In the background, there was my personal connection to the war, and intellectually I have moved around within the work I was doing on masculinity. I started to think more and more about our understandings of gender and what that meant to subjectivity. In the late 1990s my work started to move towards psychoanalysis, with regard to both the relations between psychoanalysis and history, embracing both the history of psychoanalysis in Britain, and the use of psychoanalytic concepts within historical and social research. I did a course on methodology and theory of psychoanalysis which encouraged me to think about how I could use those clinical techniques in historical research. Psychoanalysis, through its involvement with the unconscious effects of emotional experience has helped me for example with the methodological problem of how to discern states of mind from letters, diaries and memoirs. Although still thinking about masculinity, gender has been turned further into the background and subjectivity and psychoanalysis has come to the fore.

My interest was also related to the discourse on trauma. Elaine Showalter has written a beautiful chapter in *The female malady* (1985) on shellshock. I read this and got really engaged, because it is about the idea that shellshock was emasculating, a form of masculine complaint against the war.³ The trauma discourse has become much more present in academic circles, and when you add that to my interest in psychoanalysis, you begin to see your own past in a different way. I began to think about my grandfather again. He was someone with a short temper, often cross about politics and other things. He had a volatile temper and could suddenly explode, which was perhaps a sign of post traumatic behaviour. As a grandson, rather close to my grandfather, it felt I could understand his situation. In middle age you start to look back, and I think that this study is also influenced by becoming a parent and my own experiences of family life. Hence, this was one of those moments where something which what was part of my formation as a person related to my research.

When you opted for a PhD, you never thought of doing research on the First World War?

No, my PhD was about masculinity and management, which was about my father's generation, the culture I grew up with. I asked these men the same questions as you ask me now: how did you get into management, explain what happened to you, etc. Although there are



Bron: Papers of S.E. Brown, Dep. of Documents, Imperial War Museum, 89/7/1

A postcard S.E. Brown sent to his mother as he was about to embark for France. Brown was killed at Ypres in May 1915.

differences, it is similar in the sense that the generation of my father formed the basis for my first book, and the generation of my grandfather the foundation for the book on the First World War.

The preface and epilogue of your book are quite personal, with stories about your grandparents, your children and yourself. Why did you want to incorporate your own life into the book?

The preface and epilogue are personal, but the main part of the book has no references to my own life. I wanted the reader to have a frame from which to view my research, but I did not want that frame to dictate the terms of the book. I wanted people to draw their own judgements about the connection between what I tell them about the war in my family, and what they deduce about the war in my book. Another point is that the book is about children, about very young adults. So with regard to my own position, both now and in the past, my personal experiences as a young boy and adolescent are on the edges of the book. Besides, I do not think it is always satisfacto-

ry when historians write introductions where they only draw intellectual connections. I did want people to form an opinion as to where I came from, I did not want to hide myself. But at the same time I did not want to write myself into the main narrative.

In what way did this personal aspect influence your research on the First World War, especially because there are so many emotions involved?

I suppose I would think about a personal attachment as a starting point, rather than a finishing point. These connections are important for any historian to investigate in themselves. Actually for the historian of emotion, it is quite important that you think about what your attachment is to your project. I will say something that I expect many of your readers will not fully agree with, but I will say it anyway: I think that sometimes history of emotion can be too scrupulous, especially about neutrality with regard to the sources. Perhaps because of the difficulty that there might be a potential connection between the historian's emotion, and the emotions that are the subject of historical research. And what do we do? We try to neutralize it by saying: 'We cannot really know too much about what people felt in the past. We can really only know what they said they felt, or we can track the history of social codes about how people should feel. But we cannot possibly say anything about emotional experiences, that is too hard.' The work on the history of emotion often just portrays what people said they felt and what they were supposed to feel, but unfortunately does not want to make a judgement any further than that.

But don't you have to detach yourself at some point? Particularly because of the dreadful stories that are part of this research. How does that determine your approach?

I agree, that is true. But I would hope that detaching oneself is a process that comes from reflection, rather than chopping off all emotion. Whereas my sense is, that some historians just do not want to approach their own feelings, because then it becomes too easy to dismiss the history of emotion as nothing



(2009)

more than subjective. Within the history of emotions, the scrupulousness about the historian's emotions seems to be particularly marked. But you are right, you do at some point have to detach, and paradoxically, in my view, one does that by thinking about the nature of one's attachment to the topic and material. By examining: what emotions are you tapped into, which ones you can manage and why these particular emotions interest you. Asking yourself questions about what you are looking for, what you are sensitized to, with whom you identify and what kind of empathy you feel. We need a methodology for how we think about a personal attachment rather than just putting away such attachment into a box and professing a supposedly neutral stance.

The emotional effects of the war on soldiers are very present in *The secret battle*. Does this relate to your own attachment and the questions you asked yourself?

The subject of the First World War can be difficult with unhappy endings, letters that suddenly stop because men died or when the correspondence is about somebody's death. What does that do to you? Maybe it is slightly odd that I should find this rather unhappy correspondence interesting. I did feel quite upset sometimes, but that was not a problem. I have never read documents that were so vivid and so moving. There is directness in many of the letters that historians working with less extreme events and circumstances perhaps do not encounter.

Furthermore, you focus mainly on the relationships between the soldiers and their families. Where does your interest in this particular theme come from?

I did a Master in Gender History in Essex in the mid-eighties with Leonore Davidoff,⁴ and her view was: if you think about gender in 'a relational way', you have to think about both men and women. When I started working on the First World War in the early 2000s, I noticed that historians in this field did not do that. There are many studies about the women's movement and patriotism during the war, but there is not a relational approach with a focus on the interaction between men and women in families. I found this very fascinating. If you read letters and try to think about relationships between families, the dialogue between mothers and their sons, that is what a Gender History approach encourages you to do.

Was the relation between soldiers and their mothers something you noticed in the sources?

Yes, the sources very clearly displayed a strong connection between soldiers and their mothers. I had been working on a particular management thinker who kept the most won-

derful collection of materials of the self: diaries he wrote, journals of journeys he made and so forth. He was a First World War veteran and he left a collection of personal accounts about the war, starting in the war itself and including a succession of memoirs written from the 1950s almost until his death in the 1980s. Part of the collection is his letters to his family. There were many more letters to his mother than to his father. I found this contrast rather puzzling! My first reason to go to the Imperial War Museum in London was to have a look at the collection and see if this pattern was common. The correspondence between soldiers and their mothers did indeed expose their strong relationship.

What do you think is the value of a familial perspective on the experiences of World War I soldiers?

In the British context there are not many studies with this perspective. The relational approach to gender allowed me to look at military history in a different way. Although a huge amount of work has been done on the First World War in Britain, much of it is still not adopting a relational perspective. It is often a more traditional women's history approach, adopting the idea that gender boundaries could be changed by the war and that roles are not set. Historians often think only of women's contribution in public roles during the war, as nurses or munitions workers for example. In my opinion, this is actually a thirty year old historiography. There is not so much written about women in a domestic con-

text, and the links of those domestic contexts to the warfront. A relational approach on gender can bring new perspectives to the men on the battlefield. Historians should see the two spheres of home and trench together.

At the same time in Military History, there is a whole masculine subtext about war being a men's history, which means there is resistance to thinking about women. I tried to stir up things in Military History: 'Look at all those women, supporting the war effort and the British army, and playing a major role in emotional survival.' It was not just morale, it was food as well. Much of the immense scale of parcels that were sent to the warfront were organized by women.

And there is of course domesticity at the front and domesticity between the men there. Life on the front was full of deprivation: you had to survive. You had to contend with dirt and mud, try and keep yourself clean, shave, sew your clothes and manage all sorts of domestic things that this generation had not had to think about much before the war. Military historians do not acknowledge the domestic aspects of life in trenches. Because of this different view, I think my book has made no impact on military history so far. I find that interesting, I think it exemplifies the persistent gender codes within Military History.

Do you think the war irreversibly changed the way men behaved in the domestic sphere or was there a certain pre-war domestic ideal that gradually developed from the 19th century onwards, like historian John Tosh shows in *A man's place*?⁵

>>

Mother and son



from: Bamforth and Co., England, 'Songs' series, private collection



That is really tricky, I think we still await a good history of male domesticity post John Tosh. In his book, John sketches different types of fathers. The domesticated father who was investing in the home was one type of men, but there were other types too. There was the man who had a separate spheres type of life, mostly investing in his club, for example. I am in the middle of a project which is exactly about this subject, so I would not like to say quite what I think as it is too early. I am fascinated by this problem of male domesticity, by whether the war had a real impact on this sphere. In addition, what did the war contain for both men and women? How does the revival of domesticity in the 1920s relate to the fact that women and men of the 'war generation' became parents after having been through the emotional turmoil of the war, and what does that mean for the kind of homes they established? Across all of Europe, they are the mothers and fathers of servicemen of the Second World War. That is really interesting too.

In your research on the First World War you make use of ideas from psychoanalysis. What possibilities does psychoanalysis have for historical research?

When writing *The secret battle*, it was very difficult to think about the influence of psychoanalysis. I did not want people to be turned off. There is a fifty year history of scepticism towards psychohistory. So I tried to hide my psychoanalysis as much as possible: it is not on top, but underneath. I think looking back now, I would have liked it to be more central.

Historians work on emotions, but for psychoanalysts emotions are evanescent, a surface phenomenon. What is more important is what emotions tell you about the person's state of mind. Freud talks about slips of the pen and slips of the tongue, for example. In their letters, soldiers are often circling around painful memories, but they drop clues about their feelings in errors and slips of the pencil. I was quite interested in thinking about these slips as clues of unconscious states of mind. This is where the distinction between psychoanalysis and the history of emotions might be quite strong. If you look at letters, they are full of 'Mama, I am getting on fine.' There was even a postcard which allowed the man to tick a box saying 'I am getting on well.' That's the so-called stiff upper lip, the restriction in the expression of emotion. Historians of emotions just notice that stiff upper lip, but a psychoanalytic methodology allows you to understand what is going on in the very statement of 'being fine', when it is repeated again and again. What is underneath this statement, what are the underlying states of mind and what is the writer trying to keep in? Psychoanalysis is good for thinking about contradictions, the tension between the codes about how you should feel, and how you actually feel.

As you said, psychoanalysis has received much criticism. What do you think of this critique, also in relation to historical research?

Without psychoanalysis, 'common sense' psychology will often sneak in. I would rather have theory than no theory and I actually get fed up with the criticism. Why is it that psychoanalysis is always singled out and always treated as different from other theories. There is an unthought-prejudice: psychoanalysis is seen as a bourgeois, nineteenth century invention, but that does not mean it cannot tell you

focused on Gender History, but which would actually be closer to home.

Although the study of masculinity is not the main subject in your current research, it is still an important element in your research on soldiers and their families. Is masculinity something you always consider in your research?

It has receded in importance, but it is still there. *The secret battle* is a funny book in a way, because most readers probably would agree that the sons are more adequately por-



© Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum, Q6186

Soldier writing home, 1917

something about human beings from other times and ages. Of course there are many problems, I do not think the relationship between history and psychoanalysis is easy, but to me, it gives me all sorts of insights.

You were one of the first men to participate in Leonore Davidoff's Master in Gender History. How did you become interested in gender and specifically masculinity?

Well, I have got an older sister who's very into Gender History, she was always preaching gender (laughs). During my PhD, I started to work on the feminization of clerical work. But because of Davidoff's course and her interest in the history of masculinity, I began to think about masculinity. Then the project changed from a focus on women and clerical work to thinking about male cultures in management. Because of Davidoff's influence, but also being the only man in a group of fifteen very strident feminists who asked me why I wanted to do something on women and I did not have an answer to that question. I started to think about what subject I could do which

trayed than the mothers. If someone else had written this book, he or she might have put the mothers first. So I think that masculinity is still very much there in that way. I am more sensitized to the subjectivities of the men, than to the mothers. But this is also due to the fact that the material from the mothers is much more sparse, they collected and kept their sons letters, but sons often did not keep their mother's letters. It is very subjective, but I think because the sons carry their mothers very deeply inside them, the letter is a trigger point for that, but it doesn't need the letter as evidence of the relationship.

You and John Tosh wrote in *Manful assertions* (1991) that the concept of masculinity is a complex one because it was 'the product both of lived experienced and fantasy' and that further studies were needed to 'explore how cultural representations become part of subjective identity'. In your article 'Slipping out of view: subjectivity and emotion in gender history' (2005) you write that this problem is not solved yet. How do you consider this problem in 2014?

I think that the issues concerning this problem have freed up. There is more research done now that is much closer to what I think of as history of subjectivity and that is good. There was a phase called the 'theoretical moment' in the mid-nineties, when the cultural turn was really having a devastating impact on social historians.⁶ It seemed it took everything away that these historians had ever believed in, for example talking about experience in history. That moment has passed, so I do not perceive that this problem is such a concern anymore. Ironically, the issues remain more pressing within the history of emotions than within cultural and social history more generally, where, it seems to me, there is more diversity and tolerance of being open to what emotions might be and how the historian senses these. I see there is a lot of development in different fields, so I do not feel quite as grim as I did.

Your current research, "The generation between: growing up in the aftermath of war, Britain 1918-1939" investigates the impact of the First World War on children born in Britain in the 1920s. Can you tell a bit more about this project?

It is a project which has many parts to it, but the basic theme concerns the legacies of the war among children that were born between the two wars. Where was the First World War in the child's world afterwards? These are not children who had any personal experiences with the war, but children that grew up afterwards. The project focuses on three aspects of the war's legacy on children. It is actually ridiculously ambitious. Firstly, I am investigating interwar children's culture through toys. Were children still playing with the kinds of war toys, the model soldiers, that were popular in Edwardian Britain? I am also interested in the relation between play therapy with traumatized children and children's toys, how is war incorporated in that? A second aspect studies the development of child psychoanalysis and the effect of the war on children. How is the First World War related to the growth of child expertise? The third area is oral history interviews with the children of veterans. I was surprised by the reactions of those I am interviewing, now in their nineties. Many of the children of the 'generation between' still feel themselves to be very much affected by the war and they are concerned that knowledge of the aftermath does not die with them. They want someone else to hear their story, as it was not always possible to talk about their experiences earlier in life. But now in very old age, and in an emotional climate where you are encouraged to talk, they recognise that they are the last living link to the First World War.

Is there a difference between the impact of the war on boys and girls?

Although my research is still in an early stage, what I am finding is that the situation with



The front of the card S.E. Brown sent to his mother (see p.30)

daughters is very different from the sons, especially with children whose fathers were physically disabled or had a mental breakdown. Almost all the men in these families were able to go on and have careers unconstrained by the father's disability. In other words, although some of the sons had to leave school early because of financial problems, it is the daughters that are asked to help, and the daughters did not only carry the burden for the father, but for the mother as well. And the pressure is on them to help the mother out. They often led very localized sorts of lives, close to their mother. But you also find other family situations, for example fathers, coming back from the war, who were very keen on both daughters and sons getting an education, so the story about the daughters having to defer or give up their education is not all encompassing.

For your research, you often undertake oral history interviews. What attracts you to this method?

I love interviewing! There are moments when you think: this is what I am on the planet for, the reason why I am here. This is what I really like to do and it is always during an interview I feel like that. Because I feel like I am finding something new and at times it feels as if the war is almost there. I find that fascinating. A hundred years down the line the war is still almost there. ///

Notes:

- ¹ I would very much like to thank Marjolein Van Bavel for her contribution to this interview.
- ² Michael Roper, *The secret battle. Emotional survival in the Great War* (Manchester 2009).
- ³ Elaine Showalter, *The female malady. Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (New York 1985).
- ⁴ Leonore Davidoff is Emeritus Professor in the Sociology Department and Director of the Center for Cultural and Social History at the University of Essex. She was the founding editor of *Gender and History: Retrospect and Prospect* (Oxford 2000) and author with Catherine Hall of *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class* (Chicago 1987).
- ⁵ John Tosh, *A man's place: masculinity and the middle-class home in Victorian England* (New Haven 1999). John Tosh is Professor of History at Roehampton University (London). Besides *A man's place*, Tosh has written extensively about the history of masculinity.
- ⁶ The cultural turn changed the practice of history from the 1970s onwards as it placed the concept of culture, and the related notions of meaning, cognition, affect, and symbols at the centre of methodological and theoretical focus.

Rose Spijkerman (1987) studeerde geschiedenis aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam, waar zij zich specialiseerde in gender- en emotiegeschiedenis. Momenteel promoveert zij aan de Universiteit Gent, waar zij onderzoek doet naar emoties van soldaten in het Belgische leger tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Bij de uitreiking van de Johanna Naberprijs 2014 kreeg Spijkerman een eervolle vermelding voor haar masterscriptie 'Vrouwenrecht en mannenplicht. De Mannenbond voor vrouwenkiesrecht 1908-1919'. Daarnaast is ze redacteur van *Historica*.

Contact: Rose.Spijkerman@UGent.be

Man worden in de Eerste Wereldoorlog

Het onderzoek naar de Eerste Wereldoorlog focust zich al lang niet meer alleen op politieke of militaire geschiedenissen van de oorlog. Sinds de *cultural turn* in de historiografie is er de laatste decennia steeds meer aandacht voor de levens, ervaringen, emoties en reacties van soldaten, burgers, mannen en vrouwen. Gendergeschiedenis speelde een cruciale rol in het belichten van deze subjectieve kant van het conflict. Zo werd onder impuls van de discipline duidelijk dat de getuigenissen van de soldaten niet zomaar evident 'mannelijk' waren, maar dat het ging om specifieke, door noties van mannelijkheid gevormde verhalen. Jessica Meyer sluit met *Men of war. Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* aan bij deze ontwikkeling. Zij stelt de vraag hoe Britse soldaten zich door middel van hun ervaringen tijdens en na de oorlog definieerden als man, zowel in relatie tot andere mannen als vrouwen.



Britse propaganda voor het leger (1915)

/ Rose Spijkerman en
Fabian Van Wesemaal /

Door in het eerste hoofdstuk gebruik te maken van brieven naar het thuisfront, oorlogsdagboeken in het tweede hoofdstuk, condoleancebrieven in hoofdstuk drie, brieven van invalide militairen naar het Ministerie van Pensioenen en oorlogsmemoires in respectievelijk hoofdstuk vier en vijf, verbindt Meyer de ervaringen van soldaten en de gebeurtenissen op het slagveld met hun zoektocht naar een mannelijke identiteit, zowel tijdens als na de oorlog. Zij onderscheidt in deze bronnen twee identiteiten die als mannelijk ideaal golden. Namelijk het heroïsche martiale ideaal dat vooral werd geassocieerd met het front en de militaire sfeer, en het huiselijke dat verband hield met hun relatie tot vrouwen en hun rol als goede zoon, echtgenoot en vader.

Door het werk heen wordt steeds benadrukt dat het type medium en het beoogde publiek in grote mate het soort mannelijkheid bepaalden dat de soldaat kon aannemen. Meyer nuanceert dit echter door te stellen dat ondanks het feit dat deze verschillende vormen van mannelijkheid werden geconstrueerd binnen het kader van culturele idealen en sociale verwachtingen, de twee identiteiten niet vastomlijnd waren en bovendien tegenstrijdig konden zijn. Zo werden geruststellende en optimistische brieven naar huis dikwijls ontkracht door

gelijktijdig geschreven dagboeken vol angst en teleurstelling, die een andere werkelijkheid van de belevingswereld van de soldaat geven. De veelzijdigheid aan bronmateriaal en de zorgvuldig gekozen citaten zijn dan ook één van de kwaliteiten van Meyers werk.

Toch benoemt Meyer niet alleen de verschrikkingen van de oorlog. Op verfrissende wijze wordt eveneens aandacht besteed aan de door de soldaten zelf beschreven positieve gevolgen van de oorlog voor beide vormen van mannelijkheid. Het leger en de oorlog werden als leerschool ervaren en Meyer toont aan hoe mannelijkheid voor soldaten een dynamisch wordingsproces was dat zowel in heroïsche als huiselijke zin werd nagestreefd. Zij beschrijft hoe de soldaten het publieke discours over de regeneratieve en vermannelijke kracht van de oorlog reproduceerden en meenden in het leger tot volle wasdom te komen. De oorlog bracht avontuur, maar tevens verantwoordelijkheid. De fysieke component was een belangrijk onderdeel van het martiale ideaal: "I have no doubt that the exacting discipline has a most favourable effect upon the body", schreef een soldaat in een brief naar huis. Daarnaast beargumenteert Meyer dat mannelijkheid niet louter werd afgemeten aan prestaties op publiek terrein. Verschillende soldaten schreven naar het thuisfront dat zij in de loopgraven leerden wassen, kleding verstellen en hun kookkunsten aanzienlijk verbeterden. Een mooi voorbeeld is de brief van een zorgzame soldaat

aan zijn verloofde, waarin hij schrijft dat het na de oorlog niet meer onwennig of vreemd zou voelen haar 's ochtends thee en ontbijt op bed te brengen.

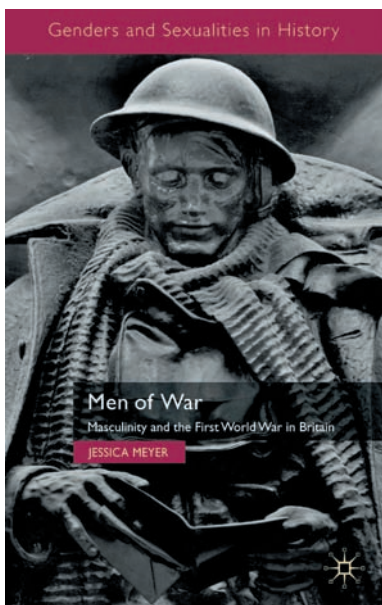
Meyer doorbreekt hierdoor niet alleen het vaste stramien van enthousiaste, vaderlandslievende jongens die vol van heroïsche idealen gedurende de oorlog veranderden in getormenteerde slachtoffers, maar brengt tevens geïmpliciteerd aan in het idee van martiale en heldhaftige mannelijkheid dat nog vaak automatisch met de belevingswereld van soldaten wordt geassocieerd. Soldaten waren bereid opofferingen te leveren, maar onnodig leed in de vorm van zinloze opdrachten van oversten of dagenlang slecht weer kon hun overtuiging soms aan het wankelen brengen. Daarnaast maakt Meyer duidelijk dat een abstract ideaal als 'opoffering voor het vaderland' concreet werd gemaakt door met hun familie in het achterhoofd ten strijde te trekken. Zij verbindt op deze wijze mooi het heroïsche met het huiselijke ideaal.

Meyers interessante reflecties binden echter aan kracht in doordat zij in haar beschouwingen zelden het concrete niveau overstijgt. De vier oorlogsjaren, met hun uiteenlopende gebeurtenissen en omstandigheden, worden door Meyer als eendimensionaal, statisch fenomeen beschreven. Na het derde hoofdstuk is de oorlog opeens afgelopen, waardoor het volgende hoofdstuk dat in teken staat van de naoorlogse omgang met mannelijkheid als een te abrupte overgang voelt. Het lijkt alsof er geen evolutie

in de oorlogservaring van de soldaat zou zijn en 'tijdens' en 'na' 1914-1918 als enige cesuur volstaat. Bovendien worden cruciale, bepalende invloeden en specifieke nationale contexten – zoals de uitkomst van de oorlog – niet genoemd. Deze waren echter onmiskenbaar van belang voor de ontwikkeling en de perceptie van hun mannelijke identiteit. Dit verkleint de verklarende kracht van Meyers boek en maakt bovendien een internationaal comparatief perspectief niet evident.

De meest fundamentele kritiek op het boek is niettemin dat Meyer uitgaat van één ongedifferentieerde categorie mannen. In deze optiek is ook de titel, *Men of war*, ongelukkig. Alle mannen lijken dezelfde twee idealen op dezelfde manier aan te hangen. Zij gebruikt mannelijkheid als totalitaire categorie en heeft geen aandacht voor andere socio-culturele verschillen tussen mannen. Dit wordt in de hand gewerkt door het nagenoeg ontbreken van een theoretisch kader dat duidelijk maakt wat mannelijkheid nu eigenlijk is. De heroïsche en huiselijke mannelijkheidsidealens worden al snel in het werk vermeld, zonder ze te historiseren, te contextualiseren of te politiseren. Dit is vooral spijtig in het geval van de mannelijke huiselijkheid, dat in het inleidende hoofdstuk slechts in één alinea wordt behandeld als verschijnsel dat ook voor de oorlog al aanwezig was. Het roept de vraag op in welke mate de oorlog een daadwerkelijke verandering aanbracht in al bestaande structuren.

Dit probleem uit zich ook in Meyers omgang met de bronnen. Hoewel zij dit niet expliciet zegt wordt het duidelijk dat ze vooral geschriften van militairen van de (hoge) middenklasse gebruikt. De idealen die Meyer beschrijft, blijken dus behoorlijk specifiek te zijn. Verschillende opvattingen van mannelijkheid die ongetwijfeld bestonden tussen officiers, infanteristen, stedelingen, landbouwers, geestelijken en medici worden niet uitgewerkt.



Mannen die principieel niet wilden deelnemen aan de oorlog evenmin. De Britse *men of war* lijken allemaal binnen dezelfde kaders en idealen te worden ingepast, waardoor zij ondanks de verschillende vormen van mannelijkheid geen eigen identiteit krijgen. Zo is het maar de vraag of en in welke gesteldheid de huiselijke mannelijkheid, die historicus John Tosh identificeerde als typisch voor de middenklasse, ook kan worden geïdentificeerd bij de lagere sociale klassen.¹ Overstegen beide idealen wel degelijk alle klassenverschillen en etnische grenzen? Recent historisch onderzoek naar gender en mannelijkheid geeft alleszins belangrijke argumenten om dit laatste tegen te spreken.

Hoewel Meyer aangeeft de soldaten eveneens in relatie tot vrouwen te willen onderzoeken, figureren vrouwen nog algemener en vager dan mannen. Ze blijven de niet nader gespecificeerde ander. Impliciet wordt vrouwelijkheid ingevuld als a-historisch en eeuwig. Dit contrasteert te veel met haar beschrijving van een complexere zoektocht naar een mannelijke identiteit. Het boek leert dan ook weinig over de relaties en wederzijdse definiëring van mannen en vrouwen in de context van de Eerste Wereldoorlog.

Hierbij aansluitend valt ook een algemene kritiek te geven op Meyers omgang met de bronnen. De selectie, de interpretatie en de duiding van het bronmateriaal worden niet alleen in de inleiding te kort en weinig grondig geproblematiseerd, in de hoofdstukken die volgen blijft het vervolgens eveneens onduidelijk waarom zij specifiek voor bepaalde brieven, dagboeken of memoires heeft gekozen. Afgezien van een paar uitgebreidere casussen – niet toevallig van militairen van hogere rang – worden soldaten niet geïntroduceerd of geïdentificeerd naar afkomst of positie aan het front. De lezer blijft helaas in het ongewisse over de sociale achtergrond van Meyers schrijvende soldaten.

Als laatste kunnen wat betreft het hoofdstuk over invalide oud-strijders vraagtekens worden geplaatst bij het gehanteerde concept van lichamelijke. Hoewel Meyer veel aandacht besteedt aan het lichaam, wordt de precieze rol van het lichaam in het proces waarbij invalide oud-strijders hun mannelijkheid (re)construeren niet uitgewerkt. Manlijkheid lijkt – zoals vaak – louter gefundeerd in geestelijke kwaliteiten. Zolang mannen hun taken als kostwinner of soldaat konden uitvoeren bleef hun masculiene identiteit stabiel. Culturele idealen lijken op die manier als vanzelfsprekend verbonden aan het mannelijk lichaam. Meyer maakt niet duidelijk hoe de veranderde lichamelijke status fungeert bij de constructie van een mannelijke identiteit. Het lichaam is echter niet alleen een passieve drager, maar ook een producent van culturele betekenissen. Meyer laat het na om de volledige complexiteit van natuur en cultuur in samenhang met het mannelijk lichaam te vatten.

Hoewel Meyer mooi het ambivalente, pre-

caire, subjectieve en veelzijdige karakter van mannelijkheid aantoon, wegen de kwaliteiten van haar studie niet op tegen de gebreken. *Men of war* slaagt er helaas zelden in om het beschrijvende niveau te overstijgen. Te vaak blijft het werk een eng opgevatte cultuurgeschiedenis van vrijblijvende idealen, hetgeen tot meer vragen dan antwoorden leidt over de werking van mannelijkheid voor *verschillende* mannen in relatie tot oorlog. ///

Noot:

¹ John Tosh, *A man's place: masculinity and the middle-class home in Victorian England*. New Haven, 1999.

Jessica Meyer, *Men of war. Masculinity and the First World War in Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2008, 232 p., € 19,99 (paperback)

Rose Spijkerman (1987) studeerde geschiedenis aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam, waar zij zich specialiseerde in gender- en emotiegeschiedenis. Momenteel promoveert zij aan de Universiteit Gent, waar zij onderzoek doet naar emoties van soldaten in het Belgische leger tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Bij de uitreiking van de Johanna Naberprijs 2014 kreeg Spijkerman een eervolle vermelding voor haar masterscriptie 'Vrouwenrecht en mannenplicht. De Mannenbond voor vrouwenkiesrecht 1908-1919'. Daarnaast is ze redacteur van *Historica*.

Contact: Rose.Spijkerman@UGent.be

Fabian Van Wesemael (1991) won met zijn masterscriptie 'Helden in het hospitaal? Een gendergeschiedenis van de ervaring van verpleegsters en artsen in hun omgang met gewonde soldaten en lichamelijke tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog' de Johanna Naberprijs 2014. Sinds maart werkt hij aan een doctoraat over de maatschappelijke impact van de Eerste Wereldoorlog op oudstrijders en hun families (UGent en UNamur). Van Wesemael schreef voor deze *Historica* ook 'Artsen in de 'Grote Oorlog'. Een genderanalyse van de representatie van 'de arts' en het gewonde soldatenlichaam' (p. 9-15).

Contact: Fabian.VanWesemael@UGent.be