Cover picture: A Douglas Dakota drops supplies by parachute to troops of the 14th Army on a bridgehead south of the Irrawaddy River. Photo © Imperial War Museum, IWM (CF 415)

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EDITORIAL[*]

This issue, our first in 2025, makes eminently clear that the field of military history is in rude health. Our seven articles and three research notes range across two hundred years and three continents (North America, Europe, and Africa). Our authors also reveal an impressive diversity of methodological approach. In the pages that follow you'll encounter biographical reassessment, statistical analysis, conflict archaeology, battlefield identification through the use of maps and photography, and oral history. And you'll learn about everything from the ethics of military leadership in precolonial Africa, to the role played by the nascent Belgian Navy in the Second World War, to the composition of First World War-era British Army Rum. In short, there's something for everyone here.

Thanks to the excellent work of our Book Reviews editor, Dr Máire MacNeil, this issue is rounded out by six reviews of recent publications. You'll see that works exploring the twentieth century experiences of British and Commonwealth forces feature especially strongly here. Going forward, we're keen to build on this and further broaden the scope and range of the works discussed. If you're interested in writing a review of a recent military history publication then please do get in touch.

Finally, and as ever, we also remain keen to receive submissions of both articles and research notes. So if anyone out there is currently working on articles that consider such things as the upcoming 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, or the 250th anniversary (next year) of the American Revolution, or indeed anything else within the broad field of military history (in any period), then please do keep us in mind (you can find full submission guidelines at the back of this issue as well as on our website).

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'The Presiding Spirit of this Tempest': A Profile of General Sir James Leith (1763–1816)

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ABSTRACT
This article assesses the life, career, and character of Peninsular War General Sir James Leith (1763–1816). Compared with many of his peers, Leith is an overlooked figure, whose episodes in the forefront of events are punctuated by periods of obscurity. Hitherto he has been portrayed without depth, complexity, or nuance solely as an archetypal Napoleonic-era warrior. The latter part of General Leith's career, however, found him in a more equivocal situation, that of soldier-turned-colonial administrator. Recent scholarship has begun to pursue a more comprehensive approach to figures of Leith's ilk. Nevertheless, a narrowly myopic, or 'Victorian', approach to military historiography has died hard. Numerous Wellingtonian lieutenants who evolved into architects of empire, including Benjamin D'Urban, John Colborne, Harry Smith, and Stapleton Cotton, to name just a few, lack modern, multi-dimensional reassessments, and James Leith is of their number. This article aims to bring facets of both General Leith's soldiering and his colonial governing into clearer, contemporary focus.

Introduction
The name of Lieutenant-General Sir James Leith (1763-1816) is familiar to any student of the Peninsular War. As one of Wellington's divisional commanders, Leith played a significant role at the battles of Bussaco and Salamanca, as well as the sieges of Badajoz and San Sebastián. Seriously wounded at both Salamanca and San Sebastián, Leith had also earlier survived the grim Corunna campaign and endured the chronic effects of fever acquired in the miserable 1809 Walcheren expedition. At his death he was serving as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands.

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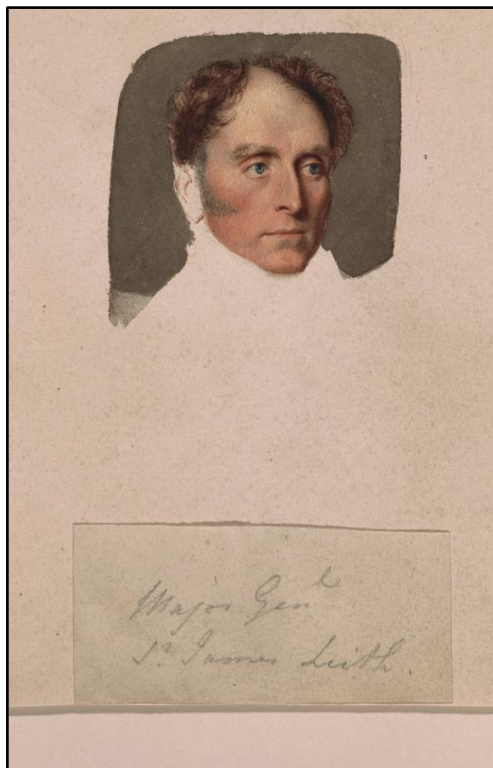
Figure 1: Major General Sir James Leith.[1]

However, and notwithstanding Leith's crowded and conspicuous career, a number of his peers and contemporaries are a good deal better known to us today. Unlike Leith, Generals Thomas Picton, Rowland Hill, and Thomas Graham, for example, have all attracted serious biographical scrutiny. Picton, for instance, was the subject of a two-volume biography by Heaton Bowstead Robinson, published in 1836, and, a century later, two further, fine studies appeared in quick succession.[2] Hill and Graham have both received comparable attention from historians also. By contrast, James Leith

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[1]By Thomas Heaphy (1775–1835), Courtesy of The Huntington Library, Sir Bruce Ingram Collection.
[2]Heaton Bowstead Robinson, *Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton,* 2 vols, (London: Richard Bentley,1836); Robert Havard, *Wellington's Welsh General. A Life of Sir Thomas Picton,* (London: Aurum Press, 1996); Frederick Myatt, *Peninsular General. Sir Thomas Picton 1758–1815,* (Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1980).

remains neglected. The sole ostensible full-length biography of Leith, written by his nephew Sir Andrew Leith-Hay in 1818, outlines the General's origins, background, and military career efficiently, and due familial respect is regularly paid to the latter's qualities.[3] However, Leith-Hay actually spends much of his time relating the saga of the Peninsular War as a whole, and the book's title is somewhat misleading. Also, Leith-Hay conveys, unsurprisingly, a uniformly glowing, one-dimensional depiction of his uncle, as an archetypal *Hentyesque* figure of the Napoleonic era; brave, noble and beyond reproach.[4] He tells us, for instance, that the young James Leith was 'Possessed of a commanding figure, and an intelligent, handsome countenance …' and that he '… added to generosity of disposition a warmth of heart and polished deportment that stamped him as a person of no common promise.'[5] He goes on to assert that during Leith's tour of duty in the Irish Rebellion, his 'regiment was in the highest state of discipline, and its appearance upon every occasion evinced the professional knowledge of its commanding officer.'[6] At times, such encomiums and praise are corroborated by others; at other times not.[7]

From one perspective, Leith can indeed be seen purely as an Olympian figure, soldiering steadfastly and heroically against Napoleon, an interpretation that carries few attendant moral ambiguities. And, as we shall see, witnesses to his performance on campaign during the Peninsular War in particular, taking into account the snares of

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[3]Andrew Leith-Hay, *Memoirs of the Late Lieutenant-General Sir James Leith, G.C.B. with a Précis of Some of the Most Important Events of the Peninsular War,* (London: William Stockdale, 1818). See also Andrew Leith-Hay, *A Narrative of the Peninsular War* 2 vols, (Edinburgh: Daniel Lizars, 1831) which also contains information relative to General Leith. Andrew Leith-Hay (1785–1862) fought at Corunna, Talavera, Bussaco, Salamanca, Vitoria and San Sebastián, receiving the General Service Medal with clasps for these six engagements. He became a Lieutenant in the 29th Foot, 15 April 1808, was promoted Captain with the 11th, 15 April 1813. In all, he was with the 29th from July 1809 until March 1810, and subsequently served as aide-de-camp to his uncle from April 1810 to April 1814.

[4]George Alfred Henty (1832–1902), war correspondent, robust Imperialist, and vastly prolific author of, largely, juvenile adventure stories including *Saint George for England: A Tale of Cressy and Poitiers* (1885) and *The Young Buglers: A Tale of the Peninsular War* (1880). For a sharp, if brief, rejoinder to Leith-Hay's glowing interpretation see William Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France from the Year 1807 to the Year 1814,* 3 vols, (Brussels: Pratt, 1839), Vol. 1, p. xxxii.

[5]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 11.

[6]Ibid., p. 11.

[7]Also see Robert Chambers, *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen,* 4 vols, (Glasgow: Blackie, 1835), Vol. 4, pp. 512–521, a source that is heavily reliant on Leith-Hay's work.

bias and hagiography, make a strong case for the validity of this portrait. By contrast however, the obscure episodes, notably his service during the Irish Rebellion and especially his post-war time as Governor of the Leeward Islands, occasion more nettlesome questions and suggest a more complex picture. Today, how are we to assess appropriately the class of soldier-turned-colonial administrator that evolved out of Wellington's 'kindergarten'? These men became the very architects of empire and included, in addition to James Leith, figures such as Benjamin D'Urban, John Colborne, Harry Smith and Stapleton Cotton. A fuller, multi-dimensional evaluation is demanded, and the objective of this article is to prompt this in the case of Leith.

A repository of documents relating to Leith resides in the John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester.[8] The more than three hundred documents therein comprise a broad and often intriguing archive, including communications to and from fellow soldiers such as Rowland Hill, Fitzroy Somerset, William Erskine, George Murray, and Wellington himself, as well as politicians and administrators including Earl Bathurst and the Duke of York. There are also ancillary items such as reports on the battles of Bussaco and Vitoria by subordinate officers, intelligence reports and topographical sketches, an anonymous Walcheren journal, telegraph signals, and even Leith's pay stub from 1811.[9] However, interesting as they are, these documents also reveal very little about the nature of the man himself. It is as if James Leith is a lighthouse whose beam shines only intermittently, and whose moments in the forefront of events are punctuated by episodes of obscurity. This article aims to penetrate some of the associated darkness.

Biography

James Leith was born the third son of John Leith of Leith Hall in Aberdeenshire, 8 August 1763. After studying with a private tutor, Leith attended Marischal College and the University of Aberdeen before spending 'a considerable amount of time' at a French military academy at Lille.[10] Commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the 21st Foot in 1780, Leith was rapidly promoted to Lieutenant and then Captain in the 81st Highland Regiment. Next, we find him in Gibraltar on garrison duty with the 50th Foot, and subsequently serving as aide-de-camp to the officer commanding, General Charles

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[8]John Rylands Library, *Correspondence and Papers of Sir James Leith*, Ref: GB 133 Eng MS 1307. Hereafter, JRL *Leith Papers*.
[9]The author's transcription and article concerning this Walcheren journal may be found at the Napoleon Series: https://www.napoleon-series.org/book-reviews/memoirs-and-other-primary-sources/a-walcheren-journal/. Accessed 20 March 2024.
[10]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 7.

O'Hara, and eventually in the same capacity for no less a figure than Sir David Dundas.[11]

Figure 2: Portrait assumed to be of James Leith as a young boy.[12]

Leith's service with both of these men, particularly the latter, must certainly have helped smooth the ascent of his career, uniting military, and dynastic patronage in an age when these counted for a great deal.[13] Leith took part in the siege of Toulon in 1793 where, famously, Napoleon Bonaparte first rose to prominence. Upon receiving his Brevet Majority, Leith returned to his native Scotland in order to raise a new regiment. This undertaking was not quite so straightforward as might be supposed since authorisation from Horse Guards was by no means a given, and moreover, a kinsman of Leith was simultaneously pursuing the same end in their mutual ancestral

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[11]Charles O'Hara (1740–1802) had the peculiar distinction of having surrendered to both George Washington and Napoleon Bonaparte. General Sir David Dundas (1735–1820) was a veteran of the Seven Years War and issued his seminal *Principles of Military Movements Chiefly Applicable to Infantry*, based upon the precepts of Frederick the Great, in 1788. Dundas was Commander-in-Chief from 1809 until 1811.

[12]Copyright of the National Trust for Scotland, Leith Hall, Photograph by Beatrice Fettes-Leages.

[13]Famously, Wellington himself was able to 'leapfrog' his way to preferment and opportunity in India when his brother was Governor-General there, and likewise his connection with Castlereagh was to smooth his path greatly in the Peninsular years.

patch of northeast Scotland.[14] Nevertheless, Leith succeeded and went on to serve as Colonel of his newly-minted Princess of Wales' Aberdeenshire Fencibles in Ireland during the rebellion at the end of the 1790s.

Andrew Leith-Hay tells us that at that period,

> he was conspicuous for his activity and firmness of mind, and those qualities that found full scope for development in the mercy and forgiveness extended to many of the objects of mistaken feeling, whom circumstances placed in his power: – and it is no slight eulogium, that during scenes, where so much bloodshed was inevitable, Colonel Leith's humanity never became in the slightest degree questioned.[15]

Whereas Leith's later conspicuously laudable battlefield actions are frequently corroborated by several witnesses, here we only have his nephew's testimony and at present little more evidence as to his conduct in Ireland has come to light, other than a court martial proceeding regarding financial irregularities in the regiment[16]. It is a pity therefore that Leith-Hay omitted to cite specific examples of his kinsman's 'humanity' at that epoch. Historian Carole Divall has aptly characterised command at that time and place as 'a poisoned chalice'. Faced with a confused tapestry of internecine violence that involved the prosecution of counterinsurgency operations over and above regular open field engagements, certain officers came to condone or encourage brutal and lawless measures on the part of their men.[17] Divall, by way of example, contrasts the sanctioned, ruthless approach of Commander-in-Chief Gerard Lake, 'terror tactics, flogging men and burning property', with that of Ralph Abercromby, whose more honourable and juridical tack failed and rapidly led to his resignation.[18] Officers such as Lake and General James Duff abetted the massacre of prisoners, the torture and murder of civilians by their soldiery yet were able to pursue their subsequent careers without apparent hindrance or penalty.[19] Presumably then, Leith-

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[14]J. E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation 1793–1815,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 136.

[15]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, pp. 10–11.

[16]See Footnote 39.

[17]The unlikely alliance between rebel Catholics, Presbyterians and revolutionary French forces is one example of the singular nature of the 1798 uprising. See Alvin Jackson, *Ireland 1798–1998. Politics and War,* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 17 for a lucid assessment of the complex threads involved.

[18]Carole Divall, *General Sir Ralph Abercromby and the French Revolutionary Wars 1792–180,1* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2018), pp. 116–150.

[19]Thomas Pakenham, *The Year of Liberty. The Story of the Great Irish Rebellion of 1798,* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969). See pp. 163–164 for an account of the

Hay was under no compulsion to falsely paint his uncle in a humanitarian light and, had Leith in reality adopted a savage policy, his nephew might still have held up this as something to be admired at that time. On balance, and in the absence of further evidence, we are probably justified in characterising Leith as an Abercromby rather than as a Lake; and as one who at least attempted to rein in the excesses of his soldiers. Be that as it may, towards the conclusion of his service in Ireland, he was promoted Colonel of the 13th Battalion of Reserve, and in 1804 Brigadier-General on the Staff.[20]

The period 1804 to 1808 represents a strangely quiescent episode in Leith's career. Records and correspondence are notably lacking for these years, and it is curious that Leith's biographer-nephew skips over them entirely. He seems to have spent the bulk of this period in Ireland in command of the 13th Battalion of Reserve.[21] Further research into these obscure years is called for, but it seems plain that, as the Peninsular War began, Leith's gifts were widely acknowledged, valued and employed by the men in power.

Leith had now attained the rank of Major-General and was promptly sent on a liaison mission to northern Spain. He would need all the optimism and energy at his disposal at this juncture, since Spanish ardour was threatening to dissipate after their defeat at the Battle of Tudela on 23 November 1808, and Napoleon's occupation of Madrid.[22] Leith transmitted a clear-eyed dispatch to General Sir John Moore in which he characterised Spanish military proceedings thus: 'Never has there been so injudicious and ruinous a system begun and persisted in …'. He did however acknowledge that, ill-led though they were, there was no 'want of spirit in the [Spanish] men.'[23] This quasi-diplomatic episode in Leith's career was then immediately succeeded by active service with Moore's army, in which Leith commanded a Brigade. He survived the Battle of Corunna, 16 January 1809, unscathed and, shortly after his return to England, took part in the calamitous Walcheren expedition in the late summer of that year – calamitous personally in that Leith was stricken with the virulent Walcheren Fever.[24] In fact he never shook off this recurring affliction, and Andrew Leith-Hay surmises plausibly that its lingering effects eventually contributed to Leith's comparatively early death.

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massacre of some 400 rebel prisoners by Duff's force at Gibbet Rath, 29 May that year.

[20]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 11.

[21]*The Royal Military Chronicle,* 3 vols, (London: Davis, 1810–12), vol. 2, p. 461.

[22]See Leith's report to Castlereagh in Vane (ed.), *Correspondence*, Vol. 7, pp. 239–240.

[23]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, Appendix p. 2.

[24]Modern medical assessments suggest that Walcheren Fever was a combination of malaria, dysentery, typhoid, and typhus. See: Martin Howard, *Walcheren 1809. The Scandalous Destruction of a British Army*, (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2012), p. 170.

Leith returned to the Iberian Peninsula and active duty early in 1810, and presently found himself commanding the 5th Division on the ridge at the Battle of Bussaco, 27 September. As was to be seen consistently on future occasions, Leith acquitted himself well, demonstrating swiftness and clarity of thought. When the French infantry threatened to gain a lodgement in the British position 'Major-General Leith evinced that decision of character which was remarkable throughout his military life.'[25] Wellington's official dispatch to Lord Liverpool, Secretary of State for War, confirms Leith-Hay's appraisal. 'Major Gen. Leith also moved to his left to the support of Major Gen. Picton, and aided in the defeat of the enemy …. In these attacks Major Gens. Leith and Picton … distinguished themselves.'[26] A recurrence of Walcheren Fever forced him to quit the Peninsula early in 1811. Leith then made his return almost one year later, just missing the taking of Ciudad Rodrigo, 19 January 1812. In the aftermath, Leith and the 5th Division was given the task of effecting repairs and improvements to the city's defences. In the unlikely event that Leith harboured regrets on having narrowly missed this siege, such warfare being almost universally detested, he was shortly to be more than compensated, as Wellington proceeded next to invest French-occupied Badajoz.[27] The 5th Division's part in the assault on Badajoz that grim night, 6 April 1812, was initially intended as a feint with the purpose of drawing at least some of the defenders away from the main attack, but Leith's men actually succeeded in breaking into the city, contrary to all reasonable expectation. Wellington observed that 'Lieut. Gen. Leith's arrangements for the false attack … were likewise most judicious; and he availed himself of the circumstances of the moment, to push forward and support the attack … in a manner highly creditable to him.'[28]

As we shall see presently, Leith was wounded at Salamanca later that year and, following another period of recuperation at home, had the misfortune to make it back to the Peninsula only in time to be badly wounded once more – this time at the siege of San Sebastián in September 1813. Subsequently appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands, Leith enjoyed only a brief, if militarily lively, tenure there prior to his death from Yellow Fever in 1816.

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[25]Leith Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 37.

[26]John Gurwood (ed.), *The Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, during his Various Campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, the Low Countries, and France,* 8 Vols, (London: John Murray, 1852), Vol. 4, p. 306.

[27]See for example Charles Boutflower, *The Journal of an Army Surgeon during the Peninsular War,* (Manchester: Refuge Printing, 1912), p. 89: '… there is so much fatigue and so little glory attending a besieging army, that it is rarely one meets a military man anxious to be engaged in such a service.'

[28] Wellington to the Earl of Liverpool, Gurwood (ed.), *Despatches*, vol. 5, p. 578.

Leith's Character and Style of Leadership

Amidst the factual narration of his uncle's progress and career, Andrew Leith-Hay imparts at various moments personal, quasi-filial insights regarding his uncle, and for certain of these, there exists collateral, contemporary evidence. During the retreat to Corunna, as the British Army turned at bay at Lugo, 7 January 1809, Leith-Hay records that his uncle placed himself at the head of his light companies and proceeded to lead a successful charge, one of various instances in which the General demonstrated a pattern of reckless bravery in order to galvanise those under his command. At the Battle of Corunna itself, 16 January, he once more depicts Leith leading from the front – on this occasion carrying the 59th Foot forward to succour the depleted 81st – and again with success.[29]

This style of leadership was demonstrated once more at Bussaco, 27 September 1810, where the General charged the French at the head of the 9th Foot.[30] Sergeant James Hale of the 9th was there and recalled,

> we continued moving on in open columns of companies, until we got within about one hundred yards of them, when we were ordered to wheel into line, and give them a volley, which we immediately did, and saluted them with three cheers and charge, taking the signal from General Leith, who commanded our brigade: – he made the signal by taking off his hat and twirling it over his head.[31]

And we have a personal account of Bussaco from Leith himself (although written in the third person), at a moment when he was called upon to rally Portuguese allies,

> Major-General Leith, on that occasion, spoke to Major [Walter] Birmingham … who stated that the fugitives were of the 9th as well as of the 8th regiment [Portuguese], and that he had ineffectually tried to check their retreat. Major-General Leith addressed and succeeded in stopping them, and they cheered when he ordered them to be collected and formed in the rear …[32]

A couple of months after Bussaco we find Captain, eventually Field-Marshal, William Gomm writing to his sister in these glowing terms. 'I am living with a most excellent man, General Leith, and a higher gentleman or a better soldier I believe is not to be

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[29] Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, pp. 25–6.

[30] Ibid., p. 37.

[31] James Hale, *Journal of James Hale Late Sergeant in the Ninth Regiment of Foot,* (Cirencester: Watkins, 1826), p. 51.

[32] 2nd Duke of Wellington (ed.), *Supplementary Despatches and Memoranda of Field Marshal Arthur Duke of Wellington, K.G.* 15 vols, (London: John Murray, 1858–72), Vol. 6, p. 638.

found among us … I find him more and more worthy of the respect which I feel inclined to pay him …'[33] Lieutenant-Colonel William Warre, seconded to the Portuguese army, wrote to his father in the autumn of 1811, urging him to 'Remember me to General Leith should you see him. I have a great regard for him. He is generally much esteemed.'[34] The following year, an officer of the Royal Scots Regiment, John Allen, whose detachment was straggling to an embarrassing extent, was alarmed to observe 'the approach of General Leith, the general of my division, and, of course, I fully expected to be goosed, but, with all the affability and goodness that mark a really great man, after several enquiries, and my informing him that I had divided a two days march into three, I was gratified by his expressing his approbation …'. Allen goes on to comment 'With the 5th Division the arrival of General Leith will be greeted as a most auspicious omen, as it may lead to the reaping of some laurels in the ensuing campaign.'[35] Leith was plainly popular both on account of his reasonableness and his competence.

Fellow Scot Sir Thomas Graham, in command at the Siege of San Sebastián in 1813, warmly acknowledged Leith's value too. 'Lieut. Gen. Sir J. Leith justified, in the fullest manner, the confidence reposed in his tried judgement and distinguished gallantry, conducting and directing the attack, till obliged to be reluctantly carried off, after receiving a most severe contusion on the breast, and having his left arm broken.'[36] Corporal John Douglas of the 1st Foot recounted this same occurrence from a humbler viewpoint,

> We had just entered the trenches below the convent when we met our old General Leith, being carried up wounded, lying on a blanket … some of the men cried out, "Oh" at this sight, and, "There's the old General"; others, "We'll have revenge for that."[37]

Given these testimonials, nephew Leith-Hay's commendations ought not to be entirely ascribed to familial flattery or propaganda.

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[33]Francis Culling Carr-Gomm (ed.), *Letters and Journals of Field-Marshal Sir William Maynard Gomm, G.C.B.*, (London: John Murray, 1881), p. 189.

[34]Edmond Warre (ed.), *Letters from the Peninsula 1808–1812. The Correspondence of an Anglo-Portuguese Staff Officer During His Service in the Peninsular War,* (London: John Murray, 1909), p. 208.

[35]John Allen, 'Journal of an Officer of the Royals in the Seat of War', *The Royal Military Chronicle* (May 1811), pp. 39 - 44.

[36]Gurwood (ed.), *Despatches*, vol. 6, p. 728. (21 December 1813.)

[37]Stanley Monick (ed.), *Douglas's Tale of the Peninsula and Waterloo 1808–1815* (London: Leo Cooper, 1997), p. 82.

Leith and Wellington

For one thing, James Leith was one of the generals Wellington evidently trusted the most. 'In December 1809 Wellington included Leith's name among the general officers for whom he was asking as replacements for the casualties he had suffered in the Peninsula, and said that he had personal experience of his efficiency, probably from Wellington's time at Dublin Castle as Chief Secretary for Ireland.[38] In addition to mentions in despatches and encomiums such as that from Wellington to Lord Liverpool, after Bussaco, and quoted above, one naturally finds instances of mild friction and disagreement also. For example, Leith unsuccessfully lobbied to have a greater proportion of British troops under his command in September 1810, and he bridled at Wellington's disparagement of the 5th Division's performance at the siege of San Sebastián three years later. Much of Wellington's correspondence with Leith, however, is of a routine form such as – Lieutenant-General Leith will be so good as to move his division at first light – and deals with workaday military concerns.

There exists one unusual communication from the Duke of Wellington to Leith, on a personal note, that contrasts with the commendations, points of controversy and the purely objective, practical memoranda. Upon Leith's assuming command in the West Indies, Wellington saw fit to pen him some advice. His letter strikes a relaxed, avuncular tone,

> 21 December 1813
> St. Jean de Luz
>
> I received yesterday your letter of the 7th, and … I am quite delighted that they have given you the appointment which you mention.[39] Nobody could expect you to decline to accept it in order to return to your division with this army; and if I could have advised you before you accepted the offer, my advice would have been by all means to accept; and I now most sincerely congratulate you.
>
> I have frequently heretofore given you a hint upon a subject over which I hope you will forgive me for taking the liberty of mentioning to you again … I hope you will put your establishment on such a scale as that your holding it will be a permanent advantage to yourself and your family. You have always told me that you were a good *manager* [emphasis in original] … but you may depend upon it

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[38]T.A. Heathcote, *Wellington's Peninsular War Generals and Their Battles. A Biographical and Historical Dictionary* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2010), p. 78.

[39]Leith had been appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands. Evidently, Leith at once informed Wellington of his appointment, a couple of months prior to the official announcement. See *The London Gazette*, 15 February 1814, p. 367.

that no management will make an income, however large, give a surplus, if the possessor of it does not take care to fix his expenses on the lowest scale that the nature of his situation will permit.[40]

Wellington appears to be hinting here that Leith had a propensity for lavish spending or an excess of generosity.[41] Despite the fact that Wellington was Leith's junior by some six years, a 'younger brother' rather than an 'older' in effect, he was moved to proffer this fraternal counsel. Also, it may be that Leith was not the most adept handler of matters financial, since he had become embroiled years earlier in an imbroglio regarding the accounts of his Aberdeenshire Fencible regiment.[42] At any rate, Wellington would doubtless have been more than satisfied to have employed Leith's services at Waterloo the following year, had Fate not determined that Leith should then be serving in the Caribbean instead.

Leith at Salamanca
When Leith's story reaches 22 July 1812 and the Battle of Salamanca, the degree of detail and information that is available to us suddenly increases. Leith's performance at Salamanca represents the pinnacle of his soldiering, notwithstanding his notable service at Bussaco, Badajoz, and at San Sebastián. Andrew Leith-Hay's arresting account of Salamanca is supplemented by those of other men who fought with Leith that day, as well as unpublished original documents from the John Rylands archive. This then is the moment when James Leith is best revealed to us.

The Battle of Salamanca followed weeks of intricate manoeuvring between the armies of Wellington and Marshal Marmont, including a remarkable sequence on 20 July during which both forces marched parallel to one another at minimal distance, yet without joining battle.[43] In the event, on the 22nd Wellington inflicted a crushing reverse on the French, and Salamanca has often been viewed as the pivotal moment of the Peninsular conflict whereupon Wellington definitively assumed the strategic initiative.

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[40]Gurwood (ed.), *Despatches*, Vol. 7, p. 213.

[41]If so, Wellington's advice may have fallen on deaf ears since Leith was to request a 25% reduction in his gubernatorial salary in 1816. See Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 162.

[42]George Kerr, *The Trial of Lieutenant George Kerr, of the Aberdeenshire Fencibles, before a General Court Martial, Assembled at Dublin Barracks, on Wednesday, the 15th Day of October,1800, (and Continued by Adjournment to the 21st of the Same Month) on Charges Exhibited against him by Colonel James Leith,* (Dublin: Milliken, 1801).

[43]Rory Muir, *Salamanca 1812,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 16.

Figure 3: Wellington Commanding the British Army at Salamanca, June 1812.[44]

On the morning of 22 July, Sir James Leith was in command of the Allied army's 5th Division, comprising the brigades of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Greville (3/1st Foot, 1/9th Foot, 1/38th Foot, 2/38th Foot and a company of Brunswick Oels), Major-General William Henry Pringle (1/4th Foot, 2/4th Foot, 2/30th Foot, 2/44th Foot and a company of Brunswick Oels), and Brigadier-General William Spry's 3rd Portuguese (3 and 15 Line, 8th Caçadores), totalling 6,710 officers and men.[45]

Corporal John Douglas of the 1st Royal Scots was there:

> The enemy … commenced extending their left to outflank us, on which Sir James Leith advanced our Division in double quick time on that point … The 3rd brigade on coming down did not please Sir James. He marched them back under the whole fire in ordinary time and back again to make them do it in a soldier-like manner …

> General Leith rode up about two o'clock. The cannonading at the time was terrible. Addressing the Regiment he says, "Royals," on which we all sprang up.

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[44]By Jean Duplessis-Bertaux (1747–1819), Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.
[45]Ibid., p. 246.

"Lie down men," said he, though he sat on horse-back, exposed to the fire as calm as possible. "This shall be a glorious day for Old England, if these bragadocian [sic] rascals dare but stand their ground, we will display the point of the British bayonet, and where it is properly displayed no power is able to with stand it. All I request of you is to be steady and to obey your officers. Stand up men!" Then taking off his cocked hat and winding it around his head he gives the word "March!"[46]

Whether or not Leith actually employed the word 'bragadocian', this is a distinctly flamboyant performance in which the display of courage, even disdain, for enemy artillery fire combines with an almost theatrical air and demeanour - extrovert, courageous and eloquent. An anonymous account from a soldier in the 1/38th recorded a further morale-lifting oration from Sir James that afternoon. 'Now my lads, this is the day for England. They would play at long ball with us from morning til night, but we will soon give them something else.'[47]
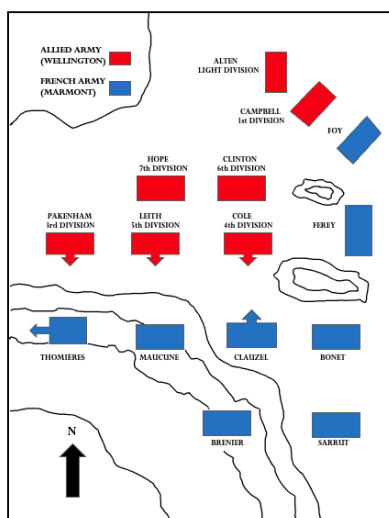
Figure 4: Battle of Salamanca. The situation around 1700 hours, illustrating the central role of Leith's division in the battle.[48]

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[46]Monick (ed.), *Douglas's Tale*, pp. 44–45.
[47]Peter Edwards, *Salamanca 181,2* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2013), p. 210.
[48]Map by author.

The 5th Division had to endure a lengthy wait under French artillery fire before staff officer Captain Philip Bainbrigge arrived with Wellington's orders for them to advance:[49]

> I galloped up to General Sir James Leith, who was riding backwards and forwards along the front of his men, with two or three staff officers; the round shot were ricocheting into and over his line, and as I was about to deliver the order, a shot knocked up the earth close to his horse's nose. He took off his hat to it and said, 'I will allow you to pass, Sir!' The men heard him, and said, 'Hurra for the General.' They were at ordered arms, standing at ease. I delivered my order, and the General replied, 'Thank you, Sir! That is the best news I have heard to-day,' and turning to his men he said, taking off his hat and waving it in the air in a theatrical manner, and in a tone of voice which was grand in the extreme, said, 'Now boys! We'll at them!'[50]

Displays of courage such as this were an expectation of commanders at this epoch; a potent means of steadying and inspiring the men they led. What strikes the modern reader, and evidently impressed Bainbrigge too, is the dramatic nature of Leith's performance. William Gomm, whose admiration of the General has been noted earlier, was also present, acting as one of his aides-de-camp, and he too underscored this rhetorical tendency in Leith. 'As for General Leith, he addressed the troops with the eloquence of a Caesar, before they advanced; and he led them, like something that had descended for a time to favour the righteous side; and had this even been so, the enthusiasm excited could hardly have been greater.'[51]

As the impressively coordinated British advance began, Leith 'despatched his other aides-de-camp, Captains Belshes and Dowson, to different parts of the line to help restrain over-keenness.'[52] Leith evidently felt it imperative to maintain a judicious pace of advance in order that the troops not arrive at the hill crest before them winded and tired. Moreover, one might speculate that he knew this moment was going to afford his division the opportunity to demonstrate to all onlookers, Allied and French, exalted and humble, just how effectively, spectacularly they could manoeuvre - field-day exactitude executed under the real-life exigency of battle. It has been noted

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[49]Lieutenant-General Sir Philip Bainbrigge (1786–1862).

[50]Philip Bainbrigge, 'The Staff at Salamanca', *United Service Magazine* (January 1878), pp. 72–73.

[51]Carr-Gomm (ed.), *Letters and Journals*, p. 278.

[52]Captain John Murray Belshes, 59th Foot, earned the General Service Medal for Fuentes de Oñoro, Badajoz, Salamanca and San Sebastián. https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/biographies/GreatBritain/Challis/c_ChallisIntro.html. Accessed 15 January 2024.

earlier, by John Douglas, that Leith was sufficiently punctilious and determined as to insist the 3rd Portuguese repeat the first portion of their manoeuvre and oversaw them execute this in a more 'soldier-like' fashion. Wellington himself was to be found in observation between the two 5th Division lines at this point and would doubtless have been impressed.[53]

Figure 5: Salamanca.[54]

Attaining the brow of the hill, Leith ordered his men to fire a volley, then charge, the French at once replying with a volley of their own. On horseback, and leading from such an exposed position, it does not require much imagination to foresee inevitable, imminent misadventure for General Leith.[55] Andrew Leith-Hay says that his uncle was hit 'When close to the enemy's squares in the commencement of the battle …'[56] William Gomm recorded details of Leith's wounding: 'after the most important advantage had been gained, he received a musket-shot in the arm, which shattered the bone; and when he grew faint with loss of blood, I tied up his arm as well as I could,

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[53]Leith-Hay, *Narrative*, p. 56.
[54]From a sketch by Andrew Leith-Hay. *A Narrative of the Peninsular War*, vol. 1, p. 20.
[55]Ibid., pp. 55–56: '… namely, in front of the colours of the 1 battalion of the 38th regiment.'
[56]Ibid., p. 57 and p. 59.

and sent him in good hands to the rear.'[57] He was carried initially to the village of Las Torres, a couple of miles behind the battle lines before moving to the house of a Spanish grandee in Salamanca itself.[58]

Four days after the battle Leith was sufficiently recovered to be able to write a personal and touching letter to his wife, Lady Augusta.[59] Evidently Leith was right-handed and, since he had sustained his wound to the right arm, he was obliged to press his left hand into service to pen Augusta her note. As can be seen below, he managed to produce an admirably legible script! Anyone who has struggled to decipher the sometimes frustrating and obscure handwriting in certain Peninsular War letters may reflect on the irony that this particular document, although written in painful, straitened circumstances, is exceptionally easy to decipher.[60]
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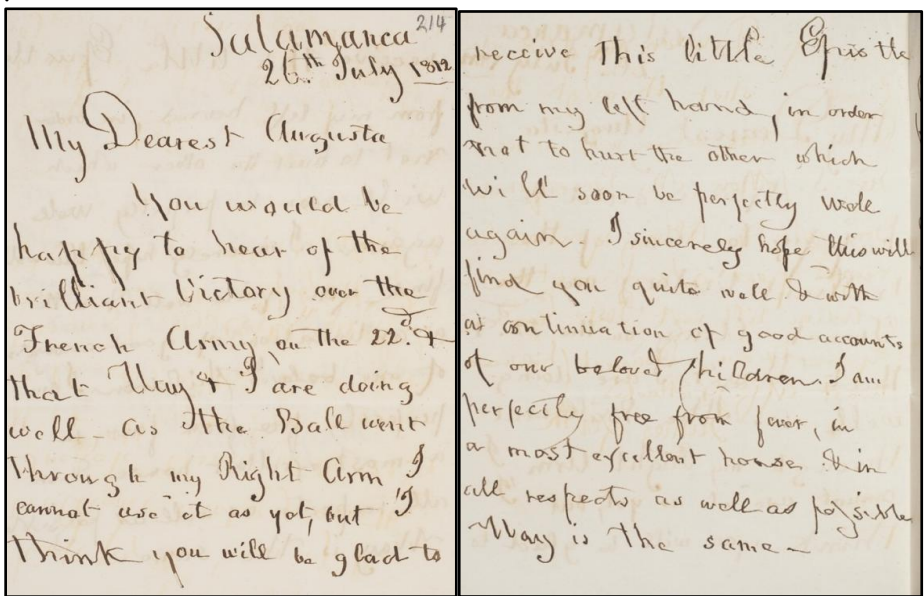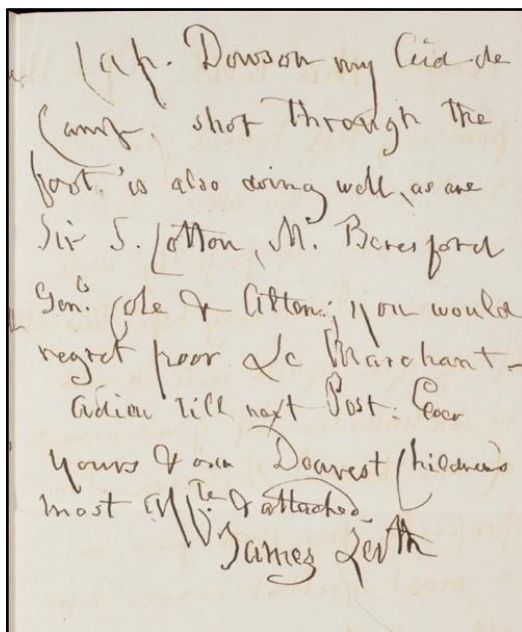
[57]In fact, Leith's wound turned out to be less severe than Gomm feared. See Leith's letter to his wife dated 28 July 1812 below.

[58]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 64.

[59]The life story of Augusta Leith, née Forbes, is largely obscure. She was the daughter of George Forbes, Fifth Earl of Granard in the Irish peerage, but the dates of Augusta's birth and death are unknown.

[60]JRL, *Leith Papers*, #214.

Figure 5: Letter from Sir James Leith to Lady Augusta Leith.[61]

A translation of the above follows,

> Salamanca 26th July 1812
>
> My Dearest Augusta
> You would be happy to hear of the brilliant Victory over the French Army, on the 22.d & that Hay & I are doing well. As the Ball went through my Right Arm, I cannot use it as yet, but I think you will be glad to receive this little Epistle from my left hand, in order not to hurt the other which will soon be perfectly well again. I sincerely hope this will find you quite well & with a continuation of good accounts of our beloved Children. I am perfectly free from fever, in a most excellent house & and in all respects as well as possible. Hay is the same. Cap. Dowson my Aid [sic] de Camp, shot through the foot, is also doing well, as are Sir S. Cotton, M. Beresford [,] Genl. Cole & Alten; you would regret poor Le Marchant.

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[61]Courtesy of the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester.

Adieu till next Post. Ever yours & our Dearest Children's most aff[te] & attached,

James Leith

As he recovered from his wounding, Leith will have scanned thoroughly the report of one of his Brigadiers, Lieutenant-Colonel The Honourable Charles John Greville, who had come through the battle unharmed, despite having had his horse killed under him just prior to the time that Leith sustained his own injuries.[62] Greville opens buoyantly, with what might be interpreted as flattering words for his chief, were it not for the several other witnesses confirming Leith's inspiriting leadership that day:

> After the unfortunate circumstance which deprived us of your assistance during the latter part of the Action of the 22d. it is with much satisfaction that I can assure you that the same Zeal and Conduct which was pursued by the Brigade under my command previous to being deprived of your animating example continued throughout the day, with unabated Spirit in spite of every obstacle presented by the Enemy, and after driving back the Columns in the Charge you commanded …'[63]

Leith's official report to Wellington was written 25 July. The original is in a firm, clear script, obviously dictated. Leith at once acknowledges 'the coolness, regularity, and intrepidity' with which his men advanced upon the French line. He attests to the irresistible nature of the Allied onset and he lauds 'the conduct of every Officer and Man on that memorable occasion.' Specifically, Leith mentions the contributions of the artillery and Staff Surgeon Emery.[64] His dispatch is notable for its generosity and warmth of tone, characteristics which observers and recipients at times felt were lacking in such communications from Wellington himself.[65] For another report infused with warmth, and perhaps a whiff of hyperbole, we can turn to William Gomm's

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[62]Sir Charles John Greville (1780–1836). Greville's career as Lieutenant-Colonel, and much later, Colonel of the 38th Foot in the Peninsula encompassed the very beginning and end of the war - from Roliça to Bayonne - and included action at Vimeiro, Corunna, Salamanca, Vitoria, San Sebastián and the Nive. As with so many of Wellington's officers, Greville served in Parliament, in Greville's case exclusively after the war, espousing chiefly conservative causes.

[63]JRL, *Leith Papers*, #208.

[64]Staff Surgeon Henry Gresley Emery M.D. served in the Corunna campaign and under Wellington from April 1810 until January 1813. He also saw service at Walcheren and Waterloo. (Challis, *Peninsula Roll Call*.) JRL, *Leith Papers,* #212.

[65]See for example Rory Muir, *Wellington. The Path to Victory,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 427–429.

reflections in the days immediately following the battle. It has been noted earlier how thoroughly Gomm had come under Leith's spell,

> At headquarters they are full of his [Leith's] praises; he was the Bayard or Gaston de Foix of this battle, "the observed of all observers;" he threw a truly chivalrous spirit into all those who were about him.[66] The wits say that while he was advancing he looked like the presiding spirit of this Tempest …

And later,

> General Leith, I hope, is doing well, but he is gone to Lisbon, and I fear we shall not see him with the army for some time. I regret it exceedingly, for I value his single presence at 10,000 men in any field.[67]

Clearly, Gomm is in an unashamed state of hero-worship at this juncture, making parallels between his chief and the legendary, Romantic paladins of the past, and in a sense to Napoleon himself, whose battlefield presence was apt to be assessed in similar, numerical terms.[68] How objective or reliable a witness is Gomm? His letters, while certainly revealing him to be an appropriately loyal and discreet aide-de-camp, contain numerous instances of detached, judicial assessments, one example being his characterisation of Wellington as impetuous.[69] There is nothing obsequious about him and his euphoric encomium on Leith is thus all the more remarkable.

So, from Salamanca we glean a detailed picture of Leith to a degree that is vouchsafed to us at no other time. On all sides, he had come to epitomise both the courageous soldier and skillful commander, and his showing at the battle may justifiably be regarded as his finest moment. However, a counterpoint of more nuance and complexity than this one-dimensional portrait is suggested by Leith's subsequent experience in the Caribbean. These were to close his life and career.

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[66]Pierre Terrail, Seigneur de Bayard (c.1476–1524) enjoyed a lengthy and successful military career, attaining a reputation as a paragon of chivalry - the 'good knight'. Gaston de Foix (1489–1512) famed for dash and boldness was killed at the Battle of Ravenna.

[67]Carr-Gomm (ed.), *Letters and Journals*, p. 287.

[68]Wellington is frequently cited as having equated Napoleon to 40,000 men. See Rory Muir, *Wellington. Waterloo and the Fortunes of Peace 1814–1852* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 128.

[69]Carr-Gomm (ed.), *Letters and* Journals, p. 137. Elsewhere, Gomm is critical of the engineers at the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo (p. 31) and General Sir Howard Douglas: 'I do not think he will ever shine.' (p. 289).

Leith in the West Indies

Many of Wellington's officers pursued careers in colonial administration: the bewhiskered proconsuls of Empire. Harry Smith, Henry Hardinge, George Napier, Stapleton Cotton and Thomas Picton are among the most noteworthy, and James Leith, briefly, was of their number. Posterity has endowed these early nineteenth century figures with an unsympathetic twenty-first century verdict as imperialist enablers and thus for certain of these men, reputation has swung violently from that of national hero to communal embarrassment.[70] Certainly their legacies have tended to tarnish far more than those of their peers, most notably Wellington himself, whose post-war activities were chiefly restricted to the domestic arena.

The Governorship of the Leeward Islands at that time tended to be the preserve of generals. These included Francis Mackenzie (1802–1806), Sir George Beckwith (1810-1815) and Lord Combermere (1817-1820) as well as Leith. Given the appalling reputation for mortality that postings in the Caribbean involved, and the thoroughly reactionary convictions of the islands' slave-owning oligarchy, one might well wonder what motivated these men to undertake the job. Plainly the financial rewards were enticing, Wellington, in the letter to Leith quoted above, alludes to this, and doubtless Leith, at least in part, also accepted out of a sense of duty.

Leith arrived in Barbados 15 June 1814. He was Governor, but also Commander-in-Chief, thus combining powers both civil and military. The most pressing task he faced was implementation of the terms of the recent Treaty of Paris, restoring the islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique and Saint Martin to the French crown and re-establishing Bourbon rule. His tenure began smoothly enough, as he undertook an initially serene gubernatorial tour of the islands. Yet the embers of Bonapartism were not yet extinguished and news of Napoleon's return to power in March 1815 rekindled the flames.

Leith first had to deal with incipient revolt in Martinique. He rapidly deployed a force of 2,000 British troops and succeeded in 'securing the tranquillity of the Island and preventing the designs of the disaffected.'[71] The situation at Guadeloupe, however, threatened to prove a good deal more difficult. The island openly declared for the

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[70] Welshman Sir Thomas Picton's time in the Caribbean, in particular, has earned him contemporary indignation and notoriety, to the extent that City Hall, Cardiff removed his statue in 2020. Sir Harry Smith (1787-1860) is another such figure; buoyant, attractive and swashbuckling in the Peninsula, but whose later career of unsanctioned land-grabs in Africa and compelling conquered Africans to grovel before him - 'I am your Paramount Chief and the Kaffirs are my dogs!' does not sit well today. See Piers Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire,* (New York: Knopf, 2007), p. 98.
[71] Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p. 148.

Emperor on, of all dates, 18 June 1815.[72] In fact, although news of Waterloo and Napoleon's second abdication did reach the French commander in Guadeloupe, Admiral Charles-Alexandre, the Comte de Linois, prior to the date of Leith's invasion, he chose to ignore it and hence Leith's operation went ahead. Leith was at once faced with a multi-pronged dilemma. Confronting the combined obstacles of serious resistance from the island's Bonapartists, a mountainous terrain favourable to resolute defence, the imminent onset of the hurricane season, and professional naval advice opposing an immediate invasion, he nevertheless pushed through an amphibious operation of boldness and speed. Having swiftly assembled an invasion force of 5,000 infantry and artillery, conveyed by an impressive fleet of more than 50 vessels, Leith effected a successful landing on 8 August. A series of nimble manoeuvres outwitted the island's defenders and prevented their occupying the defensive redoubt of Fort Matilda. Terms of surrender were agreed on 10 August, the invaders' casualties totalling 16 killed, 51 wounded and 4 missing.[73] Thus, a situation that might well have become intractable was dealt with quickly and efficiently and in the space of 48 hours. In recognition of his service at Guadeloupe, the Prince Regent, posthumously in the event, awarded the Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath to Leith. [74] Leith's Despatch noted that 'the conduct of the troops has been most zealous, gallant, and exemplary', and he summed up matters, with understandable self-assertion, as follows:

> When it is considered that this beautiful and extensive colony, with a population of one hundred and ten thousand souls, with forts, and an armed force numerically greater than ours - when it is known that every sanguinary measure had been devised, and that the worst scenes of the Revolution were to be recommenced, that the 15th of August, the birth-day of Bonaparte, was to have been solemnized by the execution of the Royalists, already condemned to death, it is a subject of congratulation to see a Guadaloupe [sic] completely shielded from Jacobin fury in two days, and without the loss of many lives.[75]

So far, so good. Leith's military duties had necessitated absence from Barbados as well as deferral of his civil administrative responsibilities. However, shortly after the triumph at Guadeloupe, he was compelled to return to Barbados following an uprising among the enslaved people there: Bussa's Rebellion or the Endeavour Revolt.[76] Much

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[73]Denis Haggard, 'The Last Fight for Napoleon', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. 14, #56, pp. 231–232.

[74]See Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, Appendix, p. 22.

[75]*Supplement to The London Gazette*, 18 September 1815, p. 1911.

[76]David Lambert, *White Creole Culture, Politics and Identity During the Age of Abolition,* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005), p. 111.

of the island's enslaved population had come to anticipate imminent emancipation upon Leith's assuming office, and their subsequent disappointment flared into an outbreak, chiefly targeting property in the period 14-16 April 1816.[77] From the enslavers' standpoint, a shocking and largely unforeseen irruption in what they had perceived to be a stable, enduring *modus vivendi,* provided Abolitionist 'meddling' could be held at bay, but Leith's experiences in the midst of other uprisings, albeit with differing reasons, in Ireland, Portugal and Spain may have led him to regard the situation with greater detachment than they. He arrived back in Barbados on 24 April, by which time a combined militia and imperial force had swiftly quashed the revolt and the rebels had already suffered savage reprisals. Despite enslavers' fears and the enslaved population's apparent expectations that the soldiers would defect to their side, 'the suppression of the insurrection was due in large measure to the loyalty of the 1st West India Regiment.'[78] According to his biographer-nephew, Leith immediately 'proceeded to the parts of the island where the greatest excesses had been committed, and collecting the slaves upon the several estates, addressed them with that impressive manner, which, ever at [his] command, enabled him with facility to speak to the feelings and understanding of whatever class of society it became necessary to convince.'[79] If Leith-Hay is to be believed, Leith succeeded in reconciling the enslaved population to the *status quo*.[80] On the other hand, and suggesting a less comforting scenario, Leith went on to issue a Proclamation, delivered via intermediaries, stating:

> I have already pointed out to the Slaves how impossible it would be that they should act with violence, without bringing down the severest punishment on those who should henceforward be concerned in any attempt to disturb the Public tranquillity.[81]

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[77]See Gelien Matthews, *Caribbean Slave Revolts and the British Abolitionist Movement,* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), pp. 20–21 and pp. 64-70 for a discussion of the complex skeins of motivation underlying this revolt.

[78]Randolph Jones, 'The Bourbon Regiment and the Barbados Slave Revolt of 1816', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. 78, #313, pp. 3-10 and see Alfred Burdon Ellis, *The History of the First West India Regiment,* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1885).

[79]Leith-Hay, *Memoirs*, p.161.

[80]The Slave Trade was abolished 1 May 1817, but it would take more than three decades before full abolition was achieved in the colonies. See Royal Museums, Greenwich: https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/how-did-slave-trade-end-britain. Accessed 21 January 2023.

[81]*The Barbados Mercury, and Bridge-Town Gazette*, 7 September 1816.

Rapidly thereafter Leith went back to Guadeloupe, only returning to Barbados in August 1816 when he addressed the Assembly in conciliatory fashion, volunteering to take a reduction in salary, vowing to strengthen the military presence and reminding his hearers that he had 'lost not any time, after the unfortunate event of the late insurrection, to remove from the minds of the slave population that delusion which appeared to have been its immediate cause.'[82]

The Barbados House of Assembly, reflecting 'an unparalleled social arrogance' and 'the nearest equivalent in the Caribbean to the racist civilization of the southern United States', had unblinkingly pursued a hard-line stance, bolstered by brutal legislation dating back to the seventeenth century.[83] There are reckoned to have been some 400 active rebels and the ensuing punitive statistics are grim. Martial law had been declared prior to Leith's return from the Guadeloupe campaign but was maintained for a period of three months, during which time a harsh and pitiless litany of executions, torture and deportations was carried out. Whereas the local militia had suffered just a handful of casualties during the days of insurrection, by the end of September the Governor himself reported to Whitehall a bloody roll of 144 enslaved people executed, 70 more under sentence of death, and 123 to be transported to Honduras.[84]

Leith's precise role and motivation in this episode is obscure. As Commander-in-Chief he obviously possessed the plenary power to mount an ambitious military operation, and the natural assumption would be that he might wield the same degree of unquestioned dominance over the island's civil authorities to intervene and limit the duration of the period of martial law – which by any criterion seems a violently disproportionate over-reaction. However, this was evidently not the case or, at least, not Leith's understanding of the situation. During his absences Barbadian civil as well as military affairs were in the hands of the President of the Assembly, John Spooner, and precise division of responsibility between the two men was unclear and fraught with the potential for confusion.[85] In some measure due to Leith's chronologically patchy spells in Barbados, amounting to a total of only some 24 weeks on the island, his was a hands-off approach. Whether this was attributable to callousness, shirking of moral responsibility, a mandate from his political superiors or his own pragmatic

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[82]Robert Hermann Schomburgk, *The History of Barbados,* (London: Longman, 1847), p. 400.

[83]Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains. Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 154.

[84]Hilary Beckles, *Black Rebellion in Barbados. The Struggle Against Slavery, 1627–1838* (Bridgetown: Antilles Publications, 1984), p. 88.

[85]See Schomburgk, *History*, p. 392 which suggests the ambiguity of Leith's status, pointing out that he arrived initially as 'Lieutenant-Governor' but not yet 'Governor-in Chief'.

conviction that the Governor's powers in this arena were to a large extent circumscribed, one has the impression that Leith was much more at home in his military role than the civil.[86]

Naturally, Leith is scarcely the only instance in history of a successful soldier finding themselves enmeshed in the toils of civilian administration and, although military figures can flourish in that arena, what a contrast to the relatively straightforward path of soldiering! For James Leith the available courses of action must have seemed confused, serpentine and vexing. In his assessment of Bussa's Rebellion, dean of Caribbean studies, Hilary Beckles interprets Leith the Governor as in fact little more than a hapless, marginal figure.[87] Scholar Michael Craton is inclined to be more generous, observing that Leith found the 1680s Slave Code under which the island operated as 'extremely defective' and 'was thoroughly fatigued, if not sickened, by the policy of retribution.' At any rate, practically his last act as Governor was to persuade the Barbados Council and Assembly to commute the sentences of those not yet executed to transportation.[88]

Conclusion
James Leith had repeatedly demonstrated his resilience and toughness in surmounting battlefield wounds, fevers and nightmarish campaigns, but on Thursday 10 October 1816 he fell ill with symptoms of Yellow Fever and succumbed on the evening of the following Wednesday, 16 October.[89] His remains were returned to London, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey on 15 March 1817. Echoing other *sotto voce* circumstances in his biography, Leith's passing seems to have generated surprisingly little recognition or fanfaronade. A proposal to erect a statue to him in the Abbey was refused.[90] Acknowledging the incomplete picture we have of James Leith at present, it

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[86]Leith's successor as Governor, Lord Combermere, was to resign in 1820 after just three years in the post citing frustration at having met with the enslavers' enduringly bloody-minded attitudes. See Beckles, *Black Rebellion*, p. 115.

[87]Beckles, *Black Rebellion*, pp. 86–122. And, in fact, Leith's name fails to appear in the book's index.

[88]Craton, *Testing the Chains*, p. 265; and see The UK National Archive (hereinafter TNA) CO 28/85/15 and CO 28/85/11.

[89]Leith made his will on 10 October 1816. 'I James Leith being in perfect possession of my faculties do … give and bequeath … [my] possessions to my widow and my children to be laid out and appropriated for their benefit …' *Will of Sir James Leith. Lieutenant General in His Majesty's Service, Governor and Captain General of Barbados and Commander of the Forces in the Windward and Leeward Caribbean Islands of Barbados, West Indies*. TNA PROB 11/1590/462.

[90]See https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/sir-james-leith. Accessed 14 January 2024.

seems appropriate to leave him in the arena where he most belonged - and in which he comes into clearest view - as 'presiding spirit' of the tempest at Salamanca, 22 July 1812.

Figure 6: The Gravestone of Sir James Leith, Westminster Abbey.[91]

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[91]Copyright: Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

Two Hundred Years of British Army Casualties and Statistics

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ABSTRACT
This paper covers the evolution of medical statistics on the Army from the early nineteenth Century to the present day. Although several policies during this period described the importance of medical statistics for the planning and management of military health services, there have been problems with collecting and analysing medical data at the beginning of the First World War, the Second World War, and the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The paper considers the key features and analytical reports that have been shown necessary to report on the health of the Army and activities of the medical services in peace and war.

Introduction
The Russian surgeon Nikolay Pirogov described war as an epidemic of injuries[1]. As with epidemics of disease, military medical statistics and epidemiology can be used to understand the characteristics of wars on human beings and to measure their impact over time. The armed forces, as an instrument of the state, bear the brunt of the consequences of war, although of course the civilian population may also be seriously impacted by conflict. Governments may be expected to report the number of deaths and injuries within their armed forces during war and may suffer political consequences if the public perceive this cost to be too high. The leadership of the armed forces also needs their personnel to be fit to fight which places a requirement on the medical services to report statistics on the medical fitness of the armed forces and the effectiveness of the military medical system in returning the sick and injured to duty. This paper will examine the history of casualty statistics within the British Army and

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[1]Inge F Hendriks, James G Bovill, Peter A van Luijt, and Pancras CW Hogendoorn, 'Nikolay Ivanovich Pirogov (1810–1881): A pioneering Russian surgeon and medical scientist', *Journal of Medical Biography*, 26,1 (2016), pp. 10-22.

the wider UK armed forces in peace and war and discuss how the sources of data and analysis have evolved. Whilst primarily based on 'official statistics' published by the Government, it will also consider the importance of statistics published in medical journals and military publications. In closing, the paper will make recommendations for the medical statistics that should be collated on the armed forces in peace and war and how these might be used to inform personnel and medical policy in the future. The analysis particularly highlights the importance of Royal Commissions and other external inquiries in directing the Government to capture data to describe the impact of war on armed forces personnel and to explain how military casualties and Veterans are provided healthcare.

Medical statistics of the armed forces are compiled from periodic 'reports and returns' that are initiated by medical units and passed to a central office. At the most basic level, these comprise events such as deaths, admissions to hospital, and discharge from the armed forces on medical grounds – medical discharge or invaliding. These events may be classified by broad cause, such as battle injury, infectious disease, chronic disease etc., or may be clinically coded using agreed definitions such as the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). Each record may also be associated with demographic data such as age, rank, gender, military unit, treating medical unit, and location. When aggregated, these records can provide numbers over time and location, and rates when linked to the total military population at risk. This is the core "person, place, time" of descriptive epidemiology[2]. Collated data can be analysed and compared to examine issues such as demand, causation, outcome, and trends. Such analysis is useful for a retrospective analysis of 'what happened' but, more importantly, it can help to develop strategies for preventing ill-health and contributes to predicting demand or casualty rates in order to inform planning of health services. This is the essence of the role of the military doctor in advising the chain of command in the protection of health, the prevention of disease, and the allocation of resources to the medical services. The relationship between the medical services and the executive in their respective interest in the well-being and fitness of the armed forces is an interesting example of military 'sociology'.[3]

The word 'statistics' had first entered the lexicon in 1749 when it was used by Gottfried Achenwall in Germany as 'Statistik' to describe the political, economic and social status of a country.[4] Initially in narrative form, it quickly evolved to include

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[2]Lewis H Kuller, 'Epidemiology: then and now', *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 183, 5 (2016), pp. 372-380.
[3]Martin Bricknell, and David Ross, 'Fit to Fight – from military hygiene to wellbeing in the British Army', *Military Medical Research*, 7, 1 (2020), pp. 1-7
[4]George Rosen, *A History of Public Health*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015).

numerical data, described as 'political arithmetic'. In 1786, the Scotsman Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster (1754-1835) encountered the concept whilst on a tour of northern Europe and adapted it to a more general description of the 'state of the country', including the 'quantum of happiness' of its people i.e. their wellbeing, and leading to the publication starting in 1791 of his groundbreaking 21-volume *Statistical Account of Scotland*, based on data provided to him by parish Ministers.[5] This was the beginning of a growing interest in collecting and publishing data, including on the incidence of diseases and mortality, which in due course was to have a profound influence on medical planning in the armed forces.

The British government has a long history of publishing medical statistics on the health of the armed forces. Although statistics had been collected during the Peninsular War (1807-1814), these were not published. The first published statistics appeared in 1835 in Colburn's United Services Magazine, following a careful analysis of sickness and mortality rates by Sir Alexander Tulloch (1803-1864), an infantry officer. Tulloch's work came to the attention of the Secretary of State for War, Lord Grey, who commissioned him to prepare further analyses for Parliament, in collaboration with Thomas Graham Balfour (1813-1891).[6] These were published as a series of 'Blue Books' between 1838 and 1841. As will be described later, routine publication of military medical statistics began in 1861. These formed the evidence base for a profound change in the level to which the military leadership would be held accountable for the health of their personnel. In the twentieth century, specific volumes on casualties and medical statistics were published as part of the official histories of the First World War and the Second World War.[7] However, these were not published until as late as 1931 and 1972 respectively and so were of no value in the immediate postwar periods. The Ministry of Defence published a series of comparable datasets from the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan during the first two decades of the twenty-first century but it took some time before the suite of information represented a full picture. Part of this delay in compiling medical statistics during wartime can be accounted for by the sheer volume of material and the limited staff available to conduct the analysis of the wartime medical records. It might also be partly explained by the political sensitivity of such information entering the public

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[5]John Sinclair, *The Statistical Account of Scotland. Drawn up from the communications of the ministers of the different parishes* (Edinburgh: William Creech, 1791).
[6]Richard Froggatt, 'Sir Alexander Tulloch (1803-1864): Soldier; army reformer'. *Dictionary of Ulster Biography,* http://www.newulsterbiography.co.uk/index.php/home/viewPerson/1994. Accessed 24 Dec 23)
[7]Thomas John Mitchell, and Miss GM Smith, *Medical services: casualties and medical statistics of the Great War,* (London: HMSO, 1931); Franklin W. Mellor (ed.), *Casualties and medical statistics*. Vol. 6, (London: HMSO, 1972).

domain. Medical statistics during war are likely to have a high level of security classification in order to prevent the enemy interpreting them as a measure of military success or political vulnerability. This fact has been demonstrated by the lack of authoritative information on the casualty figures for either side in the current Russian/Ukrainian war. Thus, whilst official government publications may be the only source of reliable information on casualties and medical statistics in the armed forces, their production may be delayed, and any statistics promulgated during the conflict may be of questionable provenance and accuracy. It may take external inquiries or public pressure to oblige governments to place this information into the public domain.

The Birth of Official Military Medical Statistics in the Nineteenth Century
The nineteenth century saw important advances in the collection and publication of statistics on the health of armed forces. The first Statistical Report on the Health of the Royal Navy was published in 1840 covering the years 1830-1836, and set in place a legacy for the Royal Navy Medical Services.[8] Dr James McGrigor (1771-1858), as the Director General Army Medical Services (1815-1851), established the first formal series of returns on the health of British Army in the mid-1800s, having proven the value of statistical returns during his service in the Peninsular War. These reports were prepared by Tulloch and Balfour, continuing their earlier work, but as Balfour recounts, 'The outbreak of the Crimean War [1853-1856] put an end to our labours in this direction'.[9] Undoubtedly a contributory factor was McGrigor's retirement three years earlier, at the age of 74 years.[10] Soon after the Crimean War a Royal Commission was established to review the medical arrangements for the British Army as a result of multiple failures including a huge death toll from potentially preventable diseases.[11] The Commission's report marked the start of a half century of sanitary reform and reorganisation of the medical services of the British Army. It included a recommendation to compile and publish medical statistics on the British Army. An

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[8]F. P. Ellis, 'The health of the Navy: the changing pattern', *Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 26, 3 (1969), pp. 190-201. http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/oem.26.3.190

[9]Graham T Balfour, 'The Opening Address of Dr. T. Graham Balfour, FRS, &c, Honorary Physician to Her Majesty the Queen, President of the Royal Statistical Society. Session 1889-90. Delivered 19th November, 1889', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 52, 4 (1889) pp. 517-534. https://doi.org/10.2307/2979100

[10]M. W Russell, 'Sir James McGrigor', *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 13,2 (1909), pp. 117-148.

[11]*Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Regulations Affecting the Sanitary Condition of the Army, the Organization of Military Hospitals, and the Treatment of the Sick and Wounded: With Evidence and Appendix. Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty*. (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1858).

innovative feature of these newly-reported statistics was the ability to make a comparison of mortality between personnel in the Army stationed in the United Kingdom and civilians. The report presented carefully curated data which showed that the soldiers on home service had nearly double the rate of mortality compared to an age-matched civilian population, and substantially greater mortality than broadly equivalent occupations such as agricultural labourers, outdoor trades in cities, and miners. Many of the statistical analyses presented in the report have been attributed to Florence Nightingale and her innovative approach to the presentation of data.[12] As a result of the report the Secretary-at-War set up a committee to define statistical policy for the Army.[13] The first Report of the Army Medical Department was published in 1861, covering the year 1859[14]. Instructions for the completion of statistical returns for these reports were contained in various editions of the regulations for the Army Medical Department.[15] The annual reports on the health of the army (published under a range of titles over the years) provide a rich source of comparative data of hospital admissions and mortality between military commands within the United Kingdom and overseas commands.[16] They also provide data on the medical examination of recruits and the numbers and causes of medical invaliding – discharge from army service for health reasons.[17] The Royal Commission also augmented the role of the Army Medical Officer with additional direction, beyond care of the sick, to 'advise commanding officers in all matters affecting the health of troops, whether as regards garrisons, stations, camps, and barracks, or diet, clothing, drill, duties or exercises'. In 1864, Edmund Parkes (1819-1876), as the first Professor of Military Hygiene at the Army Medical School, published 'A Manual of Practical Hygiene for use by the medical service of the Army' which made extensive use of health statistics to illustrate the importance

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[12]S Rosenbaum, 'Report of the Royal Sanitary Commission (1858)', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 106, 1 (1960), pp. 1-11.

[13]Committee on the Preparation of Army Medical Statistics, and on the Duties to be Performed by the Statistical Branch of the Army Medical Department (London: House of Commons, Parliamentary Papers, 21 June 1861)

[14]Army Medical Department. Statistical, Sanitary and Medical Reports for the year 1859. (London: HMSO, 1861) https://books.google.com.au/books?id=ESBcAAAAQAAJ&pg=PP11#v=onepage&q&f=false. Accessed 14 October 2024.

[15]An example is Part 6 Statistical Regulations of Regulations for the Medical Department of Her Majesty's Army. (London: HMSO 1878) https://wellcomecollection.org/works/r7v35w22. Accessed 14 October 2024.

[16]By military district in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland; By overseas command, Mediterranean, Canada, West Indies, Africa, Ceylon, China, Japan, and India.

[17]A list of online copies of Army Medical Department Reports 1959-1906 compiled by Dr Beverly Bergman is available at: https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/fightdisease/. Accessed 14 October 2024.

of preventive medicine in advising the chain of command on standards for water supply, rations and accommodation to keep the army healthy.[18] The regular publication of official statistics on the health of the Army and Navy provided the evidence to show how the improvements in military accommodation and sanitation led to a reduction in sickness and death in both services.[19] As described later, these core data sets continue to form the basis of contemporary military medical statistics produced by the health section of the Defence Statistics branch of the UK Ministry of Defence. The relative risk of death from military service compared to civilians continued to be a topic for statisticians. One early paper on this topic published in the Journal of the Institute of Actuaries in 1898 showed that the 'average extra rates of mortality which may for life insurance purposes be considered as incident to service in the British Navy and Army, is, that these may be fairly taken at 6 per 1,000 for the Navy, and 10 per 1,000 for the Army'.[20] Later in this paper we will consider how the health impact of military service compared to the referent age/gender matched civilian population continues to be a contemporary political topic, especially in relation to mental health, suicide and exposure to military hazards such as radiation from past atomic bomb experiments.

The Royal Army Medical Corps came into being in 1898 and had not had time to reorganise its services by the start of the South African War. The subsequent Royal Commission inquiry found many deficiencies in the organisation of the Army Medical Services during the South African War (1899-1902) as a result of being 'overworked, undermanned, and under-orderlied' and especially challenged by outbreaks of typhoid fever.[21] Notably Sir Almroth Wright's typhoid vaccine had started to be used but the constraints of war and Wright's aversion to statistics prevented the collection of data on its efficacy.[22] The primary data for casualties and medical statistics were published

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[18]Edmund Parkes, 'Manual of Practical Hygiene. Prepared especially for use in the medical service of the Army'. (London: Churchill & Sons, 1864) https://wellcomecollection.org/works/jwgpcjyz/items?canvas=5. Accessed 14 October 2024.

[19]Thomas Graham Balfour, 'Comparative health of seamen and soldiers, as shown by the naval and military statistical reports', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 35, 1(1872), pp. 1-24.

[20]James J McLauchlan, 'On the Mortality of the British Navy and Army, as shown by the Official Reports', *Journal of the Institute of Actuaries*, 34, 3 (1898) pp. 251-281.

[21]'Report of the Royal Commission on the South African War', *The British Medical Journal*, 2, 2226 (1903), pp. 484–487.

[22]Henderson J. The Plato of Praed Street: the Life and Times of Almroth Wright. J R Soc Med. 94(7) (2001), pp.364–365; William Leishman, 'Anti-typhoid inoculation', *Glasgow Medical Journal*, 77,6, (1912), pp. 401-410.

in the report of the Royal Commission on the South African War.[23] Unfortunately the staff employed to collate medical statistics from the South African War were disbanded before an official report was published, though the data were eventually added to the volume on casualties and medical statistics in the medical services series of the Official History of the Great War.[24] These data, plus an analysis of the War Office death registration system, were used to plot the mortality rate against each month in the campaign, with the primary purpose of calculating the annual premium required to provide £100 of life assurance by type of service – officers, NCOs and soldiers, based on the estimation of the value of a soldier's life at £100 by Dr Burke, late Inspector-General of Hospitals in Bengal.[25]A further analysis of these medical statistics was published in the Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps.[26] This important and well-researched paper starts with a discussion on estimating the number of troops at risk based on the records of soldiers who disembarked ships on arrival in South Africa. The paper shows how 'wastage rates per thousand' as a combination of deaths and invaliding home varied according to the phases of the war. The paper then examines admissions and deaths from fevers, dysentery, other diseases and hostile action and compares these rates with other military campaigns in Africa from the late 1800s. It challenged the previous criticisms of the Army Medical Services by showing that the case-fatality rates for fevers was much lower in this war than other shorter wars from the same period. The data analysis published by the Royal Commission also had an additional outcome; beyond the medical statistics from the actual war, the data from official recruiting and military medical statistics on the medical examination of entrants to the Army focussed attention on the parlous state of the general health of the British male working-age population. This resulted in a formal Parliamentary inquiry into the physical condition of the working classes and a range of measures to improve general civilian public health, chiefly in order that there would sufficient fit men of working age to be recruited into the Army at a time of national crisis.[27]

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[23]Royal Commission on the South African War. (London: HMSO, 1903)

[24]Casualties and Medical Statistics of the Great War. Ref 7.

[25]Frederick Schooling and Edward A. Rusher, 'The Mortality Experiences of the Imperial Forces during the War in South Africa, 11 October 1899 to 31 May 1902', *Journal of the Institute of Actuaries*, 37,6 (1903), pp. 545-627; J. R. Martin, 'The Health and Efficiency Of The British Troops In India', *The British Medical Journal*, 90, 2 (1858), pp. 798-799.

[26]John Ritchie Simpson, 'Medical History of the South African War'. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 14, 3 (1910), pp. 23-38.

[27]Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration (London: HMSO, 1905)

The impact of formal reporting and analysis of statistics on the health of the Army can be observed in the content of military medical training publications used in the instruction of members of the Royal Army Medical Corps for their role during this period. The 1911 edition of Royal Army Medical Corps Training has a whole section devoted to sanitation or the prevention of disease. This includes a table of statistics extracted from the annual reports on the health of the army showing the reduction in admissions and deaths in different overseas commands between 1860 and 1909.[28] The 1912 Edition of the Manual of Elementary Military Hygiene (the successor to Parkes' Manual of Practical Hygiene) contains a table showing admissions and deaths for British troops in war, categorised by disease and action, for all wars from the Crimean War to the South African War.[29] Thus, at the start of the twentieth century, it was being taught that disease rather than battle injury was the biggest cause of hospital admission and death during war, and that public health measures were the most important medical intervention that would keep the Army healthy. Whilst data from the Boer War could have also been used to inform the 'casualty estimate' function within medical planning, at the start of the First World War the British Army was still using the formula created by the Austrian General Cron, based on historical data on casualties from European wars. He assumed that in a battle, only 3/5 of the force would be at risk and that 15% would become casualties, namely 10% of the whole force.[30] Whilst moderately accurate for the Crimean War, this was to prove hopelessly low in respect of the major battles of the First World War, when casualties were incurred on a scale never previously seen. However, by the Second World War, this formula was again able to provide a reasonable estimate.[31] Thus, by the beginning of the First World War, the British Army was publishing reliable data on the peacetime workload of the Army Medical Services but there was no viable plan for the analysis of war casualties and medical statistics which could reliably inform medical planning.

The First World War: 1914-1918
Preparations for writing a medical history of the war were established soon after the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. The Director General Army Medical Services (DGAMS) Lt Gen Sir Alfred Keogh (1857-1936) issued instructions for the formal collection and archiving of war diaries and other sources centrally. In addition, the national Medical Research Committee, later to become the Medical Research Council, established a statistical department to support the Army Medical Services for analysis of medical statistics and the scientific investigation of war injuries and disease. The

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[28]Royal Army Medical Corps Training. (London: HMSO, War Office, 1911), pp.14-15.
[29]Manual of Elementary Military Hygiene. (London: HMSO, War Office 1912), p. 78.
[30]T. B. Nichols. *Organisation, Strategy and Tactics of the Army Medical Services in War*. (London: Balliere, Tindall and Cox, 1937), pp. 46-56.
[31]A. J. Shaw, 'Medical planning factors', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 122, 4 (1976), pp. 208-214.

process involved reviewing over 38,000 war diaries and other documents.[32] Each of the volumes of the Medical History of the War contains basic numbers of killed, wounded, missing in action, and died of wounds for each campaign and phase of the war across the principal geographic areas of operations alongside the organisation and capacity of the medical services. [33] The First World War saw the introduction of chemical warfare, a novel cause of war casualties and a new challenge for the medical services. The volumes also record the leading diagnostic categories for the sick and wounded. The epidemiological features of individual conditions are covered by the volumes on clinical services – pathology, disease, hygiene, and surgery. These volumes contain insights into the scale of wounded and sick, and their treatment by the Army Medical Services. However, they do not provide a comparison of the activities and performance of the medical system in historical context nor any data on the whole medical system at a strategic level including the long-term impact of the cost of the war injured on the Ministry of Pensions. Unfortunately, the volume on Casualties and Medical Statistics could not be completed within the time allocated to the other volumes and did not appear until much later.

Notwithstanding the delay, it was considered that the First World War statistical information would still be of use for (a) military purposes in future wars; (b) medical purposes for the Army Medical Services; (c) medical purposes for the medical history of the war; and (d) general medical scientific purposes. This would be based on the data contained on individual medical record cards that had been transcribed from admission and discharge books sent by each medical unit to the War Office (prior to 1916), or from cards that were initiated by medical units (after 1916). These cards recorded a single episode of care for a single person and were collated by the Ministry of Pensions in order to corroborate claims for disability pensions. This information was then coded onto a 'Hollerith Card'[34] that could be read by a 'tabulator' which used an electric counter to count each dimension in a selected group of cards.[35] This process was further refined in September 1921 and initially formed the basis for the data for subsequent editions of the Annual Report on the Health of the Army.[36] Regulations for the Medical Services of the Army contained the detailed instructions

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[32]'The Official Medical History of the War', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 43,3 (1924), pp. 213-219.
[33]The last of the eleven volumes of the original series was published in 1924.
[34]An early type of punched card
[35]Director of Statistics. 'Medical (War) Records', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 41,2 (1923), pp. 131-136.
[36]A. M. D. 2. 'Medical Statistics', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 44, 6 (1925), pp. 411-419.

for the provision of statistical returns and the Hospital Case Card (AF 11220) to the War Office.[37]

After much effort, including adjustments to the scope and number of personnel assigned to the analysis to cope with the quantity of data, the volume on Casualties and Medical Statistics of the medical history of the Great War was eventually published in 1931.[38] This concentrated on providing data and analysis of casualties, manpower, and wastage to inform military officers, administrative staff and medical officers in the estimation of the demand on the medical services for future wars.[39] The introduction to this volume provides a full description of the challenges in collating around 30 million individual index cards on every admission and discharge from medical units during the war. The first chapter describes the manpower data on the size of the British Army and the allocation of troops to campaigns and battles that provide the denominator for all calculations of rates. The second two chapters cover high level data on battle casualties and non-battle casualties respectively. There were 11,096,338 British and Dominion casualties of whom 91.54% were treated by the medical services; the remainder were either killed or became prisoners of war. Of the sick or wounded admitted to medical units, 3.04% died, 58.1% were returned to duty within that theatre of war, and 37.4% were evacuated home. Subsequent chapters followed a standard framework covering the strength of the force, classification of casualties, admissions to hospital, hospital accommodation in the lines of communication, and principle causes of non-battle casualties.[40] The book also presented the data from the Boer War in the same structure. The volume of index cards for the period 1916-1920 was so great that a sample of 1.04 million cards was analysed to provide reference percentages as a proportion of the total for topics such as cause of wounds such as weapon, accident, self-inflicted, old injury, type of wound such as flesh wound, major fracture, minor fracture, dislocation, anatomical location of wound, period in hospital, and disease diagnosis. The final chapter summarises the numbers of personnel awarded compensation by the Ministry of Pensions for physical or mental disablement arising from a wound, injury, or disease caused by war service. From 1919-1929, a total of 4,878,285 medical assessments had been undertaken and 27.7 percent of those who had served were in receipt of a war disablement pension. As observed after the Boer War, there was also a crisis of recruiting for the armed forces in the later years of the First World War. Whilst primarily an issue for the Adjutant General, the system of

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[37]Regulations for the Medical Services of the Army (London: HMSO, 1923), pp. 50-55.
[38]Casualties and Medical Statistics of the Great War. Ref 6.
[39]The term "manpower" reflects its contemporary military usage as a measure of available personnel, and has no implications as to gender, with casualties being a loss of effective manpower.
[40]By rank (officer or other rank), nationality (British or Dominion).

medical examination of entrants was also revised. [41] After many false starts, a Ministry for National Service was created and the task of classifying recruits into categories of fitness was subordinated to civilian local government.[42] Similar to the conclusions after the Boer War, this whole process reignited awareness of the importance of the health of the working age population as a strategic economic and military asset.[43]

The data on medical activities and invaliding contained in the volumes of the 'Medical History of the Great War' represent a formalisation of the data included in the Royal Commission investigations that occurred previously after the Crimean War and the South African War. Indeed, the preface to Volume 1 laments the pre-war situation that

> the facts and lessons taught by war have to be searched for in reports of Royal Commissions and of parliamentary, interdepartmental, and War Office committees ; in the appendices to the annual reports of the Army Medical Department ; in general publications and articles in journals ; in Continental literature ; as well as amongst other documents, many of which are untabulated and their existence not generally known.[44]

Chapter II of the Medical History of the Great War is quoted in the 1935 edition of Royal Army Medical Corps Training as the source of data to estimate casualties from future conflicts.[45] The chapter on 'calculation of casualties' in Nicholls' book on the organisation, strategy and tactics of the Army Medical Services in war analyses this data in much greater depth and provides a fuller description of the calculation of a casualty estimate for a campaign.[46] Both Royal Army Medical Corps Training 1935 and the 1938 edition of Regulations for the Medical Services of the Army contained

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[41]The Adjutant General performs the function of the Director of Human Resources in the Army.

[42]Sir W.G. Macpherson. Chapter VII The Medical Examination of Recruits, in *History of the Great War based on official documents by direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Medical Services: General History Vol. 1,* (London: Macmillan, 1921), pp. 118-137.

[43]Jay Murray Winter, 'Military fitness and civilian health in Britain during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5, 2 (1980), pp. 211-244.

[44]Sir W.G. Macpherson. Preface, in *History of the Great War based on official documents by direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Medical Services: General History Vol. 1,* (London: Macmillan, 1921), p. vii.

[45]Royal Army Medical Corps Training WO 26/2883. (London: HMSO, 1935), pp. 107-111.

[46]T.B. Nichols. *Organisation, Strategy and Tactics of the Army Medical Services in War*. Ref 31.

detailed instructions for the completion of reports and returns during war and peace in order to provide the data for the compilation of medical statistics by Army Medical Directorate 2 (AMD 2) in the War Office.[47]

The Second World War: 1939-1945
As with the First World War, the compilation of statistics and the publication of the routine annual report on the health of the army was suspended at the start of the Second World War. Surprisingly, there was no plan for the collection and compilation of medical statistics in this conflict, which was further compounded by the absence of data on the many military casualties treated in the UK by the civilian emergency medical services. However, by 1941, an editorial board had been established to direct the work to collect and review material ready for the production of an official history of the medical services from this war. The scope was expanded to cover the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, the civilian medical services, and the medical services of the Commonwealth forces. It was intended to include statistics within the text of individual volumes and to publish a special volume on the topic.[48]

As with the analysis of medical data from the First World War, the first challenge was to collect the reports and returns from the individual operational theatres, based on two sources: personal medical documents and consolidated medical returns. The primary personal medical documents were the field medical card Army Form (AF) W3118 and the hospital record AF 11220. All AF 11220 forms were coded using punched cards and this provided the data for collating disease statistics. These coded medical returns were consolidated into a single report, AF W3180, by districts and commands with information from medical units, military hospitals, civilian hospitals, convalescent depots, and other sources. Inevitably, many records were lost in-transit due to enemy action. Beyond this there were issues with compliance with War Office instructions and oversight of the quality of data before it arrived at the War Office. Thus, there were several reviews and revisions to the procedures during the war.[49] The changes resulted in the formation of an Army Medical Statistics Branch that had three functions: current administration in the form of hospital admission information

[47]Regulations for the Medical Services of the Army. (London: HMSO, 1938), pp. 146-159.
[48]A. S. MacNalty. 'The Official Medical History of the War', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 81,2 (1943), pp. 51-60.
[49]AE Crew, (ed.) Chapter 12 Hospitals, Convalescent Depots; Medical Embarkation and Distribution, Medical Documentation; Rehabilitation, Invaliding, in *Volume 1. Administration. The Army Medical Services. History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Medical Series,* (London: HMSO, 1953), pp. 428-433.

and the health of Army personnel; long-term planning utilising comparisons between population groups (location, employment, ethnicity etc); and medical research.[50]

The denominators for all medical statistics were derived from the government paper on the 'Strength and Casualties of the Armed Forces and Auxiliary Services of the United Kingdom 1939-1945' published in June 1946.[51] The first analysis was the Statistical Report on the Health of the Army 1943-45 published in 1948.[52] This only covered the last three years of the war and did not contain rates per thousand, only comparative (relative) rates between commands. The report covered several topics: medical wastage rates based on evacuations from operational theatres and invaliding from the Army; medical categorisation and anthropometric measurements of recruits; medical (including nurses and dentists) manpower relative to the Army populations at risk; surgical casualties during the battle for Normandy in 1944; psychiatric morbidity; and some clinical trials data on the efficacy of penicillin in treating war wounds and venereal disease. Much of the tabulated data was visualised using graphics and charts. One important chart, reproduced as Figure 1, showed the proportionate disposal of patients admitted to medical units in Normandy broken down between injured, sick and psychiatric patients and their disposal between returning to unit (RTU), evacuation to UK, medical reclassification, and medical invaliding. The structure and format of this chart became a common visualisation for casualty estimation in training manuals for medical planning.[53]

Each of the Campaigns volumes of the medical series of the Official History of the Second World War contains health data for individual campaigns and geographical commands. The volume on the campaign in North-West Europe contains a specific chapter on the health of the troops of 21st Army Group and compares this data with the experience from the First Word War.[54] This showed a reduction in admissions from enemy action to hospital per week per 1000 strength from 7 during 1914-18 to 2.4 for October to December 1944 and a reduction for sick and non-enemy injury from 12.3 to 5.5. The chapter also reproduced the analyses of casualty data from field

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[50]HG Mayne. Army Medical Services, in Mellor WF (ed.), *Casualties and Medical Statistics. History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Medical Series*, (London: HMSO, 1972), p. 99.

[51]Strength and Casualties of the Armed Forces and Auxiliary Services of the United Kingdom 1939-1945. Cmd 6832. (London: HMSO, 1946).

[52]Statistical Report on the Health of the Army 1943-45. (London: HMSO, 1948).

[53]An example is Serial 41 Personnel Casualty Estimate Chp 3 – Sect 41 – Page 1 of the Staff Officer's Handbook. Army Code Number 71038. D/DGD&D/18/35/54. Jul 1999.

[54]Chapter 10 Health of the Troops, in FAE Crew (ed.), *Volume IV North-West Europe. The Army Medical Services. History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Medical Series*. (London: HM Stationary Office, 1962), pp. 560-636.

medical cards for casualties wounded in the period of the assault on Normandy immediately following the D Day landings, June 6 to July 31 1944, and their long-term outcome, which had been previously published in the earlier Statistical Report.
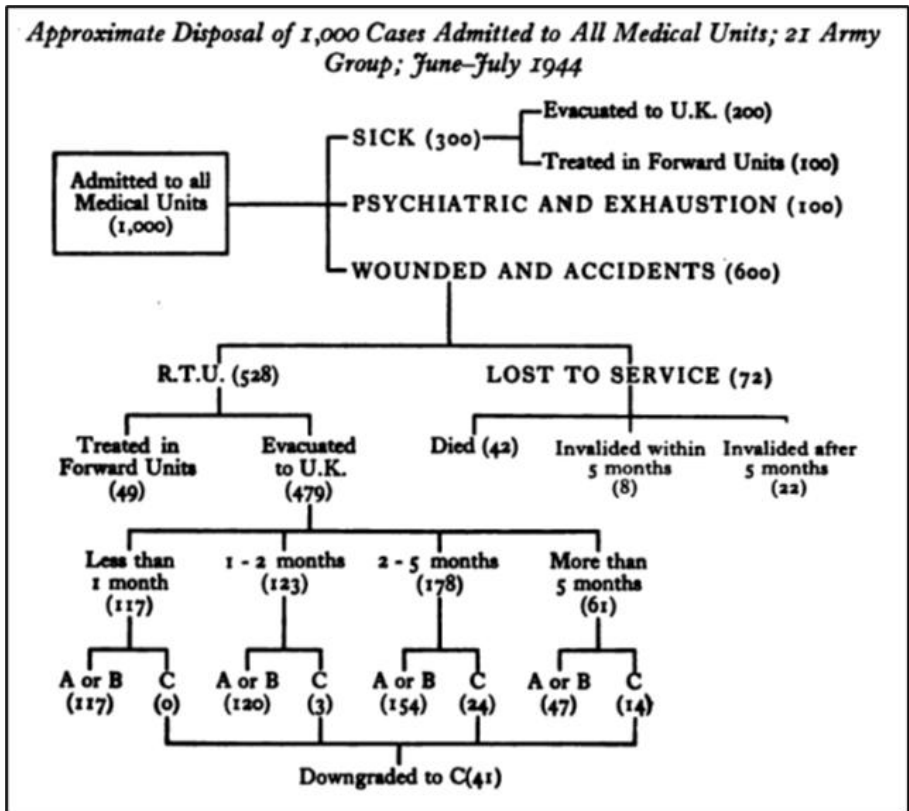
Figure 1: Disposal of Cases – June to July 1944.[55]

The volume on Casualties and Medical Statistics for the three military Services, Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, and the civilian emergency medical services was finally published in 1972.[56] It is a very comprehensive historical record covering deaths and hospital admissions in the main theatres of war, and the causes of medical discharge, invaliding, for the period 1943-1945. This volume also provides a record of the

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[55]Chapter 10 Health of the Troops, in FAE Crew (ed.)*, Volume IV North-West Europe. The Army Medical Services. History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Medical Series. (London: HM Stationary Office, 1962), p. 619.

[56]Franklin W. Mellor (ed.), *Casualties and medical statistics* Ref 7.

challenges faced by each of the medical statistics branches of the Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force during the war and the reasons for incompleteness of the datasets. However, this volume lacks the interpretive analysis that was contained in the equivalent volume from the First World War. Fortunately, the final volume in the medical history series – Principal Medical Lessons of the Second World War – contains a comparison of the calculations of casualty rates referring to 'Cron, the Great War Casualties and Medical Statistics' volume, Nicholls, and data later published in the Second World War Casualties and Medical Statistics volume.[57] This analysis had already been incorporated into the medical planning guidance within the RAMC Training Pamphlet on Army Medical Services in the Field in 1950.[58] Medical planning calculations were contained in subsequent training publications such as 'Medical Support in the Field', published as an internal pamphlet in 1981, and editions of the Staff Officers' Handbook.[59]

Towards the Twenty-First Century
Although the volumes of the Official Histories provide a useful summary of the evolution of casualty statistics during the Second World War, the delay between the end of the war and their publication means that they do not entirely reflect the implementation of learning in respect of measuring the health of the army and casualty estimation since 1945. A review by Rosenbaum, from the Statistics Branch of the Army Medical Directorate (AMD), published in 1958 summarised some of the post-war changes. After the dissolution of the statistics branch of the Directorate of Medical Research, the function was absorbed into the Directorate of Army Health in 1947. It then regained its independence as AMD Statistics (AMD Stats) in 1951.[60] The 1950 edition of the Handbook of Army Health contained statistics on the causes of manpower wastage from the Army during World War 2 including admission data from the campaigns in North Africa and the Central Mediterranean. This showed that hospital admissions for sickness were much greater than battle injuries and accidents. It also included data from South-East Asia Command to emphasise the importance of leadership in the reduction of malaria cases.[61] Rosenbaum personally published papers

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[57]Arthur Salusbury MacNalty and W. Franklin Mellor. *Principal Medical Lessons of the Second World War*. History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Medical Series. (London: HMSO, 1968), pp. 135-142.
[58]Army Medical Services in the Field. RAMC Training Pamphlet No2. WO Code 5672. (London: War Office. 28 July 1950), pp. 16-22.
[59]See reference 64.
[60]Simon Rosenbaum, 'Army Medical Department Statistics', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 104, 3 (1958), pp. 164-165.
[61]Handbook of Army Health. WO Code 5691. (London: War Office, 1950), pp. 1-3.

on the anthropometric data of recruits and the medical fitness of recruits.[62] The function of AMD Stats as contained in the 1965 Manual of Army Health was primarily to analyse, comment and advise on medical statistics for the Army based on the FMed (forms, medical) system that replaced the previous AF series documents.[63] This detail had been dropped by the 1976 edition of the Handbook of Army Health.[64] The procedure for managing FMeds and the despatch of relevant documents to the AMD Stats continued to be described in the Manual for Medical Assistants[65] and Regulations for the Army Medical Services.[66]

There were no official publications that contained data on the casualties and medical statistics from the military campaigns of the second half of the twentieth century. However, there are multiple papers in the academic medical literature that provide snapshots of the clinical experience of the Army Medical Services from the Northern Ireland Troubles, the Falklands War, and the Gulf War of 1990.[67] Official health statistics from military operations from this period are dominated by the studies into the unofficially-named 'Gulf War syndrome' as a cause of ill-health amongst veterans who served in the Middle East.[68] It should be noted that these statistical studies mirror previous concerns about the long-term impacts of exposure to health threats whilst

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[62]Simon Rosenbaum, 'Heights and weights of the army intake, 1951', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A (General)*,117,3 (1954) pp. 331-347; Simon Rosenbaum, 'Cross-sectional review of morbidity among young soldiers', *British Journal of Preventive & Social Medicine*,13, 3 (1959) p. 103; Simon Rosenbaum, 'Experience of PULHEEMS in the 1952 Army intake', *British Journal of Industrial Medicine,* 14, 4 (1957), pp. 281-286; Simon Rosenbaum, 'The Association of Medical Discharges from the Army with Initial Grading', *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 10,6 (1960), pp. 111-118.
[63]Manual of Army Health. War Office ACN 10157. (London: HMSO, 1965), pp. 404-405.
[64]Handbook of Army Health. Army Code 61257 (London: Ministry of Defence, 1976).
[65]Manual For Medical Assistants. Army Code 61535 (London: Ministry of Defence, 1987) p. 25-3-16.
[66]Regulations for the Army Medical Services continued to be published as updated editions until 1984. It was previously known as Regulations for the Medical Services of the Army.
[67]Examples of such papers are: Cameron Moffat, 'British Forces Casualties Northern Ireland', *J Royal Army Med Corps*, 122, (1976), pp. 3-8; A. R. Marsh, 'A short but distant war-the Falklands campaign', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 76, 11 (1983), pp. 972-982; T. J. W Spalding, M. P. M. Stewart, D. N. Tulloch, and K. M. Stephens, 'Penetrating missile injuries in the Gulf war 1991', *British Journal* of *Surgery*, 78, 9 (1991), pp. 1102-1104.
[68]Simon Wessely, 'Ten years on: what do we know about the Gulf War syndrome? King's College Gulf War Research Unit', *Clin Med (Lond)*, 1,1 (2001), pp. 28-37..

on military service. In 1983 the Ministry of Defence commissioned the Nuclear Weapons Test Participants Study (NWTPS) as a long-term epidemiological study of the health of UK personnel who were present at UK atomic bomb atmospheric tests conducted between 1952 and 1967.[69] A later example is the 2003 Porton Down Veterans Cohort Study to investigate the long-term health effects of exposure to chemical weapons during research at the Porton Down government research establishment.[70] Meanwhile, military medical planning was still primarily concerned with the threat of war in Central Europe and the potential for the employment of nuclear and chemical weapons. The specific detail of the casualty estimates from this period remain classified, though some insights can be found from a paper on medical planning factors published in 1976.[71] This paper cites much of the previous work already described and emphasises the collaboration between countries of the NATO alliance in the historical analysis and forecast for casualty rates. The British Army Staff Officers Handbook of 1999 provided a flow chart to estimate the number and types of casualties from military operations against the Warsaw Pact forces.[72]

The statistics branches of the three Services (including the health statistics branches) and other parts of the Ministry of Defence were merged into the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) in 1992. In 2008 this was changed to Defence Analytical Services and Advice following changes to the nomenclature of the Defence agencies. This then split in 2013 to form Defence Economics and Defence Statistics, with Defence Statistics (Health) as a specific branch of the latter dedicated to the collation of data and the production of official statistics on the health of the armed forces and veterans, the data now complying with the National Statistics standard. The Army Medical Services adopted electronic health records during the late 1990s, and these were eventually integrated into a single system for the Defence Medical Services (DMS) as the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). This led to the replacement of paper versions of FMeds with electronic versions as the routine source of data for collation and analysis.

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[69]Nuclear Weapons Test Participants Study (NWTPS): Information Sheet. London: UK Health Security Agency, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-weapons-test-participants-study/nuclear-weapons-test-participants-study-information-sheet. Accessed 20 Aug 2024.
[70]The Porton Down Veterans Cohort Study.
https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/portondownstudy. Accessed 20 Aug 24.
[71]A.J. Shaw. Medical planning factors. *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 122, 4 (1976), pp. 208-214.
[72]Personnel Casualty Estimate. *Staff Officers Handbook*. Army Code Number 71038. (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999).

Whilst AMD continued to produce annual reports on the health of the army, over time these ceased to be official publications and were published as Annual Army Health Tables for internal use within the Ministry of Defence.[73] The reports were rejuvenated as DGAMS Annual Reports on the Health of the Army with the formation of the Army Health Unit in 1996.[74] The UK military hospitals were closed during the 1990s, with secondary care being transferred to the National Health Service (NHS), and so the source of data on soldiers in hospital ceased. The arrangements for collecting primary care sickness data were changed in 1995 with the introduction of the J95 (later J97) health surveillance system.[75] This was also introduced for military training and operations, and allowed the development of a predictive model for primary care activity for military operations.[76] By the time of publication of the sixth edition of the new DGAMS Annual Report in 2000, a common format had been established that combined data from DASA, the J97 data, dental health data, communicable disease data, and medicolegal data into a holistic report aligned to a health improvement plan for the Army.[77] As expected for a predominantly young male workforce, the principal health issues for the Army as causes of working days lost were consistently reported as being musculoskeletal disorders and injuries, mental health, respiratory disorders, including smoking-related disease, and sexual health, the first of which accounted for two-thirds of medical discharges from service.

Statistics & Legacy of Afghanistan & Iraq
Recent military medical statistics have been dominated by the experience of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan during the first and second decades of the twenty-first century. In common with the commentaries in the official histories of the Army Medical Services in the First and Second World Wars, the procedures for collecting health-related information from military operations had waned by the start of these campaigns. As a policy decision, a split was made between the production of official statistics extracted from specific electronic health records within DMICP by DASA e.g. results from Medical Boards using FMed 1 and FMed 23 health records, the

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[73]Beverly Bergman and Simon Miller, 'Unfit for further service: trends in medical discharge from the British Army 1861-1998', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps,* 146,3 (2000), pp. 204-211.

[74]Alastair Macmillan, 'Armed forces public health: is it hitting the target?' *Health and Hygiene*, 21, 1 (2000), p. 16.

[75]Jeremy Tuck and Martin Bricknell, 'A review of 10 years of systematic health surveillance in the Army', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps,* 151, 3 (2005), pp. 163-170.

[76]Tom Jefferson and Vittorio Demicheli, 'J95-EPINATO based planning parameters for medical support to operations other than war (OOTW)', *J Royal Army Med Corps,* 144, 2 (1998), pp. 72-78.

[77]Personal Communication. Dr B Bergman. DGAMS Annual Report 2000.

archiving function for medical records, which became the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence's Central Health Records Library, and clinical epidemiology using bespoke samples of patient populations by individual clinicians under the authority of the 'Defence Medical Director' within the Headquarters of the Defence Medical Services. DMCIP provided data from the garrison health system, but there was no universal system for the collation of health records from operations akin to the arrangements that emerged during First and Second World Wars based on collation of data from field medical records and the admission/discharge books from medical units.

Initial reporting of medical statistics was based on case series from individual field hospitals deployed at the start of Operation TELIC (Op TELIC) in Iraq in 2003.[78] It was clear that the interpretation of military epidemiology from war casualties would benefit from a standardised approach to data collection which would endure beyond the tours of individual clinicians.[79] By 2006, the handwritten Operational Emergency Department Register (OpEDAR), that was the modern equivalent of the hospital admissions book, had been replaced by an electronic version managed by DASA.[80] Alongside this, a Joint Theatre Trauma Registry (JTTR) was established to collect detailed clinical information on the most serious military trauma patients.[81] This was originally based in the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, but then transferred to DASA when it became an 'official' statistic.

The care of military casualties from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan attracted increasing political interest during 2006-7 with particular attention being focussed on their treatment within the UK by the UK NHS and subsequent rehabilitation by the

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[78]David A. Rew, Jon Clasper, and Gregor Kerr, 'Surgical workload from an integrated UK field hospital during the 2003 Gulf conflict', *J Royal Army Med Corps*, 150, 2 (2004), pp. 99-106; C. Grainge and M. Heber, 'The role of the physician in modern military operations: 12 months experience in Southern Iraq', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps*, 151, 2 (2005), pp. 101-104; Paul Reavley and J. Black, 'Attendances at a Field Hospital emergency department during operations in Iraq November 2003 to March 2004 (Operation Telic III)', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps,* 152, 4 (2006), pp. 231-234.
[79]Martin Bricknell, 'Reporting clinical activity on military operations–time for some standardisation', *J Royal Army Med Corps*, 151, 3 (2005), pp. 142-144.
[80]Robert Russell, Timothy Hodgetts, Jo Ollerton et al, 'The operational emergency department attendance register (OPEDAR): a new epidemiological tool', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps,* 153,4 (2007), pp. 244-250.
[81]Jason Smith, Timothy Hodgetts, Peter Mahoney et al, 'Trauma governance in the UK defence medical services', *J Royal Army Med Corps*, 153, 4 (2007), pp. 239–242.

Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC).[82] This attention placed even greater emphasis on the collection and analysis of data concerning the care of military casualties. This data provided the evidence for the Healthcare Commission report into the Defence Medical Services which considered the arrangements for the care of operational casualties to be exemplary in regard to trauma care and rehabilitation, based on the evidence from the JTTR and comparisons with civilian trauma care.[83]

DASA first released publicly available annual summary statistics of cause of deaths for Armed Forces personnel based on casualty notification signals and other sources in 2001.[84] The 2003 edition, published in 2004, provided the first citation of 'Killed in Action' as a cause of death. 'Killed in Action' became the principal driver of the overall military mortality rate by 2006. The first of a series of Afghanistan casualty and fatality tables covering 7 October 2001 to 15 November 2009 was published on 15 November 2009. These tables combined data from the casualty notification system (NOTICAS[85]) with the OpEDAR and aeromedical evacuation records.[86] Mirroring the interest in casualty outcomes, the first summary of medical discharges from the Armed Forces was published in 2011.[87] These documents hark back to the authoritative

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[82]Medical care for the Armed Forces. Defence Committee Seventh Report Session HC 327 (London: The Stationary Office, 18 Feb 2008),
https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmdfence/327/327.pdf.
Accessed 30 Aug 2023
[83]Timothy Hodgetts, Simon Davies, Robert Russell, and Jo McLeod, 'Benchmarking the UK military deployed trauma system', *J Royal Army Med Corps,* 153, 4 (2007), pp. 237-238.
[84]Deaths in the Armed Forces 2001. Statistical Notice. (Bath: DASA, 27 Mar 2002), Archived versions from 2001 to 2012 are available at:
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116145122/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/health/deaths/deaths-in-service. Accessed 30 Aug 2023
[85]NOTICAS is also the system which triggers notification to the next of kin of serious casualties.
[86]Afghanistan casualty and fatality tables. (Bath: DASA, 15 Nov 2009), https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116143519mp_/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/publications/health/operational-casualties/fatality-and-casualty/2009-11-15/15-november-2009.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023
[87]Medical Discharges in the UK Regular Armed Forces. 2005/06 – 2009/10. (Bath: DASA, 11 Aug 2011),
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116143451mp_/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/publications/health/medical/medical-discharges/2009-10-financial-year/2009-10-revised.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023

publications on casualty statistics published by the War Office after the First and Second World Wars though the number of casualties is much lower.[88]

In addition to publishing data on deaths, DASA started a new series of publications on very seriously ill/injured (VSI) and seriously ill/injured (SI) casualties in 2010.[89] The sample was created from the NOTICAS system. The clinical outcomes for the sample were determined from the OpEDAR, the JTTR, DASA's Medical Discharge Database, Compensation and Pension System (CAPS), DMICP and other new datasets such as the Defence Patient Tracking System (DPTS, initiated 8 Oct 2007) and DASA's Mental Health Returns Database. These data systems were initiated some time after the start of the campaigns in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) and reflect the demand for data in response to public concern and parliamentary inquiries on the care for battle casualties and the mental health consequences of the wars. The complete series of reports provides a similar depth of overview to that relating to medical evacuation, treatment, and long-term outcomes of British Army casualties from June-July 1944 described in the North-West Europe volume of the Official History of the Second World War.[90] A separate summary of the DPTS data was published in 2012 that complied the monthly internal data into an annual report.[91] A similar summary for amputation data was also published in 2012.[92]

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[88]Strength and Casualties of the Armed Forces and Auxiliary Services of the United Kingdom 1939-1945. Reference 42.

[89]Tracking Op HERRICK (Afghanistan) VSI/SI Operational Casualties: 2008 and 2009. (Bath: DASA, 13 Oct 2010), https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116143552mp_/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/publications/health/operational-casualties/VSI-and-SI-tracking/2010-01-01/1_january_2010.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.

[90]See Chapter 1 Strengths of the British Expeditionary Forces from a Medical Administrative Standpoint, Reference 2 and Chapter 10 Health of the Troops, Reference 45.

[91]Monthly Op TELIC and Op HERRICK UK Patient Treatment Statistics: RCDM and DMRC Headley Court 8 October 2007 – 31 July 2012. (Bath: DASA, 4 Sep 2012), https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116143539mp_/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/publications/health/operational-casualties/patient-treatments-RCDM-and-DMRC-headley-court/2012-07-31/31-july-2012.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.

[92]Quarterly Afghanistan and Iraq Amputation Statistics. 7 October 2001 – 31 December 2011. (Bath: DASA, 31 Jan 2012), https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116143515mp_/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/publications/health/operational-casualties/amputations/2011-12-31/31_december_2011.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.

The public concern regarding the health outcomes from the Gulf War of 1991 continued into the twenty-first century. Official statistics were published from 2004 on the cause of death in a cohort of veterans from this war compared to a group of service personnel who did not deploy.[93] Whilst no significant difference in overall mortality was demonstrated, concerns over suicide and other mental health conditions in this group rolled across into similar concerns regarding service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Multiple academic research programmes were initiated to explore the epidemiology of mental ill-health in the armed forces during the 2000s. DASA produced the first of a long series of analyses of patients with mental health conditions at the military Department of Community Mental Health centres in 2007 based on a new Mental Health Returns Database.[94]

The experience of the first decade of this century demonstrated the continuing requirement for medical statistics on military casualties from operations, alongside routine reporting of the health of, and utilisation of health services by, members of the armed forces. It also reflected an increasing public demand for transparency and visibility of data. The current list of routine publications of official medical statistics of the Ministry of Defence covers death in service (with subsidiary reports covering operational deaths, training and exercise deaths, and suicide), operational casualties (including amputations), health and safety statistics, morbidity statistics (covering medical discharges, mental health, and NHS commissioning statistics), and Veterans statistics.[95] This is a substantial list, though it could be argued that the coverage of these statistics is similar to those from the previous century and that the evolution of the system in the twenty-first century represents a restoration of previously decayed institutional knowledge rather than new learning, augmented by the greater ease of accessing information which has been brought about by the information technology

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[93]1990/1991 Gulf conflict – UK gulf veterans mortality data. 2003-2012. (Bath: DASA), Available at:
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116145214/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/health/veterans/gulf-1-deaths. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.
[94]Corbet C and Nick Blatchley. UK Armed Forces psychiatric morbidity: Assessment of presenting complaints at MOD DCMHs and association with deployment on recent operations in the Iraq/Afghanistan theatres of operation January – March 2007. (Bath: DASA, March 2007),
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140116142555/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/health/medical/mental-health-quarterly/2007-03-31/. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.
[95]MOD National and Official Statistics by topic. Ministry of Defence.
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-national-and-official-statistics-by-topic/mod-national-and-official-statistics-by-topic#health-statistics. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.

revolution. Clearly though, the current volume of data is substantially smaller than the past due to the reduction in the size of the armed forces and the lower intensities of wars since 1945 compared to the First and Second World Wars. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a new periodic statistic on coronavirus testing and cases in Defence personnel was published between 30 July 2020 and 20 September 2022.[96] In contrast to the Official History Series, there has not been a consolidated review of medical statistical data from the most recent wars, nor is there a publicly accessible document that shows the application of this retrospective data into predictive calculations of the casualty estimate for future conflicts.

The Future for Military Medical Statistics

As evidenced by the many references cited in this paper, the Armed Forces represent a unique population for the collection and analysis of medical statistics. They are employed and receive healthcare through services commissioned by the state, but the activities which they undertake may involve unavoidable risks to health over and above those faced by the wider civilian population. Their health is assessed on joining, periodically during service, and on leaving the service. Their episodes of healthcare are recorded, and their clinical outcomes can be measured over time. Adverse outcomes of military service can be measured by the rate and cause of medical discharge, claimants of a military disability pension or compensation, and deaths in service. This data can be collected, collated, and analysed to provide information on the overall health of the military population, to determine the causation of medical attrition, and to forecast a future demand for in-service healthcare both in peace and war. The value of such a medical statistics system was demonstrated during the nineteenth century through observing the effect of improvements in hygiene and sanitation in reducing the mortality of the British Army at home and overseas. Medical statistics underpinned the medical research efforts during the First and Second World Wars by both improving measures to protect the health of the armed forces and improving treatments for those who needed medical care. The open publication of medical statistics also demonstrates the transparency of the state in husbanding the people who serve the nation in the armed forces. Thus, the three functions of a military medical statistics branch described in the volume of the Official History of the Second World War on Casualties and Medical Statistics remain unchanged, namely: current administration of the health services; long-term planning to reduce medical wastage by understanding causation of ill-health; and targeted research on causation, attribution and treatment of medical conditions affecting the armed forces.[97] The military medical statistics system generates enduring datasets that should be routinely

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[96]Coronavirus in Defence. Ministry of Defence.
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-in-defence. Accessed 31 Aug 2023
[97]Mayne HG. *Army Medical Services*. Ref 51.

analysed in peace, and additional datasets which should be analysed during war. The medical statistics system should be integrated into the clinical records system so as to minimise transcription of clinical data into parallel administrative databases, with due regard for privacy, data protection, and other legal, ethical, security, and personal perspectives. The medical statistics function should also link to the personnel statistics function so as to define populations at risk to determine the denominators for calculations of rates and risk.[98] It is a welcome development that the Defence People Health and Wellbeing Strategy of 2022 formally acknowledges the importance of evidence to address potential issues affecting the health and well-being of personnel in the UK armed forces.[99]

Based upon the historical experience of medical statistics, it would seem that there are four key events that generate data: the recruit medical examination; medical activities; medical discharges; and the award of a military ill-health pension or compensation. These are shown in Figure 2. The first is a measure of the health of the working age population, the prevalence of disease, and the threshold of medical fitness suitable for military service. As frequently shown in history, this is a measure of the 'public's health' and has significant implications for the 'medical quality' of the population for the defence of the nation. Unfortunately, due to recent contracting-out of the recruit medical examination process, data from this source is no longer routinely published. The second is a measure of the demand for in-service health services, covering physical health, mental health, and dental health. Appropriate coding will provide insights into diagnosis, causation, severity, and duration of medical conditions. This information allows commanders to balance risk to health with realism of military training, and the medical services to plan and monitor the performance of health services supporting the armed forces. It should be the primary source of evidence to inform Defence health and well-being policies. Those personnel not medically suitable for continued military service are medically discharged. Information on manpower 'wastage' by diagnosis, causation and severity can also inform prevention and treatment. Finally, the financial cost of medical discharge is measured by the value and duration of War Pensions and the post-April 2005 Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. The seminal volume on casualties and medical statistics from the Great War stands as an indicator of such a holistic approach to the military information set.

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[98]Martin Bricknell, 'Options for future military health surveillance systems', *Journal of the Royal Army Med Corps,* 145, 2, (1999), pp. 80-83.
[99]Defence People Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027. (London: Ministry of Defence, 22 June 2022) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-people-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2022-to-2027. Accessed 24 Aug 2024.
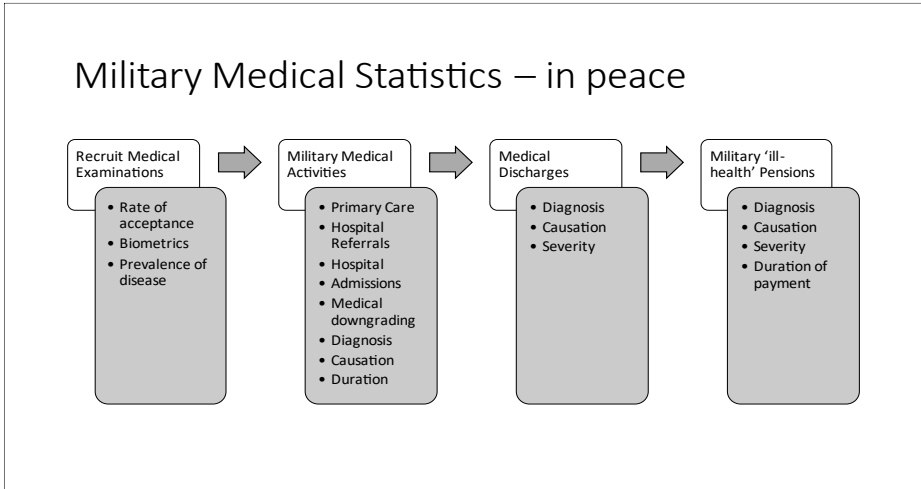
Figure 2: Military Medical Statistics – in peace.

This review has shown however that the peacetime system for collecting data and reporting medical activity has not been suitable for the exigencies of war. The volume of casualties far exceeded that of peacetime, pressure on resources prevented the expansion of capacity in the medical statistics system, many records were lost due to enemy action, and lack of compliance with procedures. However, it is precisely because of the challenges of war that information on medical statistics is valuable, both to manage the medical services in war and also to learn lessons for future wars. The basic features required of the medical statistics system in peace are the same as during war. In every war over this period, the medical assessment system of recruits required to be modified due to the shortage of personnel in the armed forces. It is clear that the demand for accurate information about the recruit medical assessment system will also increase during war.

As stated at the beginning of this paper, 'war is an epidemic of injuries', although disease also plays a part, and so effective and efficient planning and operation of the medical system will be highly dependent on management information about clinical activity. The essential datasets for monitoring and planning medical activity will be similar to those needed in peace, but the policy and procedures to manage the information will need to be adaptable to the realities of field medical services, and to reach into the NHS care system. This should cover all causes of ill-health due to war. It is noticeable that Defence Statistics developed the Defence Patient Tracking System (DPTS, initiated 8 Oct 2007) and the Mental Health Returns Database during the Afghanistan campaign. The understanding of the epidemiology of war has advanced with the formalisation of common datasets through the creation of registries such as

the Joint Theatre Trauma Registry. It is important for the system to be planned and resourced in peace in order to avoid the loss of data and knowledge that has been shown to occur at the beginning of every war described in this paper. Figure 3 shows some additional components of a military medical statistics information system for war.

Military Medical Statistics – in war

Causation
- Type of weapon
- Anatomical location of injury
- Battle Casualty Rate – KCWMIA
- CBRN

Military Medical Activities
- Rates – KCWMIA, DNBI, DOW, CFR, Unexpected Survivors
- Activity across care pathway – field medical care, evacuation, NHS care, rehabilitation, mental health
- Registries (e.g. JTTR)

Medical Outcomes
- Amputations
- Medical discharge
- Ill-health pensions

KCWMIA – Killed, Captured, Wounded, Missing in Action,
CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear
DNBI – disease and non-battle injury
DOW - died of wounds
CFR – case fatality rate

Figure 3: Military Medical Statistics – in war

Medical planning is derived from the 'casualty estimate', which endeavours to predict not only the medical resources which will be required but also the likely attrition in effective manpower. The medical statistics system must reliably record the four categories which feed into the casualty estimate in war: killed; captured; wounded; and missing in action (KCWMIA).[100] The medical services are concerned with the number of wounded from battle, and the demand from disease and non-battle injury (DNBI) patients. A range of statistical measures of the performance of the whole medical system has been developed, including: distribution of cause of injury; distribution of injury by anatomical location; died of wounds; overall mortality rate; case-fatality rate.[101] These can be compared between wars and civilian trauma systems to see

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[100]Allied Joint Medical Planning Docrine. AJMedP-1. (Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, September 2018) pp. 3-21-5 Available at: https://www.coemed.org/files/stanags/02_AJMEDP/AJMedP-1_EDA_V1_E_2542.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023.
[101]Jeffrey T. Howard, Russ S. Kotwal, Caryn A. Stern, Jud C. Janak, Edward L. Mazuchowski, Frank K. Butler, Zsolt T. Stockinger, Barbara R. Holcomb, Raquel C.

whether the observed figures differ from the statistically expected figures. This has been considered to have provided the most accurate measure of improved performance of the whole military medical system during the war in Afghanistan.[102]

This type of analysis can be further refined by matching cases for severity using standardised clinical severity scores applied to the data on patients recorded with the patient registries. A paper that applied this approach to UK casualties from Afghanistan showed a year-on-year improvement in survival rates for the most severely injured.[103] It is also necessary to link medical records with personnel records to ensure accurate denominators for the exposed population at risk; with modern IT systems and smaller numbers of personnel in service, this should not present an insurmountable challenge. History has shown that military personnel may present with unexplained medical symptoms with possible associations with exposure to environmental hazards or toxins for example the unofficially-named Gulf War Syndrome of the 1991 Gulf War and the more recent 'burn pit' syndrome ascribed by US Veterans to exposure to toxins from open burning of rubbish on military bases.[104] It is important to establish the necessary longitudinal cohort studies during and after military campaigns to be

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Bono, and David J. Smith, 'Use of combat casualty care data to assess the US military trauma system during the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts, 2001-2017', *JAMA Surgery*, 154, 7 (2019) pp. 600-608.

[102]Cannon, Jeremy W, Holena, Daniel N, Geng, Zhi, Stewart, Ian J, Huang, Yanlan, Yang, Wei, Mayhew, Emily R, Nessen, Shawn C, Gross, Kirby R and Schwab, C William, 'Comprehensive analysis of combat casualty outcomes in US service members from the beginning of World War II to the end of Operation Enduring Freedom', *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery*, 89, (2020), pp. S8-S15; Adam Stannard, Nigel Tai, Doug Bowley, Mark Midwinter, and Timothy Hodgetts, 'Key Performance Indicators in British Military Trauma', *World Journal of Surgery* 32, (2008), pp. 1870–1873.

[103]Jowan Penn-Barwell, Stuart Roberts, Mark Midwinter, and Jon Bishop, 'Improved survival in UK combat casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan: 2003–2012', *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery*, 78, 5 (2015), pp. 1014-1020.

[104]Edgar Jones, Robert Hodgins-Vermaas, Helen McCartney, Brian Everitt, Charlotte Beech, Denise Poynter, Ian Palmer, Kenneth Hyams, and Simon Wessely, 'Post-combat syndromes from the Boer war to the Gulf war: a cluster analysis of their nature and attribution', *British Medical Journal*, 324, 7333 (2002), pp. 321-324; Timothy M. Mallon, Patricia Rohrbeck, Kevin M. Haines, Dean P. Jones, Mark Utell, Philip K. Hopke, Richard P. Phipps et al, 'Introduction to Department of Defense research on burn pits, biomarkers, and health outcomes related to deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan', *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 58, 8 (2016), pp. S3-S11.

able to follow up such concerns with valid epidemiological investigations.[105] This should be an increasingly practical proposition as military health and personnel records are digital and share common identifiers (such as National Insurance number and NHS number) with other government databases.[106] Alongside returns of the more immediate deaths and seriously injured, the true human costs of war on members of the armed forces will be measurable through long-term outcome measures such as medical invaliding, medical pensions and compensation schemes as shown throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Studies also need to extend into the veteran years in order to capture the long-term consequences of military service. One such example is the Armed Services Trauma Rehabilitation Outcome Study (ADVANCE) that is long-term outcome study following a cohort of UK male military service personnel who were injured during the conflict in Afghanistan and periodically conducting a comprehensive suite of physical and mental health assessments to measure any changes.[107]

Conclusions

This paper has provided an overview of the analysis of casualties and medical statistics over the past 200 years for the British Army, and more recently, the UK armed forces overall. It has shown how the emergence of a formal requirement to publish health data on the British Army led to improvements in the hygiene and preventive medicine functions in the Army Medical Services, and hence to an overall improvement in the health of the Army. However, the medical statistics function in peace has not been adequate to meet the requirements for providing accurate management data in the

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[105]Martin Bricknell, 'Options for future military health surveillance systems', *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 145, 2 (1999), pp. 80-83; Amy Hall, Trish Batchelor, Laura Bogaert, Robert Buckland, Ali B. Cowieson, Michael Drew, Kate Harrison, David I. McBride, Aaron Schneiderman, and Kathryn Taylor, 'International perspective on military exposure data sources, applications, and opportunities for collaboration', *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11 (2023) p. 1154595**.**

[106]Examples are: Dierdre MacManus, Kimberlie Dean, Margaret Jones, Roberto Rona, Neil Greenberg et al, 'Violent offending by UK military personnel deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan: a data linkage cohort study', *The Lancet*, 381, 9870 (2013), pp. 907-917, Beverly Bergman, Daniel Mackay, Daniel Smith, Jill Pell, 'Suicide in Scottish military veterans: a 30-year retrospective cohort study', *Occupational Medicine*, 67, 5, (2017) pp. 350–355 and Beverly Bergman, Daniel Mackay, Jill Pell, Acute Myocardial Infarction in Scottish Military Veterans: A Retrospective Cohort Study of 57,000 Veterans and 173,000 Matched Nonveterans, *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 179, 12 (2014), pp. 1434–1444.

[107]Armed Services Trauma Rehabilitation Outcome Study. Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre. https://www.advancestudydmrc.org.uk/. Accessed 24 Aug 2024.

major wars in South Africa (1899-1902), the First World War, the Second World War or indeed in the recent military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Not only has the system, including new data collection methods, had to evolve, but the volume of returns and the lack of resources (personnel and space) resulted in the publication of the analyses many years after the experience of war. This reduced the overall results of the statistical analysis of human cost of war to historical value, with limited contemporary impact. It could be argued that most of the recent developments in data collection and analysis on military health statistics have been driven by public opinion pressuring politicians and the Ministry of Defence for evidence of the quality of healthcare being provided to armed forces personnel and veterans rather than internal efforts to improve the management of the health system. However, this criticism needs to be balanced against the large volume of academic papers published during and after the major wars on clinical developments in the care of military casualties, and the improvements in major trauma care in the wider community which have resulted from scientific analysis of medical care during war. The role of military medical statistical information to inform the management of three domains for a military health system remain unchanged: the current administration of the health services; the long-term planning to reduce medical wastage by understanding causation of ill-health; and targeted research on causation, attribution and treatment of medical conditions affecting the armed forces.

Professionalism and Ethics in Military Leadership: Lessons from Pre-colonial Africa

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ABSTRACT
This paper examines the role of professionalism and ethics in military leadership using examples from pre-colonial Africa. The Maasai warriors of East Africa provided professional military service to their society which rose to the position of hegemony in the region. Shaka developed a professional army which, through military might, placed the Zulu in a position of hegemony in Southern Africa. However, the undermining of military ethics resulted in the decline of professionalism and eventual failure in both the Maasai military and in Shaka's military leadership. The paper concludes that military ethics must be consistently upheld to ensure professionalism and successful military leadership.

Introduction

For many centuries the sanctioned use of violence has been practiced by humanity for one reason or another. The demand for this service in societies gradually led to the development of specialised skills and technologies that eventually evolved into the professional military as known today. During these years of evolution the issue of whether military violence is justified or appropriate has always been a subject of discourse. Hence, the question of ethics had always accompanied the military through its evolution. This paper takes a look at the issues of professionalism and ethics as they relate to the military and its leadership using examples from pre-colonial African history. The Maasai warriors of East Africa serve as the basis for discussing the place of professionalism and ethics in the military while Shaka kaSenzangakhona of the Zulu Kingdom in Southern Africa provides the basis for discussing the practice of professionalism and ethics in military leadership. The Maasai and Zulu societies were purposely chosen because both societies had well developed military organisations where warriors were mobilised exclusively for military service and served as standing armies, even residing in barracks.

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This discourse begins with conceptual clarifications of military professionalism, ethics and leadership as used within the context of this paper. The next section briefly discusses the state of military professionalism and ethics in Pre-colonial Africa. This is followed by a discussion of professionalism and ethics in the military institution of the Maasai people. Next, it discusses the practice of professionalism and ethics in the military leadership of Shaka kaSenzangakhona. The paper ends with a look at some lessons from the Maasai military and the military leadership of Shaka.

The Concepts of Military Professionalism, Ethics and Leadership

This work is developed around three concepts which are military professionalism, ethics and leadership. To avoid ambiguity, it is necessary to clarify the meanings of these concepts as used here. The journey towards understanding the concept of military professionalism should begin from the concept of a profession from which it originates. According to Lucas, a profession constitutes

> a distinctive practice, or set of social practices, that in turn requires mastery of specialized knowledge and techniques through education and intensive training. Acquaintance with a language, vocabulary, and set of technical assumptions unique to those practices that enable their common mastery and performance, and (perhaps most importantly) that ultimately provide a shared understanding among the members that they and their profession are dedicated to providing a unique and urgently needed service to the wider public or the civil society within which those professions are practiced.[1]

This definition introduces the issue of specialised knowledge and techniques which are acquired through a process of education and training and are used to provide special and needed service to the society. Snider expands this further with the opinion that

> (1) professions provide a unique and vital service to the society served, one it cannot provide itself; (2) they do so by the application of expert knowledge and practice; (3) because of their effective and ethical application of their expertise, they earn the trust of the society; (4) professions self-regulate— they police the practices of their members to ensure it is effective and ethical; this includes the responsibility to educate and certify professionals, ensuring only the most proficient members actually apply their expertise on behalf of the client; and (5)

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[1]George Lucas, *Military Ethics: What Everyone Needs To Know,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 10.

professions are therefore granted significant autonomy in their practice on behalf of the society.[2]

Here, the idea of ethics as a component of a profession is introduced, and this implies that there is also a potential for the members of a profession to abuse their specialised knowledge and skills. Consequently, a profession must then have a system of self-policing and regulation in order to ensure that its members act ethically. When this system is in place, the society tends to trust and reward the profession with some level of autonomy. The military profession is deemed so because it possesses specialised knowledge in the use of sanctioned violence developed through education, training and experience, which it deploys on behalf of its society. In addition, it has self-regulating and policing mechanisms that ensures its practices are within the stipulated ethics of the profession and as such it is trusted to carry out its duties. Military professionalism, therefore, refers to these standards and parameters that distinguish the military organisation as a profession. In other words, military professionalism involves upholding and developing military knowledge and skills through military education, training and experience, in order to provide specialised military services to the society within the ethical standards of the profession and larger society, through a system of self-regulation, discipline, integrity, sacrifice and duty.

It is not accidental that the issue of ethics is present in the conceptualisation of military professionalism. This is because the profession of arms by its nature requires some form of ethics to guide its activities and guard against excesses. Ethics provide the basis for finding the best reasons behind choices and policies affecting both the profession and the larger society.[3] Thus, the military ethic, being a professional ethic, is deeply embedded within military professionalism. As Snider puts it:

> A professional ethic is the evolved set of laws, values, and beliefs, deeply embedded within the core of the profession's culture, which binds individual members together in common purpose to do the right thing for the right reason in the right way. The ethic sets the conditions for the creation and maintenance of a motivational, meritocratic culture. The ethic provides a set of standards that individual professionals willingly impose on each other to keep trust with their client. Hence, a self-policing ethic is a necessity for any profession. This is of special importance for a military profession given the lethality inherent in its expertise.[4]

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[2]Don M. Snider, 'American Military Professions and their Ethics', *Routledge Handbook of Military Ethics*, ed. George Lucas, (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 16.
[3]Bill Rhodes, *An Introduction to Military Ethics: A Reference Handbook,* (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 2009), p. 2.
[4]Snider, 'American Military', p. 17.

While military ethics are specifically for members of the profession, they often transcend the ideological confines of the military because they are derived from the larger society. Specifically, these ethics are derived from the moral values arising from the continuous human discourse about what is appropriate behaviour.[5] In Pre-colonial Africa, these moral values were usually embedded in the customary laws of societies. Consequently, the scope of military ethics often included issues relating to the legitimacy of war, discrimination and proportionality of means. In this way the larger society was involved in the evaluation of the military profession based on the standards of these customary laws.

There is little doubt that the effectiveness of military professionalism and ethics depends on the existence of some form of leadership. The profession of arms, as a matter of necessity, is usually organised in hierarchical order. Different levels of leadership make up a chain of command which is at the core of military expertise and efficiency. This means that almost every member of the military is a leader in one or more capacities. In the context of this paper, leadership 'is the activity of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization.'[6]

Military Professionalism and Ethics in Pre-colonial Africa
Pre-colonial African historiography has been challenged over the use of concepts of Western origin and their appropriateness and applicability. As a result, this often necessitates the need for historians to prove that these concepts are applicable in the context of African history.[7] This section is not meant for this purpose. However, it is useful to state here that the concepts of military professionalism, ethics, and leadership apply to both Maasai and Zulu armies because they were trained standing armies which provided excusive military services for their respective societies, had systems of self-regulation, codes of conduct, and were organised in hierarchical order. This section provides a brief overview of the state of military professionalism and ethics in Pre-colonial Africa.

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[5]Sam C. Sarkesian, 'Moral and Ethical Foundations of Military Professionalism', *Military Ethics and Professionalism: A Collection of Essays*, ed. James Brown and Michael J. Collins, (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 1981), p. 3.
[6]Department of the Army, *Army Leadership and the Profession,* (Washington DC: Army Doctrine Publication No. 6-22, 2019), p. 3.
[7]Donna J. E. Maier, 'Studies in Precolonial War and Peace', *Warfare and Diplomacy in Precolonial Nigeria*: *Essays in honor of Robert Smith,* ed. Toyin Falola and Robin Law (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992), p. 2.

Africa, being a wide continent comprising numerous and varied groups of people, had different forms of military formations in various levels of development in the Pre-colonial era. Geographical location and terrain sometimes contributed to determining the kinds of military forces found during this period. For instance, between the Upper Guinea and the coast of Gambia, cavalry, infantry and naval forces existed in varied proportions from the desert to the savannah and to the coast.[8] Generally, most societies had some form of military arrangement for defensive or offensive purposes. While some societies had simple arrangements where every able-bodied male was called up to bear arms when necessary, others had highly organised and professional standing armies. The Tiv people of central Nigeria area, for instance, had no standing army and so relied on the services of every available and able-bodied male during war. Nonetheless, they were able to fight many wars and had even recorded major victories such as the defeat of the Chamba in the late nineteenth century.[9] Therefore, these kinds of temporary forces were no less effective than their professional counterparts in meeting the military needs of their societies. While many of the military forces found in Pre-colonial Africa were not professional, there were certainly some, such as the Maasai and Zulu armies, which both met the criteria for military professionalism.

In Pre-colonial Africa, military ethics and war ethics were often not clearly separated. This means that, although many societies did not have standing armies, it was common practice to develop ethics to guide warfare and the conducts of warriors. These ethics were mostly drawn from customary laws. This was because in many African societies the distinction between military, economic, social and religious institutions were not clear.[10] In Igbo society, for instance, war ethics prescribed two types of war to be practiced among the people; in one type it was permissible to kill while in the other type it was not permissible to kill. The war in which killing was not permitted was more common among kinsmen and in intra-village warfare. Their customary laws clearly dictated how war was to be fought, the kinds of weapons allowed, the days of non-hostility, the people exempted from hostilities and the cleansing rituals that must be undertaken by warriors who took lives in such wars.[11] In addition, combatants had to seek the consent of their priest prior to any war to ensure they were fighting for a

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[8] John K. Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa, 1500 – 1800,* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 25.

[9] Ben Japhet Audu, *Wars and Changing Patterns of Inter-Group Relations in the Middle Benue Valley of Nigeria, c. 1300-1900,* (Kaduna: NDA Publishers, 2018), pp. 61-62.

[10] G. N. Uzoigwe, "The Warrior and the State in Precolonial Africa: Comparative Perspectives." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 12, no. 1-4 (1977), pp. 20-21.

[11] U. D. Anyanwu, 'Kinship and Warfare in Igbo Society', *Warfare and Diplomacy in Precolonial Nigeria*: *Essays in Honor of Robert Smith,* ed. Toyin Falola and Robin Law, (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992), p. 163.

just cause.[12] Indeed, these kinds of war ethics existed in many African societies but their impact was limited by their being applied mostly within the societies which had created them, they would not easily apply to wars with outsiders because their customary laws were dissimilar. Generally speaking, these ethics were contextual; the difference in cultural background, religion, and language often posed a barrier to their wide application during wars in Pre-colonial Africa.[13]

Military Professionalism & Ethics: the Maasai Warriors of East Africa

The Maasai are a Maa speaking pastoral people found today in the south of Kenya and north of Tanzania in East Africa. The Maasai political system was not organised around centralised authority and there was no hereditary leadership. Rather, leadership was provided by a council of elders or civil chiefs made up of age-set leaders who were 'elected on the grounds of their moral conduct and personal qualities'.[14] This council of elders formed the highest body of authority in Maasai society.[15] An important figure was the *Laibon* who served as the diviner and medicine man among the Maasai. Unlike the civil chiefs, the *Laibon*'s position was hereditary and passed from one generation to another. He was the spiritual authority among the Maasai and was responsible for rituals and other issues relating to initiations.[16] Maasai society was socially stratified into three distinct hierarchical layers. A boy that was not circumcised belonged to a group called *Ol-laiyoni*. After a boy was circumcised he moved up to a group called *Ol-muran* or warrior. Finally, when the warrior finished military service he retired to a group called *Ol-moruo* or elders.[17] This social organization was made possible by the age-set system in which the boys circumcised together belonged to the same age group, bore a common identity and moved up the social ladder together.[18]

Warriorhood was the core of Maasai military institution and it was fed by the age-set system. Consequently, their development of military professionalism and ethics also depended on this system. The system required that boys were circumcised in a special initiation ceremony before they assumed the position of *Muran* or warrior which

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[12]John N. Oriji, 'Ethical Ideals of Peace and the Concept of War in Igbo Society', *Warfare and Diplomacy in Precolonial Nigeria: Essays in Honor of Robert Smith*, ed. Toyin Falola and Robin Law, (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992), p. 178.

[13]Francois Bugnion, 'Just Wars, Wars of Aggression and International humanitarian Law', *International Review of the Red Cross* 84, no. 847 (2002), p. 5.

[14]Kaj Arhem, *The Maasai and the State: The Impact of Rural Development Policies on a Pastoral People in Tanzania,* (Copenhagen: IWGIA, 1985), p. 12.

[15]Ibid., p. 12.

[16]Maier, 'Studies in Precolonial', pp. 87-88.

[17]C. H. Stigand, *The Land of Zinj,* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), p. 212.

[18]April R. Summit, 'Cell phones and Spears: Indigenous Cultural Transition within the Maasai of East Africa', *Indigenous Nations Studies Journal* 3, no. 1, (2002), p. 64.

marked the beginning of their military service. The period in which this initiation took place was determined by the *Laibon* and this period lasted for three to four years during which boys would be circumcised.[19] The boys, ranging in age from about 13 to 17 years, were circumcised in three batches according to how physically ready they were. The physically bigger boys were circumcised in the first year and the circumcision was right handed to mark them out as seniors. The remaining two batches of circumcision, carried out in the second and third year respectively, were left handed to mark the boys as juniors. This was a deliberate process that was done in order to establish the hierarchy and leadership inherent in the profession of arms. When these three batches of circumcision were finished, the initiation period was closed and all the boys circumcised would belong to the same age-set.[20] This process of circumcision and initiation was a stage which every able-bodied Maasai male must pass through in life.[21] Prospective warriors were expected to prove their fearlessness by not showing any sign of pain when being circumcised. Any show of weakness at this stage was frowned upon because it went against Maasai military ethics.

These newly created warriors made up a professional standing army which had no other occupation outside military service. This included protecting their people and their cattle from attack and attacking other groups for the sole purpose of cattle raiding and land acquisition. Being pastoralists, this military service was central to expanding and sustaining their economy. The warriors annexed land for grazing their cattle and seized cattle from other groups to expand their cattle stock.[22] Being skilled in the deployment of violence, they provided a specialised service for their society. These warriors had in place some techniques for ensuring professionalism and enforcing the ethics of their profession. Firstly, the warriors lived apart from the general population in barracks called *Manyata,* and each camp had a group acting rather like present day military police, called *Embika,* who enforced discipline within and outside the camp. The warriors were not allowed to marry, drink alcohol or eat vegetables. They lived on a strict diet of beef, milk and blood. In addition, they were prohibited from eating alone and could eat only in the company of their fellow warriors.[23]

The warriors had a clearly defined professional culture with which each member had to adhere. Each warrior carried a spear, a sword, a shield, and a club. The spear had

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[19]Maier, 'Studies in Precolonial', p. 87.

[20]Stigand, *The Land of,* p. 212.

[21]Summit, 'Cell phones', p. 64.

[22]Basil Davidson, *The Growth of African Civilization: East and Central Africa to the Late Nineteenth Century,* (Nairobi: Longman, 1967), p. 176.

[23]Chris Peers, *Warrior Peoples of East Africa 1840-1900,* (New York: Osprey, 2005), pp. 11-12.

a two feet long sharp iron blade and an iron point on the other end for sticking the spear upright. The sword was about two feet in length, made of iron and was worn on the warrior's left side. The shield was large, oval in shape and made of either buffalo or ox hide. Markings were made on it to show the age and clan of the warrior. The club was made of hard wood and was held in the left hand under the shield. These clearly indicate that the Maasai military was a disciplined self-regulating profession capable of providing service and being trusted by its larger society. Military discipline here refers to the 'state of order and obedience among personnel in a military organization.'[24]

The Maasai military enjoyed a high level of autonomy because it was trusted by its society to act professionally. The civil chiefs had almost no authority over the warriors although their advice was respected based on the obvious fact that they were themselves retired warriors. Nevertheless, the warriors enjoyed complete autonomy on matters of warfare. They decided when and where to make war and only sought the blessing of the chiefs on departure.[25] However, they had a particularly close relationship with the *Laibon* (diviner) because 'when a raid of any scale was planned the warriors sent to him to seek charms to ensure victory.'[26] In spite of this relationship, the *Laibon* also had very limited authority over the warriors although he was entitled to a share of their spoils of war because of his spiritual role in the process.[27] This autonomy granted to the Maasai military was mainly because it was able to uphold the principles of military professionalism.

Maasai warriors earned a reputation in pre-colonial times as fierce and bloodthirsty fighters and this did a lot to prevent and delay Europeans from venturing into the interior of East Africa. This was, however, said to be exaggerated by coastal ivory traders in order to scare away competitors and maintain monopoly of the trade in the interior.[28] While it may be true that the traders used it to their advantage, the fierceness of the Maasai was no exaggeration. They had succeeded, until the late 19 Century, in displacing other groups from a large area ranging from central Kenya to central Tanzania using superior weapons and tactics.[29] A common tactic they used in

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[24]Shelton R. Williamson, 'Standards and Discipline: An In-Depth Look at Where We Once Were and Where We Are Now', *From One Leader To Another,* ed. Joe B. Parson, (Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), p. 154.

[25]Stigand, *The Land of*, p. 213.

[26]Maier, 'Studies in Precolonial', p. 88.

[27] Stigand, *The Land of,* p. 213.

[28]Lotte Hughes, 'Beautiful Beasts and Brave Warriors: The Longevity of a Maasai Stereotype', *Ethnicity Identity: Problems and Prospects for the Twenty-First Century,* eds. George A. De Vos and Takeyuki Tsuda (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2006), p. 269.

[20]Davidson, *The Growth of,* p. 176.

battle is called the eagle's wing, where 'the bravest warriors… form a wedge in the centre, supported by a rearguard and a flank guard on each side, and charge straight through the enemy line.'[30] Another tactic was to form a long row of spearmen who then advance upon the enemy shouting.[31]

The Maasai military, in spite of attaining the greatest height of their power in the 19 Century, began to experience decline towards the end of the same century. This decline was caused by several factors including civil wars, and several outbreaks of cattle and human diseases. The civil wars among the Maasai broke out when they began to raid each other for cattle because it became increasingly difficult for them to raid other groups.[32] This development was a clear breakdown of military professionalism and ethics since warriors were turning against each other and, by implication, the very society they were created to protect. Instead of protecting and growing the economy, the military was destroying the society itself. These internal wars devastated the Maasai population to the extent that 'the people suffered far more casualties in these civil wars than in all their external campaigns put together.'[33] In addition, successive outbreaks of cattle disease greatly weakened the Maasai because of their heavy dependence on the animals for subsistence. As Coast puts it, 'an outbreak of bovine pleura-pneumonia in 1883 was followed by devastating rinderpest in 1891, both of which had the effect of decimating livestock. The effect on the Maasai population was to force a widespread migration in search of agricultural produce from other ethnic groups, such as the Kikuyu in Kenya.'[34] This loss of Maasai livestock resulted in famine because the people depended on the animals for their food. In addition to these problems, the people were affected by a number of diseases such as smallpox which devastated their population in 1892.[35] Thus, by the time the British colonial conquest came in the early 20 Century many Maasai military units had become mercenaries who fought the wars of other ethnic groups in return for cattle. As a result, the British did not meet the expected resistance from the Maasai during their conquest. Instead, they were able to enlist some of these Maasai units as auxiliaries for use in punitive expeditions against other groups.

Military Professionalism & Ethics: Shaka kaSenzangakhona
The rise of Shaka, the son of Senzangakhona, to Zulu military leadership and prominence was not the result of his royal bloodline but by merit. His father was the

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[30]Peers, *Warrior Peoples*, p. 12.

[31]Stigand, *The Land of,* p. 217.

[32]Davidson, *The Growth of*, p. 178.

[33]Peers, *Warrior Peoples,* p. 6.

[34]E. Coast, 'Colonial Preconceptions and Contemporary Demographic Reality: Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania', *XXIV IUSSP General Conference,* S50 (2001), p. 4.

[35]Ibid., p. 4.

Chief of the Zulu clan of the Nguni people of Southern Africa. Shaka began his military career as a recruit of the *Izi-cwe* Regiment which was called up by Dingiswayo shortly after he assumed the leadership of the Mthethwa clan in 1809. Military leadership in Africa during this period was achieved through various means. Certainly, a royal lineage was an important factor in the making of military leaders but merit also was an important factor which enabled some common people and even slaves to rise to powerful positions. In addition, cases are known where military command positions were purchased for a fee.[36] In contrast, Shaka distinguished himself as an excellent warrior during the wars his regiment fought under Dingiswayo. After a victorious battle in 1810 Dingiswayo called Shaka and questioned him about his battle tactics. Satisfied with the answers Shaka had provided he promptly promoted him to the captain of 100 and gifted him 10 heads of cattle as a reward.[37]

Shaka eventually rose to the position of the commander of all Dingiswayo's forces and did so purely on merit. This position gave him the opportunity to advance his ideas on military professionalism and ethics as a military leader. He began enforcing discipline and drill among the warriors by visiting their residences in rotation.[38] However, his ideas as a military leader gained more prominence when he attained the leadership of his Zulu clan, after the demise of his father Sezangakhona in 1816, and assumed control of the relatively few warriors in that clan. He immediately began the work of building, organising and training his army, to the extent that within ten years they had grown from a few hundred to over fifty thousand fighting men.[39] Although this figure is variously disputed, there is no doubt he did build a large and efficient army during this period, and it was possible because of his application of military professionalism.

Shaka began the process of building a professional military through the conscription of all males of fighting age into regiments based on age-set. This system of regimental age-sets ensured group cohesion, and the commitment and loyalty of the warriors to each other because of their similar age and experience. These regiments were settled in military barracks situated at strategic locations in the Zulu Kingdom and each was headed by a commander. Each regiment had a distinct identity made possible by the colour and design on their shield and uniform. Periodically, Shaka called up young men

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[36]Festus B. Aboagye, *Indigenous African Warfare: Its Concept and Art in the Gold Coast, Asante and the Northern Territories up to the Early 1900s,* (Pretoria: Ulinzi Africa Publishing Solutions, 2010), p. 299.
[37]E. A. Ritter, *From Folklore to History,* Vol. 2, *Makers of World History*, J. Kelley Sowards, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p. 204.
[38]Ibid*.,* p. 205.
[39]E. A. Eldredge, 'Shaka's Military Expeditions: Survival and Mortality from Shaka's Impis', *The Power of Doubt: Essays in Honor of David Henige*, ed. Paul S. Landau, (Madison: Parallel Press, 2011), p. 210.

of fighting age and established their regiments and barracks where they would begin their military training and service. Warriors absorbed from conquered groups were incorporated into regiments appropriate to their age. To ensure strict adherence to military training and discipline, Shaka made these barracks part of the royal household and he lived with them in rotation.[40]

Military professionalism was further promoted by Shaka through the abolition of privileges based purely on royal affiliation. Military promotion was based strictly on merit so there was no difference between commoners and royalty or between native Zulu and incorporated foreign warriors when it came to leadership positions. All military barracks were deemed to be a part of the royal household, and so the cattle they fed on were provided by Shaka. He regularly distributed confiscated cattle and food to the military barracks thereby promoting the idea of an equal distribution of wealth. During military campaigns young recruits on apprenticeship were responsible for carrying food and weapons for the army. This allowed the army to move swiftly and decisively to any location without worrying about the availability of food – an issue that had previously determined the location and duration of battles. He also developed an effective military intelligence network that provided his army with reliable information on enemy plans and movements.[41] Thus, the welfare of the military was recognised by Shaka as an important factor in its effectiveness. After all, the wealth of Zululand depended to a considerable extent on the spoils confiscated by the military in wars.

Developing military expertise through training was central to Zulu military professionalism. Shaka revolutionised warfare through his redesigning weaponry and tactics. He promoted the adoption of a short stabbing spear in combat and phased out the traditional long throwing spear. He also redesigned the shield so it could be used as an offensive weapon in addition to its defensive purpose. He banned warriors from the use of sandals in battle in order to increase balance and speed. He also developed the 'bull horns' technique for enveloping an enemy for a decisive defeat.[42] Shaka was not only a skilled member of the military but he also provided leadership by example. For instance, to ensure that his army was used to doing battle on bare feet he trained

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[40]Ian Knight, *The Anatomy of the Zulu Army: From Shaka to Cetswayo 1818-1879,* (London: Greenhill Books, 1995), p. 33.

[41]Mazizi Kunene, *Emperor Shaka the Great: A Zulu Epic,* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2017), pp. XXX-XXI.

[42]Calvin R. Allen, *Shaka Zulu's Linkage of Tactic and Strategy: An Early Form of Operational Art?,* Monograph, (Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, 2014), pp. 9-10, pp. 14-15.

them in dancing on hard ground and on thorns.[43] As a result his army was better trained and was more disciplined than many surrounding military forces.

Shaka enforced professionalism in the military through a number of ways. Firstly, members of the military had to live in their designated barracks unless told otherwise. They were forbidden from getting married or having sexual activity until they retired from active military service. Living in barracks and celibacy were both regarded as the indispensable foundation of military discipline by Shaka.[44] Warriors were required to go to battle and return with their spears or face execution. In addition, any warrior who withdrew from battle without being ordered to do so was executed. Shaka had a spot called the cowards bush where anyone who exhibited cowardice was held like a goat and stabbed with a spear in full public view.[45] The quality of any military, according to Sun Tzu, is assessed using seven criteria, namely; how promptly its members respond to command, how skilled its leader is, how well it utilises the terrain, how strict discipline is enforced, how skilled its members are, how highly trained its officers and men are, and how consistent reward and punishment are administered.[46] Based on these criteria it is not surprising therefore that Shaka's military had achieved the kind of success in battle it did in the early nineteenth century.

In seeking military excellence, however, Shaka superimposed his ideas of military professionalism over the military ethics that had long been developed and observed by the Nguni people, of which the Zulu were a part. Prior to the ascension of Shaka to military leadership, war was essentially light in casualties and sometimes combat was even substituted for by poetry and dancing competitions.[47] This practice was not because the Nguni people were unaware of total warfare but because they had decided deliberately to humanise war by minimising or even eliminating human suffering as a result of it. In fact, Dingiswayo once remarked that although Shaka's ideas of war were good, he preferred the use of minimal force to achieve his objective.[48] Shaka discarded the traditional Nguni war ethics in favour of a form of total and decisive warfare where the enemy was completely destroyed and the remnants incorporated into the Zulu Kingdom. Although this technique served the purpose of permanently disabling the enemy it was generally bloodier and ran against the accepted Nguni ethics of war.

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[43]Kunene, *Emperor Shaka,* p. XXX.
[44]Uzoigwe, 'The Warrior', p. 41.
[45]Knight, *The Anatomy,* p. 243.
[46]Sun Tzu, *Sun Tzu on The Art of War.* Translated by Lionel Giles, (Leicester: Allandale Online Publishing, 2000), p. 2.
[47]Kunene, *Emperor Shaka,* p. XXXVI.
[48]Ritter, *From Folklore,* p. 204.

Over time Shaka drifted away from true military professionalism by abusing his military powers through excessive bloodshed in war. There is evidence pointing to his sometimes discarding the traditional practice of sparing non-combatants, like women and children during war.[49] In addition, he killed his own subjects indiscriminately:

> Shaka carried out executions and even massacres of villagers who were his own subjects as individual and collective punishments, behavior so repugnant even to the people closest to him that his mother reprimanded him for killing his own people. The numbers of people under Shaka's rule who were killed by his order in executions and massacres appear to have amounted to as many as the deaths inflicted and incurred in military expeditions and battles.[50]

There is no doubt that Shaka carried out numerous executions of his own subjects in addition to many other forms of abuses that would today amount to war crimes.[51] This was clearly an abuse of military expertise and a failure by Shaka to lead by appropriate example. By killing his own subjects indiscriminately, he was setting a standard for his warriors to follow. This was not only unethical but also clearly below the standards of true professionalism. Shaka's eventual assassination in 1828 by his own brothers was attributed to his use and abuse of military power against his own people.[52]

Lessons from Maasai Warriors and Shaka kaSenzangakhona
The decline of the Maasai warriors as a major military force in East Africa towards the end of the nineteenth century was the result of a number of factors including animal and human disease. However, the breakdown of military professionalism was a major factor which resulted in the weakening of Maasai military might. The civil war which broke out among the Maasai, when they started raiding each other for cattle, meant that the military skills of the warriors were no longer used only for the betterment of Maasai society. Rather, the warriors' decades of military knowledge and experience was being used to destroy their own society. By attacking each other, and their own society, the warriors were no longer providing needed services to their people. This act also meant that there was no order and discipline among the warriors which, by extension, meant the failure of military regulation and self-policing mechanisms. Consequently, professional ethics were cast aside by the warriors who began abusing their military expertise. A military force which could no longer be trusted by its society, which provided no beneficial service to its people, which could not regulate

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[49]Eldredge, 'Shaka's Military', p. 220.
[50]Ibid., p. 231.
[51]See Donald R. Morris, *The Washing of the Spears: The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation,* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1966), chap. 3.
[52]Eldredge, 'Shaka's Military', p. 231.

the actions of its personnel, and which abused its expertise in disregard of military ethics could not be acting professionally. Thus, it was not surprising that many Maasai military units became mercenaries hired to fight the wars of other peoples in exchange for cattle.

Shaka, being the military and societal leader of the Zulu, had no system to ensure his adherence to military ethics. Consequently, the Zulu military focused its attention on acquiring military expertise and skills without having much concern for military ethics especially as it related to society and humanity. This clear failure in professionalism was made even worse because it involved the military leadership. Shaka was supposed to be responsible for ensuring that military ethics were observed, through exemplary actions and enforcement of standards. He clearly failed to fully uphold military ethics and as such ultimately failed as a military professional. In any military, the tendency for combatants to lose their sense of values and morals because of the horrors of war is a grim reality. Thus, military leadership serves as an outside authority reemphasising and enforcing ethical standards. Without this leadership, those actually involved in combat would be more prone to carrying out actions amounting to war crimes. This is because military professionalism is not possible where the very society meant to be served by the expertise of the military is in reality being abused by it.

The potential for the military to abuse its power is behind the necessity for it to set up effective regulatory measures to enforce ethics. True military professionalism requires that that every individual or group within the military works for, and not against, the very society which created it. Without military ethics, it becomes impossible for military professionalism to be achieved. Even if military ethics are clearly stipulated but never enforced, military discipline becomes impossible, and so professionalism is undermined. The decline of Maasai warriors as a major military power in Pre-colonial East Africa was inevitable after they began using their military expertise against their own society. Military professionalism became impossible when they failed to enforce the fundamental ethic of protecting the society which had created them. In the same way, Shaka lost his professional standing as a military leader when he began abusing his powers. By discarding the traditional Nguni war ethics, he effectively removed the mechanism that could regulate his actions as a military leader.

Upholding military ethics would not only have ensured the maintenance of military professionalism but would also likely promote the longevity of the Maasai military and Shaka's military leadership. However, the opposite was the case in both situations. The military power of the Maasai warriors declined until they ceased to be a powerful military force in Pre-colonial East Africa. Similarly, the popularity of Shaka as a military leader declined steadily until his assassination. Both outcomes illustrate the indispensability of ethics to military professionalism.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the issue of military professionalism and ethics in military leadership using examples from Pre-colonial Africa. The Maasai people developed a professional military which established itself as a dominant force in East Africa. However, towards the end of end of the nineteenth century, the Maasai military ignored their previous ethics and began raiding their own society. This was accompanied by the inevitable decline in military professionalism and the Maasai military eventually losing its place as a dominant military power. In Southern Africa, Shaka rose to the position of military leadership while serving under Dingiswayo. He later built a powerful professional military after assuming the leadership of the Zulu clan. His military reforms, however, led him to discard the traditional war ethics of the Nguni people which were aimed at minimising bloodshed in war. Consequently, Shaka began abusing his military power through excessive bloodshed in war and by indiscriminately executing his own subjects. In the end Shaka lost his position of military leadership through assassination.

These two examples show that military ethics are indispensable to military professionalism and leadership. The consistent upholding of military ethics is necessary for the maintenance of military professionalism and the success of military leadership.

Using archival sources to identify battlefield sites and the fates of the missing: The First Battle of Bullecourt 1917 as a case history

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ABSTRACT
The First Battle of Bullecourt took place in April 1917 and two study cases of the Australian missing from that event have been investigated. Firstly, the fate of Captain Allan Edwin Leane, and secondly the fate of an unaccounted group of wounded last seen in a German dugout. Australian and German unit diaries were used in conjunction with mapping and aerial photography to determine what happened and where.

Introduction
Australia has over 18,000 missing personnel from the First World War's fighting on the Western Front, and the 2008 confirmation and subsequent recovery of remains from mass graves at Fromelles, the majority Australian, has raised the prospect of locating more of Australia's missing.[1] But those missing from the fighting at Fromelles represent less than four per cent of Australia's wartime missing. The First and Second Battles of Bullecourt in April and May 1917 resulted in more than 2,200 Australian missing – which is 1,000 more than the figure for Fromelles – and with these figures excluding the generally overlooked 1,875 British missing from Bullecourt.[2]

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[1]Department of Veterans Affairs, Australia (DVA), *Memorials to the Missing*, https://www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/memorials/war-memorials/memorials-missing. Accessed 7/12/2019.
[2]The Australian figure is derived from the Roll of Honour commemorated on the Australian National Memorial to the Missing at Villers-Bretonneux; Paul Kendall, *Bullecourt 1917: Breaching the Hindenburg Line*, (Stroud: Spellmount, 2010), p. 350.

USING FWW ARCHIVAL SOURCES TO LOCATE SITES AND THE MISSING

This paper describes the process used to identify possible locations for missing Australian Imperial Force (AIF) soldiers at Bullecourt, and the role of organisations seen as having responsibility for commemoration, notably the Australian Army, the British Ministry of Defence (MoD), and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission that maintains the memorials and cemeteries in France and elsewhere.

Policy

Following the discovery of Australian remains at Fromelles in 2008 the Australian Army established a specialist unit, Unrecovered War Casualties - Army (UWC-A), which has been tasked with recovering and identifying the missing from the wars in which Australia has been a participant.[3] The position in the United Kingdom is completely different since it is British Government policy that the Ministry of Defence will not actively search for the remains of missing UK service personnel from the UK's past conflicts.[4] Canada, New Zealand, India and South Africa follow the British policy pertaining to recovery. Nevertheless, the British have introduced the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), and Canadians the Casualty Identification Program for the purpose of identifying remains from incidental discoveries.[5]

The Imperial War Graves Commission was created in May 1917 and changed its name to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in 1960. The CWGC was originally created by the UK and the then five Dominions, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa, although its remit has since grown to include the war dead from other states. Interestingly the CWGC has no provision in its charter that requires it to recover the missing, rather it is responsible for the upkeep of existing

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[3]Denise Donlon, Anthony Lowe and Brian Manns, 'Forensic archaeology and the Australian war dead', In W.J. Mike Groen, Nicholas Marquez-Grant and Robert C. Janaway (Eds.), *Forensic archaeology: A global perspective*, (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2015), p. 381.

[4]Tracey Bowers, 'The identification of British war casualties: The work of the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre', *Forensic Science International*, 318 (2021) 110571, p. 1.

[5]David Tattersfield, 'J triple C: The unsung heroes', *The Western Front Association Bulletin*, Number 111, (August 2018), pp. 31-32;

Laurel Clegg, 'Farm to France: The identification of Canada's Missing Winnipeg Soldiers from the Amiens Battlefield', In: Derek Congram (Ed.), *Missing Person: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the disappeared*, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2016), pp. 288-310.; Casualty identification https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/casualty-identification-military.html Accessed 4 February 2023.

cemeteries and memorials.[6] The CWGC asserts that the responsibility to recover and identify the dead lies with the respective armed services, although the CWGC willingly takes responsibility for adding the names to headstones through rededications, and reinterments to existing cemeteries with full military honours for more recently found remains.[7]

On an international scale, Australia is one of only two states having an agency to locate the historic fallen. The United States is the other, but only for the Second World War and later conflicts, where it provides a model to emulate. Previously, there was no precedent for the Australian armed services attempting to locate their missing after a nominal period of exhumation and the concentration of remains to war cemeteries which followed the cessation of hostilities. Until 2010 Australia followed British policy.

Fromelles
The Battle of Fromelles is remembered as Australia's greatest military tragedy in 24 hours, with 5 Division suffering some 5,500 casualties, including 1,957 killed.[8] In the late 1990s, Lambis Englezos had compiled evidence of the existence of mass graves at Pheasant Wood near Fromelles. To confirm the burials, a joint Australian Army and British Ministry of Defence project approved an exploratory investigation of the ground in 2008. The remains of 250 Australian and British soldiers were exhumed in 2009 and reinterred in a new CWGC cemetery. Currently, 173 Australians have been identified. Prior to 2010 the Australian Army's response to the discovery of human remains was tasked to their History Unit which was formed in 1996. The Australian authorities' approval for a permanent capability for this recovery and identification resulted in the establishment of the UWC-A in 2010.[9]

The success in convincing Australian authorities and the CWGC of the existence, and location of mass graves at Fromelles was in a large part due to the role of aerial photographs and other primary forms of evidence.[10] The 2009 exhumation at Pheasant

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[6]Philip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil: The History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission,* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2003), p. 28.
[7]David Tattersfield, 'J triple C: The unsung heroes', *The Western Front Association Bulletin*, Number 111, (August 2018), pp. 31-32.
[8]Tim Lycett, '31st Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces, Killed In Action, 21st July 1916', Submission to Office Australian War Graves, CWGC and Australian War Memorial, (November 2016).
[9]Donlon, et. al., 'Forensic archaeology and the Australian war dead', p. 381.
[10]Tony Pollard & Peter Barton, 'The use of First World War aerial photographs by archaeologists: A case study from Fromelles, northern France', In W. Hanson, & I. Oltean (Eds.), *Archaeology from historical aerial and satellite archives*, (New York, NY: Springer, 2013) pp. 87-104.

Wood has become a benchmark case study in forensic archaeology. Despite the precedence of Fromelles, there have been no further deliberate recoveries made by the Australian Army on the Western Front.[11] Devising methodologies to examine and data mine primary sources provides a new avenue for investigation and the search for the missing, such as at Bullecourt which is examined in this paper. It will be shown that these techniques can be applied to other battlefields to enable resolution in the accounting for the fallen.

Fromelles and First Bullecourt were comparable battles with similar disastrous outcomes in terms of casualties, where, despite the German trench lines being breached by the AIF they could not be held against counterattack, so the ground gained was lost. Consequently, the attackers were unable to bury the majority of their dead or recover their wounded from the enemy trenches. The Red Cross Bureau in Berlin advised the Allies that the Bavarian regiment at Fromelles had buried the British dead, including Australians, in mass graves and this assisted the recovery investigations at Pheasant Wood.[12] Furthermore, the orders of the Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 21 to construct mass graves were discovered in the Munich War Archive.[13] However, it is unclear how the Germans of 27 Württemberg Infantry Division dealt with the Australian dead at Bullecourt in April 1917. The instigator for investigating the Fromelles site, Lambis Englezos, used the mass grave hypothesis as a precedent for his subsequent work on locating the Bullecourt battlefield burial of Major Percy Black, 16 Battalion, but that search has so far been unsuccessful. The difficulty in working with topographical and historical data in locating sites at Bullecourt, and its interpretation for archaeology, has previously been demonstrated in tracing the path of Ernst Jünger on the first day of the German Operation Michael in 1918.[14] Nevertheless, in recent years advances in technology have been applied in the search for tanks on the battlefield, yet the successful location of Tank 796 was largely due to 'tankography' rather than modern geophysical surveys.[15]

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[11]It should be noted that unplanned (incidental) recoveries continue to be made on a routine basis as a result of activities such as road construction etc.

[12]The National Archives of Australia (hereinafter NAA) MP367/1 446/10/1840, Court of Inquiry, p. 623 & pp. 647-648.

[13]Tim Lycett and Sandra Playle, *Fromelles: The Final Chapters*, (Melbourne: Penguin, 2013), p. 107.

[14]Nils Fabiansson & Hedley Malloch, 'Making sense of eyewitness accounts in locating historical sites: Ernst Jünger at Bullecourt 21 March 1918', *Stand To!*, No. 69 (January 2004), pp. 15-22. Jünger later wrote his memoirs in *Storm of Steel*.

[15]Richard Osgood, 'Mud, blood, and green fields beyond: Exercise Joan of Arc, Bullecourt 2017', https://breakinggroundheritage.org.uk/onewebmedia/report%202017.pdf. Accessed 31 January 2023; Brenton Brooks, *Tankography* as used here is the determination of

Information Sources
This study utilises archival resources including contemporary unit diaries, contemporary mapping, aerial photography, and soldier's testimonies to investigate the missing at Bullecourt on 11 April 1917. Importantly, the article also makes use of German archival sources. The intention here is to demonstrate the integration of under-utilised techniques to re-evaluate previous assumptions of events, and so formulate new methods that can be applied to conflict archaeology and in investigations by recovery agencies. The focus is on the conflict landscape of the Hindenburg Line as attacked by the Australian 12 Brigade.

The Allied 1917 Spring Offensive & The Prelude to Battle
The Allies' main spring offensive in 1917 was conducted by the French under General Robert Nivelle on the Chemin des Dames. However, the Germans disrupted these plans in February and March by strategically shortening their defensive front. In *Operation Alberich* the Germans withdrew to the *Siegfriedstellung*, a prepared defence line between Arras and the Aisne, which was referred to by the Allies as the Hindenburg Line. To support the Nivelle Offensive in early April, the British Third and First Armies created a diversion to the north with an attack at Arras including the assault on the Vimy Ridge, and so assist the main French attack planned for a week later.

Nearby, and to the south, General Sir Hubert Gough's Fifth Army was to assist Lt General Edmund Allenby's Third Army break out.[16] Gough proposed to attack a salient in the Hindenburg Line, using the British 62 and Australian 4 Divisions supported by tanks, across a 3,500 yard front with Bullecourt at the centre. In the muddy conditions behind the front, a shortage of horses led to transport difficulties for the artillery and its ammunition supplies. This reduced the availability of the new, instantaneous Percussion No. 106 fuzed shell, which was more efficient against barbed wire.[17] Lt General William Birdwood, the Australian Corps commander, objected to Gough's planned attack because: the wire was uncut; the line was strongly held; and the tanks to be used to support the attack were unreliable.[18] On 9 April 1917, Major William

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the final positions of derelict tanks on the battlefield by analysis of wartime mapping coordinates, aerial and ground level photography.
[16]Charles E.W. Bean, *The AIF in France 1917, Vol. IV of Official history of Australia in the war of 1914-18*, (Canberra: Angus & Robertson, 1937), p. 258.
[17]Ross Mallett, *The Interplay between Technology, Tactics and Organisation in the First AIF*, (Canberra: Australian Defence Force Academy, 1999), p. 107. Honours Thesis.
[18]Australian War Memorial (hereinafter AWM) AWM 3DRL/3376 1/3 Part 1, Personal diary of Field Marshal Lord William Birdwood, 1 January – 31 December 1917. Diary entry for 9 April 1917.

Watson, from the recently formed Heavy Branch Machine Gun Corps (HBMGC), conceived the idea that his company of tanks concentrated on a narrow front could flatten the wire entanglements, and so enable a surprise infantry assault in the absence of artillery support.[19] Gough agreed to the scheme and a hastily organised attack was ordered for the following morning.[20] Watson's company was equipped with obsolete Mk Is and Mk IIs, then commonly in use as training tanks. Additionally, there was no preparatory practice of combined tactics between infantry and the new weapon. This improvised attack was to be made on a 1,500 yard front between Bullecourt and Riencourt.

On the morning of 10 April, the tanks of 11 Coy, D Battalion, failed to reach their allotted assembly points, and the attack was called off. Rather than cancel, Gough rescheduled the attack for the next morning, disregarding the unreliability of the tanks. Birdwood again unsuccessfully protested.[21]

Hindenburg Line Defences
By understanding the defensive system to be attacked, the later implications for the distribution and recovery of the dead can be better interpreted. Although the formidable defences of the Hindenburg Line were not yet complete, by the end of March 1917 the Allies were aware of the details in the neighbourhood of Bullecourt.[22] Following German High Command doctrine, the defence system incorporated the village as a natural strong point. A new trench had been constructed in some places in front of, but for the most part immediately behind, the original line. This was sited almost entirely on the reverse slope. Some of the dugouts in the original support line had been abandoned before completion. A captured German prisoner stated that in the former support line, the dugouts were of the usual deep type with four entrances, two for each company. Machine gun positions had all been accurately mapped, with three uncovered machine gun emplacements in each company sector of some 150 yards. The machine gun positions gave perfect enfilade along almost the entire outer edge of the wire. They were protected by an additional depth of wire immediately in front of them. Nevertheless, as late as 9 April Gough, believing that the *Alberich*

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[19]The artillery would instead concentrate on neutralising the German batteries.
[20]William H.L. Watson, *A Company of Tanks*. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1920) pp. 44-45.
[21]AWM 3DRL/3376 12/1a, Operations: Bapaume-Bullecourt, William Riddell Birdwood.
[22]AWM2018.785.69, Maps and aerial photographs relating to the First World War service of Lieutenant-Colonel James Murdoch Archer Durrant, 1915 – 1918; AWM4 1/30/15 PART 4, Intelligence HQ 1st ANZAC Corps war diary April 1917.

withdrawal was a sign of German weakness, was convinced the Germans intended to evacuate the Hindenburg line.[23]

The First Battle of Bullecourt
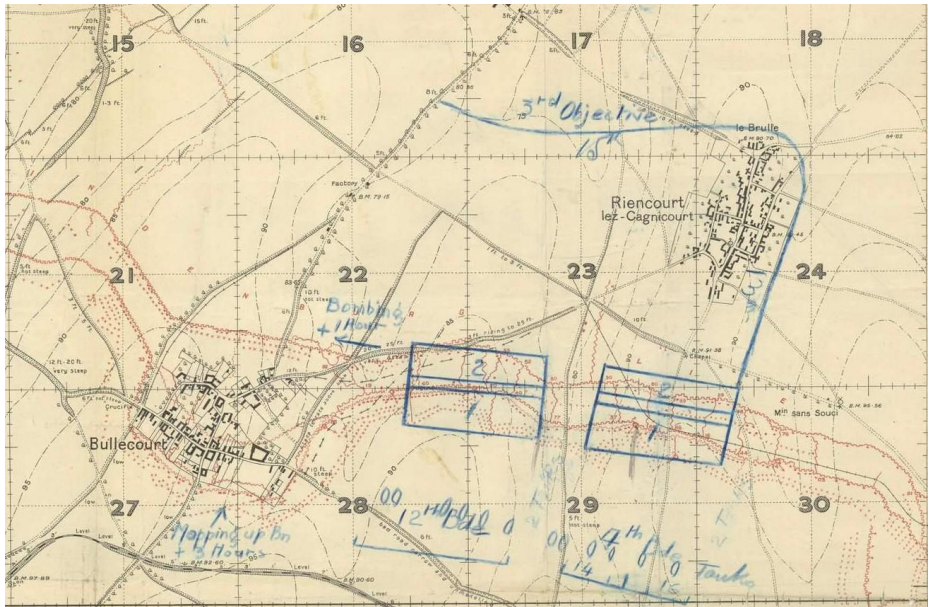
Figure 1: Objectives in Hindenburg Line for 12 and 4 Brigades at Bullecourt on 11 April 1917. Objectives 1 and 2 are OG1 and OG2 respectively.[24]

On 11 April, the tanks either broke down or were quickly hit and knocked out. The two infantry brigades were then exposed to withering enfilade fire and were left to get through the barbed wire alone. Incredibly, they achieved their first and second objectives (Figure 1) and occupied the trenches designated OG1 & OG2, where OG is derived from the Pozières nomenclature 'Old German'. After a few desperate hours the Australians were dislodged by German counter attacks. The day ended in disaster with the result that the dead and wounded could not be buried or recovered by the

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[23]AWM4 1/48/13 PART 2, General Staff Headquarters 4th Division war diary April 1917.
[24]AWM4 23/31/30.

attackers. Australian casualties were over 3,000, including some 1,170 taken prisoner.[25] German losses were 749 including 42 taken prisoner.[26]

Prisoners of War & the AIF Dead: What Archival Records Reveal
The AIF suffered over 215,000 casualties during the four years of the First World War, including 60,000 dead. Of the 4,044 men who became prisoners of war, 3,848 were captured on the Western Front.[27] The relatively small number captured often results in their fate being overlooked and their stories neglected, largely due to their circumstances falling outside both the ANZAC narrative and commemorative rituals.[28] Nevertheless, the high number of captives taken on the single day of First Bullecourt, demonstrates they were an important component of the battle, even if it was disastrous. Prisoners of war represented less than 2% of overall Australian battle casualties on the Western Front yet accounted for 39% of losses on 11 April 1917. Post war statements following repatriation from Germany are therefore an important resource for testimonies of the events of the battle.

The treatment and the experiences of the men taken into captivity at Bullecourt varied. This study will investigate the fate of some cases which ultimately are concerned with the missing. The Germans found the battle had unexpectedly and quickly turned in their favour. At Riencourt, German escort crews were soon guarding over 1,000 Australians at prisoner collection points behind the front. Prisoner columns were mistakenly shelled by rearward German artillery thinking they were advancing enemy troops.[29] The unforeseen capture of such a large number of prisoners also placed strain on the Germans' ability and capacity to deal with them.

Sergeant Frederick Peachey, 15 Battalion, an escaped prisoner reported,

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[25]Bean, *The AIF in France 1917, Vol. IV*, pp 342-343, p. 543. Bean's figures are inconsistent; The Australian prisoner figure is based on reported German success after the battle and has not been revised by scholars; Arthur G. Butler, *The Western Front, Vol. 2 of Official History Australian Army Medical Services*, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1940), p. 156, Battle casualties 11 April 1917 – Killed in Action (KIA) 825, Died of Wounds (DW) 32, Wounded 1,059, Prisoners of War (PoW) 1,275, Total = 3,191.
[26]Bean, *The AIF in France 1917*, p. 349
[27]Arthur G. Butler, *Problems and services, Vol. 3 of Official History Australian Army Medical Services*, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1943) p. 896.
[28]For example, see, Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front 1916-18*, (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 4.
[29]D. Simon, *Das Infanterie-Regiment „Kaiser Wilhelm, König von Preußen" (2. Württemb.) Nr. 120 im Weltkrieg 1914-1918*, (Stuttgart: Chr. Belsersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922), p. 67. Translated by Peter Rothe.

being ordered to remove our dead (of 4 Brigade) out of the trenches, and put them into shell holes with twenty or thirty in each…. Identification discs were not taken. After this was done we had to remove our wounded who had been left in the barbed wire, those who had leg wounds and could not walk were shot with a revolver through the head.[30]

Major Black leading 16 Battalion was killed instantly while rallying the men at the wire between OG1 and OG2.[31] Black's remains are presently sought by citizen 'searcher' organisations, including 'Team Lambis', based on Peachey's sole affidavit. At the time, the Australian Red Cross Bureau advised that parties of prisoners had hastily buried 200 or 300 of Australian dead in unmarked graves near where they fell.[32] Despite the efforts required to remove, dispose, and bury the dead in improvised mass graves, no collaborating statement has been located among the balance of hundreds of former prisoner reports. This questions the validity of Peachey's eyewitness testimony as a reliable data source.

Unlike Fromelles, there are no German Red Cross Bureau notifications for the use of mass graves at Bullecourt, and neither are there indications of earth works in the aerial images.[33] The absence of records for such makeshift cemeteries at Bullecourt presents a greater challenge than was the case at Fromelles. Major William Trew, 24 Battalion, stated he considered comparatively few of the men killed on 11 April and 3 May at Bullecourt had been buried when the Australians left the area some weeks later.[34] During the Second Battle of Bullecourt, the padre of 14 Battalion returned, searched and found paybooks and discs. He took a great deal of trouble to identify the men lying dead around Bullecourt.[35] 5 Division after their territorial success during the second battle came across a lot of 15 Battalion from the first battle that had not been buried at all, except by shelling.[36] Furthermore, the lack of any war time battlefield clearance is evidenced by the 280 unburied bodies recovered in the old No Mans Land

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[30]AWM30 B13.18. Prisoner of war statements, 1914-18 War: 4th Australian Division, 15th Battalion, 8 to 13 April 1917.
[31]AWM 940.431092 R432, William Henry Murray letter to Cyril Longmore dated 26/4/17.
[32]AWM 1DRL/0428, Australian Red Cross Society (hereinafter ARCS) Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files.
[33]NAA MP367/1, 446/10/1840, Court of Inquiry, p. 623 & pp. 647-648; Pollard & Barton, 'The use of First World War aerial photographs by archaeologists', p. 96.
[34]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files.
[35]Ibid.
[36]Ibid.

area at Bullecourt in 1919.[37] However, this clearance was conducted before adequate recovery protocols had been devised for exhumation teams. Consequently, some areas remained uncleared, and the identities of those recovered were often lost during cemetery concentrations.[38] The discovery in 2009 of four members of the British Army's Honourable Artillery Company in a pasture within the village demonstrates the inadequacy of some post-Armistice clearances.[39] Therefore the burial practices of the dead from individual battles must be investigated based on their merits, rather than relying on the precedence and expectation set by the Fromelles mass graves. However, collating and analysis of the records that are available can assist in determining the fates of the missing.

The Fate of Captain Allan Edwin Leane
The final fate of casualties is often confused, particularly behind enemy lines, with the presumed 'official' cause of death being erroneous when primary documentation is consulted. Those fates have then been perpetuated without re-examination. This study analysed a range of documentation originating from German agencies, principally their Red Cross Bureau, to demonstrate if these archival resources can clarify what happened to the missing. Such a case warranting closer scrutiny is that of Captain Allan Edwin Leane, 48 Battalion, who continues to be reported as having died of wounds in German captivity.[40] Although Captain Leane was last reported by members of his battalion in Australian Red Cross Society (ARCS) Missing Files as being mortally wounded or being killed behind German lines, there is no report from German agencies that he was taken into captivity.[41] Why does this ambiguity exist, and can examination of the German records held by the International Committee of the Red Cross Historic Archives (ICRC) provide further evidence beyond that available in Australian archives?

Confusion arises from Leane's documented date of death. This was recorded as *gestorben,* translated as 'fell', on 2 May 1917 by the German *A.O.K.6.* (Chief Army

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[37]AWM18 9966/1/21, Graves correspondence to and from Lt Q S Spedding, Corps Burial Officer.

[38]Brenton Brooks, 'Epitaph to the Missing: Agencies which abandon the unrecovered AIF dead on the Western Front', *Sabretache*, Vol. LXI, No.2, (June 2020), p. 44; See grave concentrations from Noreuil British Cemetery No.1. to Quéant Road Cemetery, Buissy, e.g., 899 Ross Patterson 13 Bn "Buried in this cemetery actual graves unknown", https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1252532 Accessed 31 January 2023; NAA B2455, PATERSON ROSS dossier.

[39]'WWI soldiers finally laid to rest after 96 years' https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-22253147. Accessed 31 January 2023.

[40]Pegram, *Surviving the Great War*, p. 191.

[41]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files, Allan Edwin Leane.

Command 6) in their report of 6 May.[42] Leane next appears on the Red Cross Bureau Berlin Office *Nachlassliste* dated 20 Aug 1917, and this was the first notification to the British of his fate.[43] Enquiries were made in September and October 1917 by the ARCS in London to investigate the circumstances of his death.[44] Nevertheless, death whilst a prisoner of war was recorded in his dossier on 9 October 1917, despite there being no advice he had ever been in captivity.[45] The German Prisoner Care Department responded they had no details of Leane ever being a captive.[46]

After the war, efforts by Captain Charles Mills to extract a death register in Berlin, record Leane as being killed in action near Bullecourt.[47] On the same page, Captain Henry Stanley Davis, 46 Battalion, was listed as being killed in action in the middle of April near Riencourt, also in the *A.O.K.6.* report of 6 May.[48] To compare the official documentation of prisoners who died in captivity, known cases with CWGC graves were investigated. In contrast to battlefield fatalities, prisoner of war deaths were clearly labelled on German death vouchers or certificates, a detail not recorded against Leane.[49] Those who died in German hospitals had their details reported in *Totenliste*, but Leane does not appear under this category either.[50] The majority of men who died in captivity do have identified CWGC graves, since their deaths were recorded in hospitals and the original interments took place well behind the front lines. Captain Leane has no known grave and is commemorated on the Australian National Memorial to the Missing at Villers-Bretonneux. A fate commonly experienced by those killed on the day of battle.

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[42]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files.

[43]International Committee of the Red Cross Historic Archives (hereinafter ICRC), https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/List/1509685/698/13937/. Accessed 31 January 2023.

[44]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files.

[45]NAA B2455, LEANE ALLAN EDWIN p. 13

[46]Ibid., p. 27.

[47]Captain Charles Mills OBE, late 31 Battalion AIF, was wounded and captured at Fromelles. He was appointed the PoW Red Cross representative for Switzerland in March 1918, and after hostilities was instrumental in accounting for the 'Missing in Action' whilst stationed in Berlin for the Wounded and Missing Bureau.

[48]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files.

[49]AWM18, 9982/2/34, POW Correspondence from Captain Mills, Berlin.

[50]See Hemsley 48 Bn, ICRC, https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/File/Zoom/E/04/01/C_G1_E_04_01_0070/C_G1_E_04_01_0070_0084.JPG/4. Accessed 31 January 2023.

Further investigation revealed Captain Leane and Captain Davis were in the same *Nachlassliste*.[51] A translation of Leane's death voucher sent to AIF Headquarters in 1919 defines *Nachlassliste* as 'Left Property', which can be regarded as personal effects.[52] 'The Left Property Office reports – has left paybook containing his will handed in with list 28/2630 on 19.9.17 for dispatch to England'.[53] As with Captain Davis' case, Allan Leane's body was most likely located on the battlefield and identified from his paybook by enemy details in May and reported to their command. The entry in Captain Leane's dossier that he was a prisoner is unsupported by German documentation or protocol, and the Roll of Honour should be reviewed for amendment to 'killed in action'. The approach undertaken here in evaluating a diverse array of archival material for an individual can be expanded to the perspective of the collective unit to seek patterns on a larger scale, such as burial clusters.

Missing Attackers from 12 Brigade

More Australians remain missing at Bullecourt than were killed at Fromelles, with sixty-three per cent of those missing from the two battles of Bullecourt remaining unrecovered from the battlefield.[54] With such a high figure, it is suggested that the records could be re-evaluated and lead to locating the sites of remains. A preliminary analysis of the witness statements in ARCS Files of the Missing in the First Battle identified a cluster of wounded men from 12 Brigade last seen placed in a German dugout in OG1.[55] This dugout was established by Major Victor Waine as 46 Battalion's advanced headquarters and dressing station.[56] During the attack, injured men were carried or ordered to this dugout to have their wounds dressed. When the Germans counter attacked the trench, they threw bombs down into the dugout and captured those present, including the wounded.[57] Major Waine endeavoured to go out via the second entrance but found the enemy blocking that outlet. Despite men in this dugout being taken prisoner, as determined by repatriation statements, other wounded that were identified sheltering with them remain missing. Sergeant Charles Burton recalled his companions' misfortune. Among those who were in the dugout that he could remember, but are now classified as missing, include 2304 William Gordon Campbell and 2384 George Samuel Burton (he had been severely wounded in the stomach) of

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[51]ICRC, https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/List/1226140/698/13916/ Accessed 31 January 2023.
[52]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files.
[53]AWM 1DRL/0428, ARCS Wounded and Missing Files Allan Edwin Leane.
[54]Brooks, 'Epitaph to the Missing', p. 44.
[55]Carl Johnson, Pers comm.
[56]AWM30 B10.4. Prisoner of war statements, 1914-18 War: 4th Australian Division, 46th Battalion, 8 to 13 April 1917.
[57]AWM30 B10.13. Prisoner of war statements, 1914-18 War: 4th Australian Division, 48th Battalion, 8 to 13 April 1917.

46 Battalion.[58] Cross referencing to the ARCS Files of the Missing, a group of at least twelve wounded men remain unaccounted for, with no known burial details, indicating they may still be interred in the dugout. If the Germans encountered the bodies, they should appear in *Nachlassliste*. This gives rise to the question could the location of that dugout be determined.

Aftermath – The Second Battle

The Second Battle of Bullecourt was launched on 3 May 1917 with broadly the same objectives as the First Battle. Initial success was achieved only by the Australian 6 Brigade, 2 Division, which had been assigned the objective of 12 Brigade in April.

In an endeavour to seek further information detailing dugouts etc. the Australian unit diaries have been examined. Fortunately, and as a part of consolidation efforts of the former German trenches, 6 Brigade's company of Field Engineers were tasked with reporting on the captured defences and the condition of the enemy's dugouts.[59] The details and location of 23 dugouts in squares U.23, U.28 and U.29 were recorded on an accompanying trench map. This was a significant archival find. No traces of concrete shelters were found in the captured works. A number of dugouts were also incomplete, especially the connections between staircases. This detail corroborated intelligence gathered on the German defences prior to the first battle.[60] In OG2 a large dugout having three entrances and two chambers was recorded. However, in OG1 no double entrance dugout as described by Major Waine was found, although its prospective location is detailed later in the article.

Evaluating Württembergische – Infantry Regiment 124 – Events to Verify the Australian 12 Brigade Account of Attack

German state archives are a potential resource for insight to the events. Such resources have largely been ignored by anglophone researchers yet account for the enemy's actions. Recent acknowledgement of the importance of such German records can be seen in the translation of von Bose's work on their 'Black Day'.[61] Bean had the 27 Infantry Division's regimental histories translated for his work, but the accurate regimental maps are absent from his archival records. This study has examined the mapping located in the Württembergische war diaries, with the intention of superimposing on them the Australian records to see if they coincide, and so verify details of the location of fighting. This is an important consideration in formulating the

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[58]AWM30 B10.4. Prisoner of war statement by 2383 Sgt C D Burton.

[59]AWM4 14/25/19, 6 Field Coy Engineers war diary May 1917.

[60]AWM2018.785.69

[61]Thilo von Bose, Translated by Pearson, D. & Thost, P. with Cowan, T (Ed.). *The Catastrophe of the 8 August 1918*, (Newport: Big Sky Publishing, 2019).

locations of potential burial clusters for the units involved, especially when formations were reinforced or rotated during the fighting to secure trench gains.
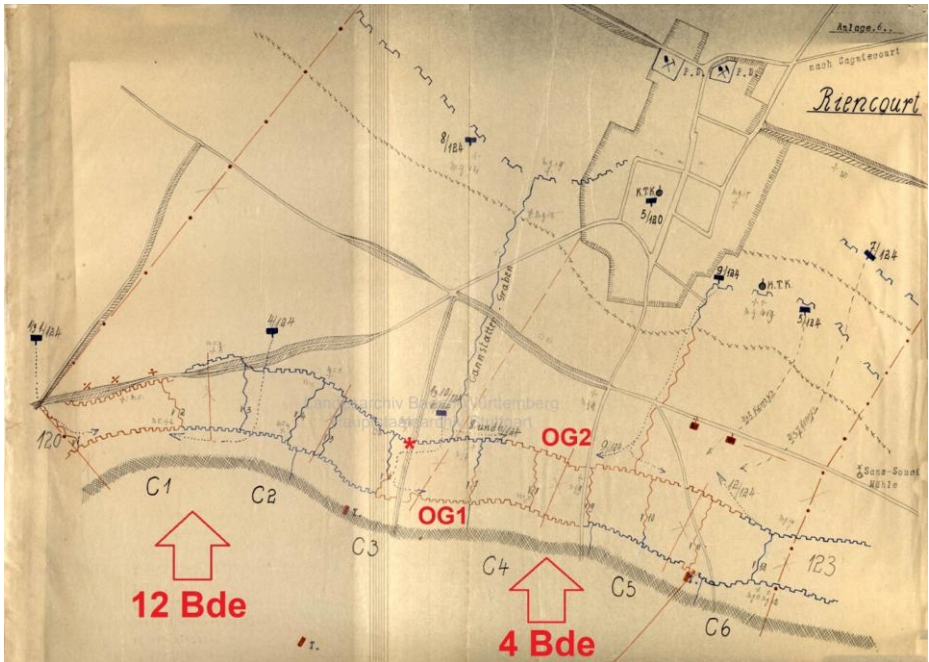
Figure 2: German trenches OG1 and OG2 of Hindenburg Line between Bullecourt and Riencourt. Trenches breached by the Australians are indicated in red. Reputed 48 Battalion block at Central Road shown at *. German counter attacks are blue dotted lines.[62]

Examining the German report of their lines which were taken by 12 Brigade, it contrasts with the account of the Australians. 48 Battalion reportedly established trench blocks in OG2 on the right at Central Road U.23.c.85.05., and on the left in Sunken Road at U.23.c.0.4. It was thought 4 Brigade was at least 400 yards to the right of their expected point in the German line. However, the Germans mapped that the Australians breached the section of their OG2 support trench further to the west towards Bullecourt as shown in Figure 2 and did not extend eastward to the Central Road. In front of Riencourt, the German records agree with the accounts of 4 Brigade for the territory held – Section C4 – C6. On the basis that 4 Brigade were in the correct position, this would support the theory that 12 Brigade were 400 yards

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[62]Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg – Generallandesarchiv Stuttgart M94 GR123.

westward of the position they believed they had occupied. This aligns with the German account of their trench line temporarily being lost in the section C1.

Site Evidence Based on Exhumations of the Fallen
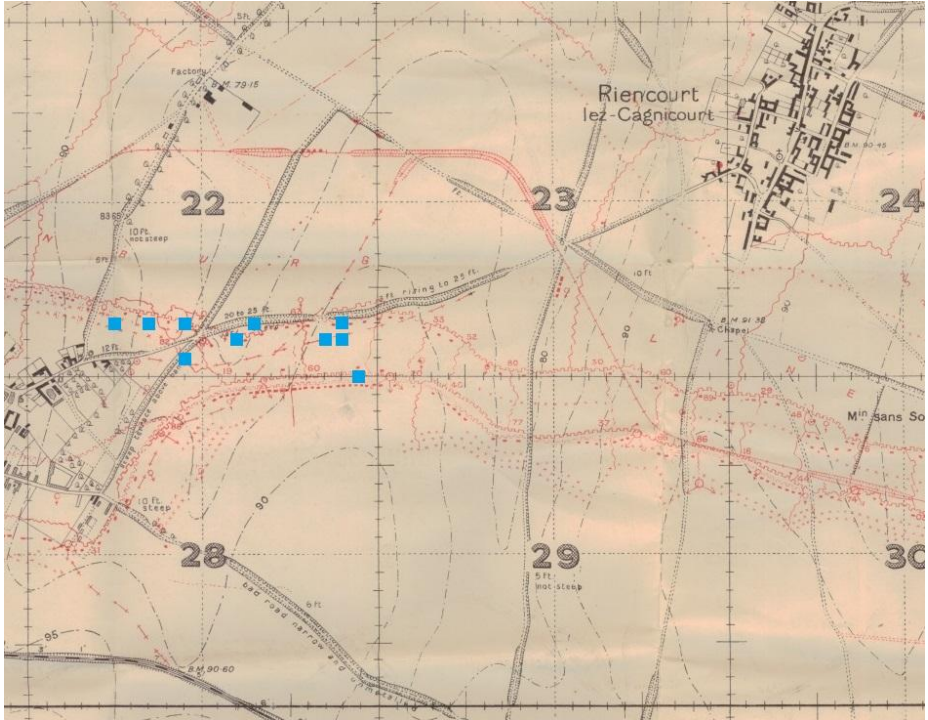
Figure 3: Exhumation sites of identified men from 12 Brigade (shown as blue squares), recovered near vicinity of OG1 and OG2. All recoveries were within square U.22. No identified men from the brigade were discovered in U.23.[63]

Confirmation of the German positions taken by 12 Brigade during the First Battle can be verified by physical evidence of their occupation. The strongest link can be revealed by those killed in the trenches and buried close to where they fell. For the 4 Division total of 923 deaths, 95 of those killed on 11 April have known graves in CWGC cemeteries. Fourteen of these graves can be identified as 12 Brigade exhumed from

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[63]Co-ordinates of recovery site extracted from CWGC Burial Returns for Concentration of Graves (Exhumation and Reburials). For example see, 1888 Charles Brooks, 48 Bn, https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/565619/charles-brooks/#&gid=2&pid=1. Accessed 4 February 2023.

the nearby enemy trenches. By plotting the locations of exhumation, see Figure 3, it can be determined if the positions can be correlated with the German records of the ground they lost. All these remains were recovered from 12 Brigade objectives in square U.22. However, no bodies identified as belonging to 48 Battalion were recovered eastward in U.23, which was reported as the extent of the brigade's trench gains. This distribution of exhumations correlates with the ground the Germans reported they had lost. Consequently, these findings challenge the century long Australian narrative of the capture of OG2 in the 12 Brigade sector extending as far right as Central Road. 48 Battalion's right flank only extended to the Diagonal Bullecourt – Riencourt Road. The present day proximity of this eastern boundary is halfway between the 'Digger 'Australian Memorial Park and *La Petite Croix* Memorial to the Australian Missing on the road renamed *Rue des Australiens*.

The Lost Dugout – Discrepancies in Mapping After the Second Attack
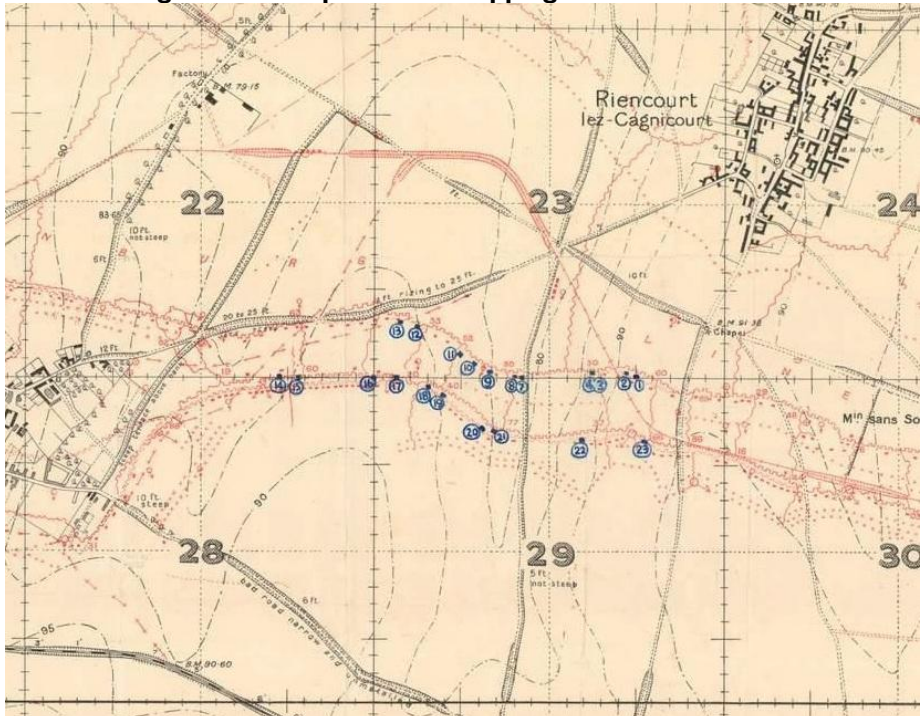
Figure 4: Survey of captured German dugouts made by Australian 6 Field Company Engineers after opening phase of Second Bullecourt in May 1917.[64]

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[64]AWM4 14/25/19.

Based on the reports of missing 12 Brigade wounded being located in a captured German dugout, a revised understanding of where the brigade breached the Hindenburg Line, and the 6 Brigade Field Company Engineers' report on German dugouts, there is now an opportunity to analyse the combined evidence. An accurate depiction of dispositions on April 11 enables the comparative examination of events at key points in the Australian and German mapping. A dominant feature is the German dugouts which existed in the Hindenburg Line during the First Battle and the discrepancy in the number constructed compared with what remained after capture in the Second Battle. The survey of dugouts by the Australian Engineers demonstrates the absence of dugouts in U.28.b (see Figure 4). This is confirmed by the earlier German mapping, held in the Stuttgart archives, which records an additional six dugouts in the C1 sector of trench not located by the Australian engineers, see Figure 5. This section of OG1 corresponds to the objectives of 46 Battalion, and the sector of the Hindenburg Line where the remains of men from 12 Brigade were recovered, see Figure 3.

Figure 5: Location of German dugouts in OG1 and OG2 prior to First Bullecourt, dated 10 April 1917, in the sector attacked by 12 Brigade. Dugouts lost in section C1 after First Bullecourt are circled.[65]

[65]Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg – Generallandesarchiv Stuttgart.

According to the German indication of ground lost, 46 Battalion occupied part of the trench including dugouts numbered 14 and 15 by the Australian Engineers with an additional four to the west towards the village. The repatriation statement given by Major Waine recorded the headquarters and dressing station at which he was captured as being a double entrance dugout. However, the engineers did not discover a double entrance dugout in OG1. This indicates the dugout entrances in this section of trench may have been blown in by artillery after the First Battle. Alternatively, the Germans may have sealed the entrances as a readymade tomb. Despite Major Waine being taken to the rear, a group of at least 12 wounded men who were being treated in the same dugout have disappeared and remain unaccounted for. It is likely therefore that the missing men are entombed in an intact German dugout.

Figure 6: Overlay of aerial image of German trenches with current land usage. Aerial image taken on 6 April 1917 of newly constructed Hindenburg Line, corresponding to British map squares U.22.d and U.28.b.[66] The entrances of the lost 12 Brigade dugouts are located below the square traverses of the German trench within the white box. Australian Memorial Park containing the 'Digger' statue is identified. Courtesy of Google Earth.

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[66]McMaster University, 51b.U22 (Bullecourt, Hindenburg Line) April 6, 1917.

By overlaying an aerial image taken in early April 1917 of the unmolested, newly constructed trenches, on present day mapping, these former dugouts have been identified as being in the arable field surrounding the Australian Memorial Park containing the 'Digger' statue, see Figure 6.

This field was previously owned by Jean and Denise Letaille, who donated the land for the Memorial Park, which was inaugurated on 25 April 1992. Peter Corlett's iconic 'Digger' statue was unveiled during the ANZAC Day ceremonies there in 1993. The Memorial Park incorporates the former OG2. The position of the memorial is an accurate landmark for a visitor to reflect where fighting in the trenches took place. The Letaille's legacy continues from the establishment of the Bullecourt 1917 Museum which houses a collection of artefacts and relics from the local battlefield which were previously stored in their barn on the museum site in the village. The museum and the 'Digger' statue are now emotive destinations for Australians on visits to their forefathers' battleground. The discovery of an intact dugout would also provide preservation and educational opportunities for the museum. But to do that the site needs an investigative survey supported by the Australian Defence Force's UWC-A to search for the OG1 dugouts and so establish whether wounded AIF soldiers were entombed there and confirm if their bodies are still present. As was the case at Fromelles any remains discovered could be recovered and interred with full military honours. If no means of identity, such as discs, are present the remains can be sampled for DNA extraction and the conduct of family profiling to enable identification.

The author maintains there is an obligation under their remit for the UWC-A to find these bodies and if successful lead on to their recovery, reinterment and resolution for the families.[67]

Conclusion
Bullecourt was the site of a re-entrant in the Hindenburg Line that witnessed two battles in 1917, involving the four divisions of the I ANZAC Corps, which achieved nothing of tactical value for the cost of 10,000 Australian casualties.[68] Of the 2,200 missing Australians, 63% have not had their remains recovered from the battlefield.[69] In addition, the British commemorate a further 1,875 missing on the Arras Memorial.[70]

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[67]For the UWC-A 'Mission Statement', see, Ian McPhedran, 'A detective story', *Where Soldiers Lie: The Quest to Find Australia's Missing War Dead*, (Australia: Harper Collins Publishers, 2019), p. 133.
[68]Bean, *The AIF in France 1917, Vol. IV*, p. 489.
[69]Brooks, 'Epitaph to the Missing', p. 44.
[70]Paul Kendall, *Bullecourt 1917*, p. 350.

This study was not able to locate any German documentation held by the Stuttgart archives that the 27 Infantry Division, then garrisoning the Bullecourt sector of the Hindenburg Line in April 1917, had performed any clearances for a collective burial of enemy dead.[71] In contrast, after launching Operation Michael in 1918 German burial details, from Ernst Jünger's 111 Division, assisted by prisoners, were observed burying British dead in a previously established soldier cemetery, see Figure 7. Several names on the existing crosses can be read which confirms the site as the Ecoust Military Cemetery. The policy of burying enemy dead may have varied between German divisions or reflects that in 1917 the continued violence of the contested Bullecourt battleground simply consumed the dead.

Figure 7: Photocard showing Ecoust Military Cemetery 23 March 1918 after the Germans have retaken the area. Several names on the existing crosses can be read, including Douglas Ferguson 10 FAB, AIF. British prisoners help bury the dead from the North Staffordshire Regiment. (Author's collection)

With the absence of evidence for mass graves, alternative methods need to be sought to resolve the whereabouts of the missing. Critical analysis of reliable historic testimony and documentation allows present day investigators to derive their fates.

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[71]The generosity of Florian Wein in accessing the records at the Stuttgart Archives is gratefully acknowledged.

The official fate of Captain Allan Leane remains ambiguous due to a lack of clarity within the ARCS Missing Files held by the Australian War Memorial. However, by broadening the investigation to *Nachlassliste* and *Totenliste* held by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and comparing his case to known casualties, it can be deduced Leane was killed in battle as opposed to dying of wounds whilst a prisoner.

This methodology assisted in accounting for individuals, however, expanding to collectives, such as all ARCS missing statements for a battle, enables spatial patterns to be discovered. Elucidating burial clusters requires more extensive investigation involving collation of data, and an ability to recognise and distinguish nuances in soldier testimony or archival documents to classify locations. Soldier statements often refer to local landmarks, such as near a tank or sunken road, which are generally not site specific enough for use in analysis of the broader battlefield front. An understanding of unit dispositions allows a greater focus within the conflict landscape to be searched. Sites of documented burials can be assessed against CWGC clearance records to ascertain the prospect of recovery. An accurate depiction of areas of interest can eliminate 'noise' in the evidence to enable a more efficient use of prospective archaeological survey resources. A lack of rigour analysing evidence led to a false positive in the search for a mass grave at Messines, Belgium, in March 2018.[72]

Data mining can be further enhanced by using the repatriation statements made by former prisoners of war who witnessed the final carnage and detritus in enemy territory. In the past, repatriation statements have been underutilised but they do offer contemporary accounts of the conflict. Examining this testimony in conjunction with unit diaries and aerial images can transform the interpretation of the battlefield landscape and its evolution. The juxtaposition of recently accessed German mapping for breached trenches challenges the 12 Brigade descriptions of captured positions in the Hindenburg Line. Furthermore, the comparison and resultant discrepancy of German dugouts before and after the First Battle of Bullecourt identifies the position suspected of being used for a dressing station that is associated with a distinct group of unaccounted dead.

Advances in technology, principally DNA analysis, also increase the likelihood of identifying individual remains.[73] However, the research required to supply historical context and data mining from multiple archival depositories for determining burial locations has received minimal recognition. Support for international collaboration to access, translate and process records is warranted. If the Australian recovery agency

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[72]Ian McPhedran, *Where Soldiers Lie*, p. 221.
[73]'Cutting edge DNA technology to identify Australian fallen soldiers' remains', https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/cutting-edge-dna-technology-to-identify-australian-fallen-soldiers-remains/ Accessed 4 February 2023.

is advocating that the identities for thousands of missing soldiers can be achieved by breakthrough DNA technology, then they need to discover and exhume the remains to investigate.[74] As the final unknown soldiers of Fromelles are being identified, is there a priority to find those still lost?

Adopting innovative and improved research techniques provides an opportunity to challenge the official international agencies, including the UWC-A, to assess their performance, and review and update recovery protocols and mandates. Recent finds such as Sergeant Samuel Pearse VC, and the Winterberg Tunnels, demonstrates the commitment of citizen searchers.[75] Despite such successes and the increased capability of 'searcher' organisations, the missing war dead remain at risk of being lost forever unless changes are made to the remits of the official agencies.

The author maintains that finding the missing war dead is an obligation greater than attendance at commemorative ceremonies.

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[74]Shelley Lloyd, 'WWII diggers buried in Pacific battlefields could be identified by new DNA test', https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-24/new-test-to-help-id-remains-unknown-soldiers-wwii-battlefields/11025876 Accessed 4 February 2023.

[75]Angelique Donnellan and Max Tillman, 'Remains of long-lost Australian digger Sam Pearse likely found in Russia', https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-24/remains-of-long-lost-australian-digger-likely-found-in-russia/11528854. Accessed 31 January 2023; Knut Krohn, 'Der Streit um die Toten am Winterberg', https://www.stuttgarter-zeitung.de/inhalt.erinnerung-an-den-ersten-weltkrieg-der-streit-um-die-toten-am-winterberg.493831d3-619c-454b-9d0e-1503b2855577.html Accessed 31 January 2023.

The Social Life of an Artillery Battery: A Historical Anthropology of Malta's Heavy Anti-Aircraft Defence

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ABSTRACT
Eighty years after the Second World War 'Siege of Malta' memories of air-raid shelters and wartime hunger live on. All of Malta's war museums are related to authentic sites from the conflict, and commemorations often take place at specific monuments and historical locations. However, other sites linked to the war remain discarded in public memory. Anti-aircraft batteries are a case in point: a network of concrete structures and guns built to hit back at Malta's aerial attackers. This article explores the origins of these sites and, much more importantly, the social life that blossomed within them as a unique way of being. It examines the close connections forged between gunners and their guns, and it explores how anti-aircraft sites have been both memorialised and forgotten.

Introduction

Exploring the Maltese countryside, one finds many concrete ruins originally built prior to and during the war. Challenging the misconception that long-term static warfare ended in 1918, such remains attest to its extension into the 1940s. Most, such as pillboxes and machine-gun positions were occupied on rotation without seeing much action. As a result, these spaces were relatively poor repositories of meaning by foreign and local enlisted men. Unsurprisingly, little to no accounts exist of such experiences. Contrarily, anti-aircraft sites were fully fledged communities. In 'pits' and 'billets' lived hundreds of 'gunners'; a fitting title for men who operated anti-aircraft guns. They were responsible for the technological feat of anti-aircraft fire, which may

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almost sound impossible to the outsider.[1] One account from 1943 describes the task as follows:

> It isn't easy to shoot down a plane with an anti-aircraft gun...Instead of sitting still, the target is moving at anything up to 300 m.p.h. with the ability to alter course left or right, up or down. If the target is flying high it may take 20 or 30 seconds for the shell to reach it, and the gun must be laid a corresponding distance ahead. Moreover, the range must be determined so that the fuse can be set, and above all, this must be done continuously so that the gun is always laid in the right direction. When you are ready to fire, the plane, though its engines sound immediately overhead, is actually two miles away. And to hit it with a shell at that great height the gunners may have to aim at a point two miles farther still. Then, if the raider does not alter course or height, as it naturally does when under fire, the climbing shell and the bomber will meet.[2]

Besides their value from the perspective of military heritage, some of the most insightful accounts of war on the island of Malta emerged from such artillery positions. As social spaces, one can explore life at war and life as a gunner through the remains of concrete command posts, gun pits, and bunkers. This article will take up anti-aircraft batteries as locations of cultural production, where meanings were made and re-made, new relationships formed and others tragically ended. Moving beyond the pits as mere gun installations or concrete bunkers, the artillery position allows itself to be studied as a human site.

To this end, this article will build on current literature from the field of conflict archaeology. Rather than understanding locations through their physical remains alone, the wealth of information gathered from exploring the human organisation operating such sites sheds much more light. To achieve this, this work is intellectually indebted to several authors as pioneers in this field.[3] However, it is also informed and

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[1]A sentiment shared by the artillerymen themselves, one coastal-gunner in Malta using the words "the mysteries of anti-aircraft artillery", H.E.C. Weldon, *Drama in Malta,* (Uckfield, UK: Naval and Military Press, 2004).

[2]The Ministry of Information, *Roof over Britain : the official story of the A.A. defences, 1939-1942,* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1943), pp. 5-6.

[3]Tony Ashworth, 'The Sociology of Trench Warfare 1914-1918', *The British Journal of Sociology,* 19 (1968), pp. 407-423; Nicholas Saunders, 'Bodies of metal, shells of memory: 'Trench Art' and the Great War Re-cycled', *Journal of Material Culture*, 5 , no.1 (2000), pp. 43-67.; Gilly Carr, 'Islands of War, Guardians of Memory: the afterlife of the German Occupation in the British Channel Islands in *Heritage and Memory of War: Responses from small islands*, eds. Gilly Carr and Keir Reeves, (London: Routledge, 2015); Max Van Der Schiek, *Beyond the Battlefields. Archaeological approaches to and*

inspired by studies of the British army, anti-aircraft artillery, first-hand accounts of local and foreign gunners during the Second World War, and anthropologies of military worlds specifically.[4]

Militaria, military artefacts and their origins have been used to explore wider social themes, much like other forms of material culture.[5] As Arjun Appadurai notes in 'The Social life of things' objects of material culture express and develop social relations.[6] The artillery position cannot be seen to have a social life in the sense that it is exchanged, traded, or meant to replace other meaningful objects. However, this article will treat the structure as material culture, one through which social relations and cultural exchanges were and are still made; the anti-aircraft battery itself as a site of cultural production and social life.

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heritage perspectives on modern conflict, unpublished PhD thesis, 2020), Amsterdam: University of Vrije; Emily Glass, 'Once Upon a Time in Ksamil: Communist and post-communist biographies of mushroom-shaped bunkers in Albania' in *In The Ruins of the Cold War Bunker: Affect, materiality and meaning-making*, ed. Luke Bennett. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017); Gabriel Moshenska, *The Archaeology of the Second World War: Uncovering Britain's Wartime Heritage*, (Barnsley, Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2013); and Robin Page, Neil Forbes and Guillermo Perez, (eds)., 'Europe's Deadly Century Perspectives on 20th century conflict heritage', *Landscapes of War project*, (UK: English Heritage, 2009).

[4]Maurice G. Agius, *Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner: the true story of a young officer who served in Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment of the Royal Malta Artillery right through the Second Siege of Malta, 1940-1943* (Valletta: Allied, 2008); Charles Kirke, *Red Coat, Green Machine Continuity in Change in the British Army 1700 to 2000*, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014); Ross Wilson, 'The Burial of the Dead: Death and Burial in the British Army on the Western Front', *War & Society*, 31, no. 1 (2013), pp. 22-41; James D. Crabtree, *On Air Defense*, (USA: Praeger,1994); Stanley Fraser and Alexander Ellis (ed.), *The Guns of Ħaġar Qim : the diaries of Stan Fraser, 1939-1946* (Rabat: Wise Owl, 2005),p. 110; Bill Todd, *Gunner: The story of Sgt Leslie Todd and the 90th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment RA in World War Two* (UK: DLE History, 2014); and Mark Burchell, *Decoding a Royal Marine Commando: The Militarized Body as Artefact*, (London: Routledge, 2018).

[5]Meredith R. Smith, *Ferry Armory and New Technology,* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1980); Olivier Razac, *Barbed Wire: A Political History,* (New York: New Press, 2002); David Henig, 'Iron in the Soil: Living with Military Waste in Bosnia-Herzegovina', *Anthropology Today*, 28, no. 1 (2012), pp. 21–23; and Richard Price, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo,* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[6]Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (N.Y: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF AN ARTILLERY BATTERY

On site surveys were conducted on all publicly accessible anti-aircraft positions and related infrastructure around the island of Malta. Archival and digital research was also carried out for any photography taken by gunners, local institutions, and Axis (Italian and German) aerial photography. By examining military sites from an archaeological standpoint, reading accounts as a historian, and by also analysing them from an ethnographic standpoint, concrete ruins can be written about as more than mere military facilities. They can be studied through remains and documents, but also by empathising with the men who lived in them; conducting fieldwork in the past through the ethnographic present.

The artillery battery, besides fitting perfectly into anthropologies of war, is also receptive to anthropologies of home, architecture, the senses, and technology, amongst other avenues.[7] In doing so, other layers in the human history of these structures can be added. This article will also focus on how the gunners themselves understood their role in the war, and the hollow collective memory they left behind. Most importantly, the article will shed light holistically on the particular conditions in which people on land waged war in the air in such a particular time period. It will focus on the most important aspects of the gunner's world; the guns, bodies, trophies, play, and the processes of converting their narratives into memory. Lastly, it will investigate how these sites are perceived in the present day and the causes of their current derelict state.

What is a Maltese anti-aircraft battery?
For as long as aircraft existed so too did the technology to shoot them down. The First World War saw extensive use of anti-aircraft systems, largely against Zeppelin airship bombing campaigns. The London Air Defence Area (LADA) was a pioneering effort for Britain to protect its skies from the ground. As the threat of war in Europe gradually returned in the 1920s, the need for better weapons and methods to deal with the new age of aerial warfare was felt dearly. In 1922, a dedicated anti-aircraft defence school was set up at Biggin Hill, Kent, and the concept of a 3.7 inch anti-aircraft gun was in development early as 1928. A few years earlier, British reports prompted new anti-aircraft defence plans. The entire country was divided into sectors, forming a protective ring around heavily populated areas in and around London. The new system was to be composed of guns, observation posts and air-cover zones.

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[7]Alisse Waterston, ed., *An anthropology of war: views from the frontline,* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009); Nicholas Saunders, and Paul Cornish, (ed.) *Modern Conflict and the Senses,* (London: Routledge, 2017); Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Berber House' in , *Rules and Meanings*, ed. Mary Douglas, (London: Routledge, 1971/2002), pp. 92–104; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2005); and Victor Buchli, *An anthropology of architecture,* (London: Routledge, 2020)

As war in Europe loomed ahead, the 1935 re-orientation scheme was introduced. Britain's anti-aircraft defence was interconnected with several cities, making use of inner and outer artillery zones. Several additional changes ensued, such as the 1937 'ideal scheme'. The 4.5 inch gun, originally a naval gun, entered service in 1938 as the Mk II but until such weapons with high ceilings were available across theatres of war, Lewis guns, 2 Pounders, and 3 inch 20 cwt guns had to suffice. The biggest challenges Britain faced were getting heavy artillery on site, on time, as well as building adequate anti-aircraft positions, the necessary auxiliary facilities, and training men to fire effectively.[8]

Production numbers for the Vickers 3.7 inch guns exceeded Britain's expectations. Many new sites had to be built to accommodate them and meet operational maturity. After intense discussions, some of these guns were ear-marked for Malta where full-scale anti-aircraft defences needed to be built.[9] By the end of 1940, Malta had more than 4 times the number of heavy-anti aircraft (HAA) guns it possessed in 1935.[10] By 1938, a standard pattern for gun pits had been set in the UK, eventually introduced to Malta with some modifications. This took on an easily constructed octagonal shape with six ammunition recesses. Although anti-aircraft warfare already had its own history by the Second World War, the scale and vicissitudes of its next chapter were not entirely known. Thus, such sites were built with a calculated imagination of a certain type of war; a conflict, fluid between land, sea, and (especially) air. As Virilio puts it for the bunker, the artillery position was designed for a specific environment; air saturated with shrapnel, stray bullets, and aerial bombardment.[11] However, that exact picture was not fully visible when the sites were constructed.

In the early days of the war in Malta some gunners found themselves in rudimentary positions offering little to no permanent accommodation with gun emplacements built of sandbags and local limestone. Eventually, each gun was bolted into a concrete gun 'pit' placed a bit further than and somewhat perpendicular to the rest. Two main designs of gun-positions were subsequently used. One was the standard, octagonal concrete structure, the other made use of a distinctively square shape. Both were

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[8]Colin Dobinson, *AA Command: Britain's Anti-aircraft Defences of World War II,* (Malton: Methuen Publishing Ltd, 2000); and Richard Doherty, *Ubique: The Royal Artillery in the Second World War,* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008).

[9]For a detailed study of the plan leading up to Malta's anti-aircraft defence see Micheal J. Budden, 'Defending the Indefensible? The Air Defence of Malta, 1936-1940', *War In History,* 6, no. 4, (1999), pp. 447-467.

[10]Dennis Rollo, *The Guns and Gunners of Malta* (Valletta: Mondial Publishers, 1999).

[11]Paul Virilio, Trans. George Collins, *Bunker Archaeology*, (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994).

designated as heavy anti-aircraft (HAA) positions and formed part of the 33 static and mobile anti-aircraft sites on Malta by May 1942.[12]

Despite the technical concerns of gunnery, projectiles, and aerial warfare, the men at any battery in Malta still had to prepare for an invasion, which they had trained for well before 1939, and had been warned about at the start of the conflict in June 1940. In each battery, anxiety, or 'invasion fever' grew steadily, especially in May 1941 after the invasion of Crete.[13] That month, German parachutists and airborne troops landed on the island. The German airborne landings in Crete somewhat shifted the British approach to the defence of Malta. Besides emphasising the importance of defence to break up an invasion (as well as the need for them to be used in conjunction with proactive tactics to prevent the airborne enemy from regrouping) the artillery positions were seen as weak points should a similar attack materialise. In his memoirs, one gunner – Major Maurice G. Agius – from the Royal Malta Artillery (RMA) recounted that should the invasion have occurred, heavy anti-aircraft sites would have been completely unaware and isolated from any organised defensive action.[14] However, one should note a decisive effort by the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (Engineers) to convert HAA guns for a 'ground role' using specially made open sights, as well as infantry training carried out by the gunners.[15] Fending off parachutist troops and enemy vehicles at close quarters was certainly absent in the artillery battery's original design, and so were many other factors, despite the predictive efforts of its designers. As Ingold notes, buildings involve the inherent anticipation of certain worlds, but not all possibilities can be addressed.[16]

To this end, structures and locations from which war was waged were no longer confined to the harbour or the coasts, but alongside bunkers, pillboxes, observation posts, searchlights and sound-locator positions; anti-aircraft sites emerged in the middle of fields and open plains.[17] In Malta, generally, they were composed of four gun emplacements, spread across an area but oriented towards two or three cardinal directions. Behind and at the centre of the guns was the command post, with a height

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[12]Stephen C. Spiteri, *British military architecture in Malta*, (Malta, self-published, 1996) and Dennis Rollo, *The Guns and Gunners of Malta* (Valletta: Mondial Publishers, 1999)
[13]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 82.
[14]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 51.
[15]The War Office, History of REME in WWII, pre-publication manuscript, (REME Museum Archives, UK, 1951).
[16]Tim Ingold, *The perception of the environment: essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill*, (London: Routledge, 2000).
[17]One should also be aware that Light Anti-Aircraft (LAA) making use of Bofors 40mm guns and other calibres was also used in support of HAA. Both were operated as mobile batteries.

and range finder and 'predictor position', instruments to lay the guns (see Figure 1 below). These concrete sites were built quickly as part of a wider defence system with other positions nearby on high ground or sunken into hills and hillocks, further blast-proofed with sandbags, companions to small limestone houses and fields of red clay soil.

Figure 1: HAA Battery 'Ħaġar Qim' (XHB 10)[18]

Taking a step back behind the guns, one could find living quarters; 20-man corrugated iron huts (or smaller elephant huts) and/or limestone/concrete billets. Batteries also had a cookhouse and a canteen, ablutions, showers and a mess.[19] Although composed of several dispersed buildings, the entire site was cordoned off with a thick belt of barbed wire which grew thicker with each warning of an invasion.

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[18]Stanley Fraser collection, National Archives of Malta (hereinafter OPM).
[19]Some examples still exist, even ones with a slanted corrugated iron roof as opposed to the more common and durable limestone billets.

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In some instances, the artillery batteries incorporated earlier structures within their plans. The gun position at Nadur used a seventeenth century tower as an observation post, adding another layer of memory to an already historic site, and further adopting the strategic topography of the Knights of St. John. In Cottonera, 'St. Clement' HAA position was built on another seventeenth century bastion. When the war department built a defence post at the corner of the same bastion, Malta Command thought it adequate to inform the Lieutenant Governor that 'it is not expected the post will in any way spoil the aspect of the bastion'.[20] Albeit more likely for the conduct of war rather than an appreciation of heritage (at the time), such locations were utilised with the intention of conserving them.

Besides being located in defensive circles protecting the sensitive harbour, or Valletta Keep, and airfield, every gun position had a particular role within the system. Each artillery position was a node in an intricate tapestry of anti-aircraft defence growing steadily as the war progressed. Besides augmenting and inaugurating a new kind of war fought equally on sea, land, and in the air, the artillery position engendered its own form of combat. As Anthony Burgess argues, the air war extended Malta's already present cultural 'airscape' which began as early as flight itself and was only in its most intense chapter during the Second World War.[21] For the gunners living in it, they became the organs of a finely tuned war-machine, deterritorialised and scattered, but wholly organised and operating as a whole. To look into the anti-aircraft site as a social space one must begin with such understandings in mind.

Life in the pits

We can understand the anti-aircraft battery through the eyes of the people who lived in and operated them. Stan Fraser was a British Royal Artillery (RA) gunner who served in Malta and in precisely one gun position during the war. He described his time in Malta in great detail, going so far as to record certain humorous accounts and tragedies in detail. So too did local Maltese gunners such as the aforementioned Major Maurice G. Agius, who later published his memoirs of time moving to and from several anti-aircraft sites.[22]

For Fraser and his comrades in the RA, the move to Malta came after their evacuation from France to England in 1940. After reaching Malta by convoy, men like Fraser found

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[20]Building of San Clement defence post, CSG-01- 1918-1945, 3123/1941, (National Archives of Malta, 1941).

[21]Anthony Burgess, From the hangar to the seabed: the airscape of the Maltese islands during the Second World War, (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Malta, 2021).

[22]See Fraser, *The Guns of Ħaġar Qim* and Agius, *Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner*. It should be noted that Fraser's account was written during the war, while Agius' was written after. The difference in context should affect our understanding of the texts.

themselves on a Mediterranean island, far away from home for more than two years. On their first day, Fraser and his troop were issued with mosquito nets to cover their beds at night; a new nuisance to address. However, it seems that their first impressions of Malta and their new temporary homes was more than satisfactory. Located high above the southern coastline, HAA 'Bubaqra' offered commanding views of the sea in front of it, something which left an impression on the young gunners discovering their new bedroom views.

Fraser judged the site as adequate based on comfort but also on its operational layout. The proximity and construction of the billets in relation to the gun is the particular factor which struck a chord with Fraser. As war raged on, any comforts they found at the anti-aircraft site started to fade away. The crew had particular trouble adjusting to the military hierarchy with several instances of poor leadership and disorganisation. These were later to be worked through when the gunners were relocated to the HAA battery in Qrendi nearby. This gun site was located close to megalithic remains. An impressive location on an otherwise barren landscape occupied by limestone walls, carob trees, and grass.[23] During the war, they were both sites of interest for the locals wandering around contemplating how they worked and why they were placed exactly there. For the gunners, their batteries became increasingly claustrophobic and sleep-deprived homes.

It was impossible to stay in the pits for weeks on end. At low levels of alertness, the gunners were entitled to five days leave every three months, an example of the British force's appreciation of the restorative effects of rest following the first world war.[24] However, Fraser notes that due to the war effort he only managed to take his time off five months after arriving in Malta. He and three others could only replace those already on leave as the war progressed. Thus, the gunners could only sparingly participate in social life outside of their battery. Some dramatic companies, internal and external to the artillery regiments, did their best to entertain the troops in remote positions.[25] Apart from this, the gunners were constantly busy under fire or on watch, the batteries were physically distant from anyone or anything, to possess undisturbed

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[23]It is ironic that Fraser's own pit became another ruin in the very same landscape. If, as Walther Benjamín argues, ruins are 'in the realm of things' what allegories are 'in the realm of thoughts,' the artillery position can be explored as a symbolic site of colonial degradation, and perhaps crumbling memories. See Walther Benjamín, trans. John Osbourne, *The origin of German tragic drama,* (London: Verso, 2003), p. 177.

[24]Emma Newlands, 'Man, Lunatic or Corpse': Fear, Wounding and Death in the British Army, 1939–45 in *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War. Genders and Sexualities in History*, eds. Linsey Robb, Juliette Pattinson, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[25]Weldon, *Drama in Malta,* p. 12-17.

firing arcs and to keep civilians away from the bomb-target they posed. Some, like Fraser, were lucky to have a bar relatively close to their site, most had no such luxuries. However, Agius recounts the extreme isolation of his battery close to Sliema as an added practical disadvantage;

> The gun position had been very badly sited. We could see nothing of what was happening in the rest of the island. The gunfire and bomb explosions reverberated among the lines of empty barrack blocks... All in all, the place had a spooky atmosphere.[26]

A form of alienation the gunners experienced was their critical role in the island's defence which necessitated their virtual absence. The batteries coordinated specially designed barrages according to the island's needs. Besides the routine manoeuvres such as the 'Xmas barrage', special barrages were designated for the King's visit in 1943, and for important convoys entering harbour. A 'governor's barrage' was also devised as well as a dedicated barrage to cover the surrendered Italian fleet in Malta.[27] Other war diaries note a dedicated state of readiness for Roosevelt and Churchill's meeting in Malta starting on 30 January 1945.[28] More than likely, the gunners themselves never saw or participate in such momentous events themselves, but their batteries played a significant role to allow them to happen in the first place. Far away from the locus of Malta's war, life in the pits was still at the centre of the war-effort.

The Guns
The anti-aircraft site was an entirely offensive installation. It operated with the intention of hitting back at airborne invaders, day and night. It was also a wholly aerial position, only located on the ground, designed to exist in an environment of bombs detonating nearby and enemy aircraft strafing. However, its concrete walls and small blast-proof billets could not withstand a direct hit, nor entirely protect the crew from shrapnel and bullets, or be effective in land-based combat. To address this fault, the four or more guns were dispersed to fragment the target posed to the enemy and further camouflage the site.[29] Thus, the entire position was in fact a series of gun-positions, working in unison, wholly designed for aerial combat, not the killing of individuals, at least, explicitly. The guns, the primary object in the artillery battery,

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[26]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 60.
[27]The UK National Archives (hereinafter TNA) WO 169/22129, 1945 War Diary - Malta Command: Royal Artillery: 2nd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment.
[28]TNA WO 169/14566, 1943 War Diary Malta Command: Royal Artillery: 4th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment (HAA); TNA WO 169/22129, 1945 War Diary - Malta Command: Royal Artillery: 2nd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment.
[29]Usually 3.7 inch guns, but also batteries of 4.5 inch and 3 inch 20 cwt guns.

were the focal point of all operations, the gunner's identities, as well as of the batteries as an entire emergent being.

Besides the HAA guns as the physical end of the technological ecology within the artillery position, the guns were also at the centre of its symbolic universe, synonymous with the gunners if not an icon of their entire identity as artillerymen. The gun was the centrepiece of the Royal Artillery regimental (RA) insignia, found on the cap badges of both the RA and RMA gunners. In the gun pits each gun had its own number and diary in which its history was recorded. Barrel changes, damage and repairs were dutifully noted. This, in turn, gave each gun and crew its own identity, and a further level of identity for each gunner within the individual gun-site, while still assigned to it.[30] Despite operating lethal guns, the gunner's main preoccupations were shell trajectories, velocities, and their impact radius. Their target was not flesh and blood, but aircraft. What Prokosch rightly argues for weapon designers can be equally applied to the HAA artillery gunner in Malta:

> He is not, first and foremost, a killer; he is a statistician, a metallurgist, an engineer. He is trained for his profession and he thinks in its terms. Enter the world of the munitions designer. It is filled with 'lethal area estimates' and 'kill probabilities', 'effective casualty radius' and 'expected damage to a circular target area.[31]

The gunners counted their successes in terms of aircraft hit and downed. This is not to say that they were oblivious to the fact that they were killing people, but rather that they focused their ontological attention on technical losses. They were proud of the fact that their guns, and their skilled operation, destroyed the enemy's technology. Dedicated to the placement of shrapnel in the vicinity of the enemy or achieving the occasional direct hit, the artillery position was a hub of intricate mathematical calculations and instrument readings. As previously noted, he guns could even fire blindly at specific coordinates in a pre-calculated sector over the island. In unison with other batteries, they would saturate a known area over a dedicated target, such as the Grand Harbour or an airfield, with intense anti-aircraft fire in a method referred to as the 'box-barrage'. Passage through such a barrage could destroy an aircraft or even dissuade the more rational pilots.[32] Thus, rather than any gun or gunner, the battery

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[30]The guns were also said to 'bark', a fragment of the gunner's treatment of the guns as an animate object.

[31]Eric Prokosch, *The Technology of Killing: A Military and Political History of Antipersonnel Weapons*, (London: Zed Books, 1995), p. 194.

[32]While British sources attest to the success of the box barrage, German sources do not entirely agree. See Helmut Mahlke, 'Methods of Attacking Naval Targets with

took responsibility as a whole for destroying aircraft equally manned by aircraft crews rather than individuals, and each 'score' re-affirmed the battery as a team. Doing so, the gunners, as individuals, found themselves alienated from the act of killing.

Figure 2: The Gunner's Aesthetic - guns firing at night.[33]

The guns not only became assimilated with gunners through function and practice, but also through the aesthetics of war.[34] Many accounts and memoirs of war veterans state that they became lost in, and dissociated from, the war.[35] While some express horror at the outlandish sights they were forced to witness or cause, others found extreme beauty, or were simply struck by emotion. If Fraser's war-time account is anything to go by, he often finds himself viewing spectacular scenes. In his memoir, he narrates several occurrences that left him gazing: searchlights catching a solitary aircraft; and a fighter hurtling towards the earth in flames. One example took place during a night barrage (see Figure 2 above):

> The moon was almost full and with the searchlights, caused a beautiful pool of light to be reflected in the waters of the bay below, I ran for my camera and

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Dive-Bombers', as quoted in *Stuka: Doctrine of the German Dive-Bomber*, by Berg and Kast, (London, Military History Group, 2022) p. 213-214
[33]Photo courtesy of Stanley Fraser collection, National Archive of Malta.
[34]Anders Engberg-Pedersen, *Martial Aesthetics: How War Became an Art Form,* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press,2023).
[35]Konrad Wojnowinski, 'War and Dissociation: The Case of Futurist Aesthetics', (Beirut: Politics of the Machine, 2019).

placed it in a good position to take a time exposure by the light of the guns, which flashed intermittently, as the enemy planes were greeted by the gunners.[36]

Figure 3: HAA Battery 'Benny' (XHB 8)[37]

The gunners, enmeshed in the regiment's system of ranks, roles, and battery designations, were primarily composed of gun crews (see Figure 3 above). Some, such as the predictor or height-finder team, had their own machine to operate. As for the guns and their gunners, the artillery piece became an extension of every individual's own skill as well as their collective co-ordination. Fraser also notes how drill was practised every day, even after hours of manual labour.[38] Pointing at the purposefully repetitive training regime, Agius notes how the gun drill, the individuals steps needed to load and fire the guns, was incessantly practised 'and rehearsed over and over again until it became automatic'.[39] As each gunner was responsible for one part of the procedure – laying the gun, setting the fuse, or loading the shell – they found themselves physically forming a part of the gun's procedures and mechanisms, if not

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[36]Fraser, *The Guns of Ħaġar Qim*, p. 166.
[37]Stanley Fraser collection, National Archive of Malta, via Anthony Rogers.
[38]Fraser, *The Guns of Ħaġar Qim*, p. 114.
[39]Agius, *Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner*, p. 30-31.

rituals and aesthetics (see Figure 4 below), the gunners are seamlessly illustrated as part of the gun). A certain extent of fascination and devotion to the machinery and guns often spilled over into animism, but one which included themselves as part of a living organisation of matter. The gunners became the battery itself, as they were explicitly expected to do.

Figure 4: 13 H.A.A. Battery Royal Artillery Christmas Card.[40]

Bodies and Parts
Much like an aircraft, the gun's crews were tightly arranged to make use of space efficiently. As discussed in the previous section, the gunners thought of themselves as extensions of the guns. This is also evident in their roles: ammo loader, mechanic, gun position officer (GPO), gun sergeant, bombardier, or, in practice, gun teams composed of numbered roles: no. 1, 2, 3 and so on.[41] The gunners were trained to become a battery: organised into a collection of roles towards firing the gun accurately, consistently, and effectively. Besides physical technology, the artillery schools utilised their own technologies to transform and operate men. The artillery training schools used drill, titles, and ranks, to produce the social environment within the pits through instructing the gunners.

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[40]Malta G.C. (George Cross), Malta George Cross Movement.
[41]The War Office, *Handbook for Ordnance QF 3.7-Inch HAA* (London: The War Office, 1940).

In other words, the gunner was a body, in the sense that he was an aggregation of military tradition, and modern anti-aircraft training. This understanding of the body features recurrently when looking at the gunner as part of an emplacement, battery and regiment, his literal bodily changes, witnessing and being injured, and his understanding of war-debris as parts containing a semblance of its whole.

The gunner's body was, first and foremost, an object of ornamentation: cloth rank and shoulder titles, brass cap badges, and uniform regulations. Although forming part of the British army with its standard summer khaki and wool winter uniform, one could nonetheless be entirely distinguishable as part of an artillery regiment through such symbols, which become more unique within individual batteries through one's personal assortment of regimental regalia.[42] Once inside the anti-aircraft site, roles and ranks were further enforced by physical segregation with separate tables for higher ranks, often British, and dedicated sleeping quarters. But there were also occasional moments where ranks dissolved, usually through comic relief, such as when orders were lost in translation, even among Maltese speakers. Agius recounts one story where during inspection a gunner was ordered to turn his bolster cover inside out:

> 'Aqlibha fuq is-sodda' he ordered; this can be literally translated into 'Turn over on the bed'. The man promptly got on his bed and did a somersault. There was a burst of laughter from everyone in the room, including the inspecting officer, and the man got away with a warning.[43]

The bodies on which the uniforms were worn also changed dramatically as the war progressed. Every battery had its own kitchen and employed cooks. However, during the siege and with supplies constantly dwindling, food became scarce, and cooks had to become creative to keep the batteries fed. By 1942, the gunners of Malta were sometimes lucky to get a whole sausage as a meal, on other days a slice of bread with margarine and a cup of tea. On several occasions, the gunners utilised local contacts to secure additional rations such as meat and vegetables. As their skeletons became ever more pronounced, and the local black market raged on, food was a decisive factor in the battery's 'morale'. Some kept livestock or grow food crops to counter the idleness between raids. Otherwise, the gunners would understand themselves to be

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[42]It is worth mentioning that since Malta could not always be re-supplied, men had to make do with what they had or even mend uniforms which others could simply replace at the Quartermaster's store.

[43]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 132.

'browned off', a phrase Fraser, and many enlisted men at the time, often used to describe low spirits at his battery.[44]

Further isolating the pits from the rest of society, besides military custom, was disease. Mixing with the civilian population was rare and could be a serious health risk. As scabies spread across the malnourished Maltese using the damp and overcrowded shelters, it also reached the gun pits through Maltese gunners meeting family members or British gunners spending their precious recreation time in crowded bars. This was also heightened by mass internal-migration and damaged infrastructure, often times resulting in poor living conditions lacking proper drainage and running water. Besides scabies and lice, some anti-aircraft batteries suffered from very poor hygiene, lacking proper ablutions or failing to control pests. Some were exemplary while others, such as 'San Niklaw' HAA billets, were reported to be riddled with cockroaches.[45]

The need for hygiene is paramount in light of the gunner as a functional tool; his body a literal extension of the guns. Every shot and salvo was laid by machine as much as man. The predictor together with the height and rangefinder team nearby, produced the correct angle of elevation, bearing, and fuse setting for the guns. The predictor itself directed the guns' fire towards the enemy's future position. Thus, anti-aircraft defence was wholly pre-emptive; concerned with the enemy's trajectory and speed rather than current position.[46]

Such coordinated endeavours were seldom carried out in optimal conditions. Coupled with gruelling air raids, increasing in intensity and quantity, many started to suffer from

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[44]Allan Allport, *Browned Off and Bloody Minded: The British Soldier Goes to War, 1939–1945* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2015).

[45]Anthony Z. Dimech, 'Field Hygiene and Sanitation during Second World War Malta - PART 2', *The Malta Independent* (2022), https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-07-12/newspaper-lifestyleculture/Field-Hygiene-and-Sanitation-during-Second-World-War-Malta-PART-2-6736225088. Accessed 11 September 2022; and Agius, *Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner.*

[46]As Paul Virilio (1994) notes of AA positions built by the Germans in Normandy: 'The new defence became not only the anticipation of the adversary's actions, but their prediction. The speed of new weapons was such that soon a calculator would have to prepare the attack and ceaselessly correct the control elements in order for the projectile-shells and the projectile-plane to become one: this apparatus was called the "Predictor." This automation of pursuit brought on, after the war, the extraordinary development of data processing and those famous "strategic calculators" that upset the conduct and politics of war.'

sleep deprivation, indigestion and heartburn.[47] As others have noted, stomach trouble could have been a somatic manifestation of the soldiers' repressed anxiety across British and American armies.[48] This would certainly be a fitting explanation given the circumstances. Towards 1942, constant air raids pushed the site to its limits as billets and gun pits became one and the same. In addition, physical exercise and infantry training was still a must. Some sites used surrounding fields to make a makeshift parade ground doubling as a football pitch. Thus, the landscape was incorporated into the site's facilities as needed, keeping in mind the necessity to be as invisible as possible to the enemy in the sky above. By January 1942, Reveille was pushed forward from 6:30 to 9:00 am.[49] The body was an instrument of war tested to its limits as any other machinery or gun, but its limits were recognised.

One can speak of both life *and* death in the pits; the latter was not ubiquitous although certainly not absent. While many experienced coming-of-age as gunners, others met their fate manning them. Artillery was inherently dangerous; gunners were injured by the gun itself in various ways, such as the rare occasions when it fired before the breach was properly closed. In other instances, barrels exploded due to overuse. The guns were a source of danger both in front and behind their muzzle, furthering the gunner's pride in operating them effectively and safely.

From firing guns to being shot at, the pits were a hub of violence, to the extent that bodies created, relocated, and symbolically constituted. Writing about political violence in Northern Ireland, Feldman notes that violence 'entails the production, exchange, and ideological consumption of bodies'.[50] However, violence and physical bodies are always the exception. In all extant accounts, deaths are always described as shocking and effectual on the men, suggesting that the gunners were not numb to dead bodies. A certain sense of apprehensiveness towards death can be noted, if not at the kind of death experienced by gunners. The body was an equal target to the battery and suffered from the effects of the same weapons designed for it. The gunner's death was not the responsibility of an individual bullet, nor did it leave isolated marks on the body. Most deaths occurred from bomb damage, specifically shrapnel. In effect, this meant hot shards of torn metal flying through the air. They embedded themselves in walls, bodies, and guns, or simply tore through them leaving gaping holes

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[47]Fraser, The Guns of Ħaġar Qim, p. 110.

[48]Edgar Jones, '"The Gut War": Functional Somatic Disorders in the UK during the Second World War', *History of Human Sciences* 25, no. 5 (2012) pp. 30–48; and Ian Miller 'The Mind and Stomach at War: Stress and Abdominal Illness in Britain c.1939–1945', *Medical History* 54, (2010), pp. 95–110.

[49]Fraser, The Guns of Ħaġar Qim, p. 110.

[50]Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 9.

or severed limbs in their path. Mourning was not an ornately ceremonial affair, and the dead had to be buried hastily in cemeteries so that the gunners could resume their duties. Despite the constant threat of bodily dismemberment and fast-paced burial, the gunners carried on as best they could.

The British army required bodies to fight its war. One should remember that most of the gunners were adolescents and young men. From ordinary jobs or even school, they found themselves operating, what were at the time, some of the most advanced weapons on earth. Putting on a uniform and operating war machines was an unexpected rite of passage for many, albeit only recollected as such in hindsight through memoirs.[51] Agius recounts this feeling of unprecedented and illogical responsibility very clearly in his memoir:

> As a soldier in the King's Own Malta Regiment (KOMR) a territorial infantry battalion, I had fired a Bren within three days of putting on my uniform for the first time. I had also handled and cleaned a .303 rifle but I had never fired one. I was quite an expert at filling sandbags. I was nineteen years of age, too young to get a license to fire a shotgun but old enough to fire four 3.7 inch HAA guns. I was a little apprehensive but very enthusiastic.[52]

War has its own way of directing the order of things. No matter one's background and motivations, in the artillery position, by virtue of knowing how to operate the guns, navigate the pits' spaces and distinct language, one was ordained a gunner, embodying the regiment. In this position, one is expected to have all of the qualities of any enlisted man. One of which being unwavering courage. Most performed their task diligently, despite fearing for their life every day of the siege. War, besides demoralising and traumatic, is also a bountiful source of 'meaning'.[53] The clear goal of defeating the enemy, perhaps, led many gunners through the worst of times.

Through the coordinated activities of hundreds of bodies, searchlights, observation posts, radar, and other components in anti-aircraft defence, the guns 'downed' many targets. Hence, if one borrows from the linguistic bluntness of the early scientists in wound ballistics, we can surmise that the artillery battery shoots matter at high

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[51] Frances Houghton, 'Becoming 'a Man' During the Battle of Britain: Combat, Masculinity and Rites of Passage in the Memoirs of 'the Few'' in *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War. Genders and Sexualities in History*, eds. Linsey Robb, Juliette Pattinson, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[52] Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 11.

[53] Chris Hedges, *War is a force that gives us meaning,* (New York: Public Affairs, 2014).

velocity to explode and spread into further matter at even higher velocities.[54] Doing so, it 'shoots down' more matter, aircraft, human bodies, aluminium, and metal parts. The latter two were highly prized, as in other theatres of war.[55] Nearby crash sites were looted for mementos such as a fighter's propeller or fragments with Axis insignia, not to mention pilots' personal effects and gold teeth.[56] Acquiring such objects made the downed aircraft more than just a number on their tally: their skills and the purpose of the battery became tangible as well. Such mementos manifested their arduous life and sacrifices, safeguarded the remembrance of their acts, and also served as a trophy to distinguish themselves from other batteries. Most importantly, they were 'parts' of larger objects, which collectively represented larger institutions and forces, such as the Luftwaffe or the Regia Aeronautica.

Other materials came off their targets: bombs. Over 15,000 tonnes fell on Malta during the war, an island of merely 246 square kilometres. In the intensely bombed months of March and April of 1942, air-dropped ordnance was a common sight. Gunners indulged in their curiosity and closely approach unexploded bombs. As the siege progressed, many observed their descent rather than head for cover immediately. This led to some close calls where these explosive objects were not treated as seriously as they ought to have been and evacuation areas were not adequate.[57] The gunners doubly learned to thrive and live within a bombed landscape. They watched them fall from the skies above, explode on impact, felt the residual pressure of their blast, and even visited the craters they produced. They were part of the island's everyday environment at war.

The gunner, at war, was a curated, ornamented, changing body, formed part of larger bodies, collected parts, and feared losing his own body, despite daily alienating himself from it as a function of an anti-aircraft gun or a predictor. The HAA site was made up of starved and often physically struggling bodies which were, however, effectively transformed into gunners using all sorts of technologies such as, rich regimental symbolism, and devotion to the little-known skill of anti-aircraft fire.

The Making of Memory
After Operation Husky, the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943, RA units gradually departed while many Malta-based anti-aircraft regiments faced disbandment or

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[54]Prokosch, *The Technology of Killing*, p. 194.
[55]Neil Price, Rick Knecht and Gavin Lindsay, 'Sacred and the Profane Souvenir and Collecting Behaviours on the WWII Battlefields of Peleliu Island, Palau, Micronesia' in *Heritage and Memory of War: Responses from small islands,* eds. Gilly Carr and Keir Reeves, (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 219-33.
[56]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 18.
[57]Agius, Recollections of Malta HAA Gunner, p. 88-90.

amalgamation. Some ranks went to territorial regiments, others to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Royal Navy, or were discharged outright. Their stores emptied and sites on which the batteries were built returned to their original owners. However, as the air-raids ebbed into memory, the gunners could start to articulate their past experiences. Apart from caricatures and amateur newspapers made by batteries, one photograph of an HAA gun at an unidentifiable location clearly depicts the gunners' newfound perception of the war (Figure 5). On the right, the Knight's (Maltese) Cross, an unmistakable symbol of RMA, adopted from the Hospitaller's rule over the island and the siege of 1565. On the left, Malta's newest icon: the George Cross.

Figure 5: Gunners use discarded material to illustrate their portrait[58]

The concept of a Second Great Siege, still prevalent to this day, was already clearly present within the batteries before the war's end.[59] The then present role of 'defenders' easily fit into historical narratives of the Second Siege to make sense of their current struggle. More so as, well before the end of the war, the Battle of Malta was already an established term. Among the ubiquitous appearances, the war diaries of 7 HAA for 1943 describe a Union Jack gifted to the Regt. Major to commemorate

[58]Malta George Cross Movement.
[59]Sandro Debono, 'Malta G.C. War Memories and Cultural Narratives of a Mediterranean Island' in H*eritage and Memory of War: Responses from small islands* eds. Gilly Carr and Keir Reeves, (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 144-59.

the part played by 'Regt in Battle of Malta 1942'.[60] The island under siege and Malta's battle were ever-present in print and parlance. Here, one can see, a making and narrating of history.[61] Utilising the plot and protagonists of the siege in 1565, the violence that befell Malta was immediately refashioned by the gunners to add their memory to the grand narrative of history, during *and* after.

Despite such mnemonic overlaps and reverie, the sites were still fully operational. The following years saw their slow but gradual abandonment. It is not known at which point they were disarmed, or what happened to all the guns, despite some indications. The men were sent back home, in Malta or to the United Kingdom. A few years after the war, vandalism was reported at one artillery position, sites slowly turning into 'imperial debris'.[62] G.W.E Heath, the General Officer of the Maltese Garrison, reported to the Lieutenant-Governor 'that practically all movable parts and holdfasts which secure the guns have been stolen'.[63]

In a letter to the Police superintendent from the deputy commissioner dated 9 August 1950, he explains the military authority's concern that these sites, which could still have come to use, were exposed to vandalism and neglect. The particular site in question was Stanley Fraser's HAA position in Qrendi, described as isolated and primarily used by goats as grazing grounds. Concrete covers and metal caps used to preserve the sites were reportedly smashed or stolen. Fixtures, fittings and stonework were reported to be quite literally carried away.[64] For the time being, military structures were still pertinent to the environment of war. However, the local population deconstructed the sites as mementos and deterritorialized them as a continuation of their natural landscapes and arable fields which they had intruded on in the first place.

The batteries soon lost their strategic value. In 1965, the anti-aircraft site at tal-Handaq was cleared for demolition. It was proposed that the site would be cleared by a 'series of small explosions' between November and December. This would continue in 1966

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[60]TNA WO 169/14567 Malta Command: Royal Artillery: 7 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment (HAA) War Diary 1943.
[61]Renato Rosaldo, *Ilongot Headhunting, 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History,* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1980).
[62]Ann L. Stoler, 'Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruin and Ruination', *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (2008), pp. 191–219.
[63]National Archives of Malta, OPM-1950-0459/1950, 1950 - 'I am passing with certain Heavy Anti-Aircraft gun positions at Hagar qim'.
[64]PM-1950-0459/1950.

to further clear the site for a new playing field forming part of the school nearby.[65] The sites were demolished with the same weapon they were designed to protect its occupants from: explosions. It took several weeks for this site to be entirely demolished, which could have been a factor when the removal of other concrete batteries was considered. After the 1960s, the sites were further looted, occupied, and vandalised. Several oral testimonies recount that their steel supporting beams were seen as highly valuable loot for the locals, especially during post-war reconstruction. Locals have vivid memories of anti-aircraft positions as sites of congregation for children eager to explore the empty rooms and the strange circular or square emplacements. As empty and abandoned buildings in the countryside, they enjoyed a brief after-life as sites of play and imaginative redesignations of its spaces as homes, castles, and fortresses. Meanwhile, others moved their farm animals into them as perfectly suitable animal pens and shelters. Much like Malta's society in general, the islanders settled into the empty husks of the British War machine, hitherto ruling Malta.

Today, the anti-aircraft sites are neither used for any historically relevant purpose or known in general, despite some effort from local historical organisations. They have few visitors and are absent in public memory. The remaining structures have the aesthetics of a hideous construction site: concrete walls with exposed rebar, littered with plastic waste. They have become an eye sore, existing in stark contrast to the lush fields within which they sit. However, one cannot exactly say they are dead: physically, most still exist. A few examples are largely intact, with a command post and at least 4 gun emplacements in good condition. Despite no longer occupying a space in collective memory, they occupy terrain as sites of memory and are still often referred to as 'il-fortizza' – 'the fortress'. Memories of the aerial war the artillery batteries were built to fight have faded, and so the sites live on as alien monuments, structures built by the foreign British for a past now all too strange and distant.

Conclusion

The Second World War anti-aircraft gun battery is not only valuable as a military curiosity or heritage attraction but as a site of social production. In Malta, the gunners tried their best to perfect their craft and fulfil their duties. Under the constant threat of invasion, life at the battery moved on while their interrupted lives back home did not. With a strict training regime, dwindling diets, and poor hygiene, the gunners also made space for enjoyable events and humorous activities. While forming relationships with and through their guns, they also created highly organised teams and lifelong bonds. As material culture of war, Malta's wartime artillery positions were locations teeming with meaning for their residents. Beyond their archaeological value in terms

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[65]Demolition Of Anti Aircraft Gun Emplacement At Tal-Handaq, G.O.C. Malta And Libya, 1965, OPM-1965-2002/1965, National Archives of Malta.

of conflict heritage, they also hold anthropological value as sites of human activity in conflict. How the gunners and their gun-pits were made and, equally important, how the gunners fought and made sense of their memories should be analysed through more lenses than that of traditional military history, as this study has done. From home-making to technologies of the self, anti-aircraft gun batteries are worth studying as unique spaces.

What do innovative perspectives, such as historical anthropology, allow us to understand about these sites? First, it enables a deeper understanding of life in the pits. Rather than a restricted military history, an anthropological and ethnographic approach to such sites opens up newfound and contrasting perspectives; the gunners' views of their positions and role within the war, their sense of detachment from the centre but wholly connected at the same time. It also allows for symbolic exploration of the artillery battery. Namely, the guns, as the functional core of the battery and the semiotic vanishing point for the regiment and the gunner's identity, as well as animistic and aesthetic dissociation. This work has also endeavoured to explore the role of the body within the battery as a site of fusion between man and machine. And it has examined the battery as a site where bodies were ornamented, segregated, dismembered, diseased, starved, and collected.

From a mnemo-historical perspective, the memory recognised by the battery and utilised to narrate its history is precisely oriented around the theme of the Second-Siege.[66] Defenders, specifically *defensor fidei*, embodied a mixture of *religio*-patriotism; the state – if not the empire, or the free world – was a higher cause to fight for. This might not be apparent at the individual, squad, or even at a regimental level, but the official narrative was certainly moulded around such notions. Nonetheless, despite this enduring memory of the Second Great Siege, anti-aircraft batteries are one of hundreds of Second World War sites in Malta now abandoned and rendered increasingly invisible to, and in public memory. The de-historicising symbolic nature of concrete and the fact that their function has become alien and unknown has largely discouraged any form of empathy or understanding.[67] As Second World War sites enter their afterlife as ruins, it is immensely beneficial to students of conflict, its history and anthropology, to study them for what they were: as places where people dwelled, made sense of, and lived entirely new lives.

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[66]Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism,* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).
[67]This might be indicative of which sites represent the memories that justify them as cultural heritage.

Novel Arrangement: The Belgian National Branch of the Royal Navy 1940 – 1946

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ABSTRACT
After Germany occupied Belgium in 1940, Belgian mariners interested in continuing the war at sea joined a specially formed Belgian national branch of the British navy, the Royal Navy (Section Belge) or RNSB. The article reviews Belgian naval forces before the Second World War, explains the reasons for the creation of this unusual force, details the ships and personnel involved, and argues that the British decision to incorporate Belgians into the Royal Navy benefitted both Britain and Belgium.

Introduction & Literature Review
Multinational naval operations today are a commonplace occurrence for Western countries, especially those that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or have a defence agreement with the United States. The successful operation of multinational naval forces is an important legacy of the Second World War. The Royal Navy (RN) and United States Navy provided the greatest numbers of ships to the combined Allied fleets, with the Royal Canadian Navy and Royal Australian Navy making important contributions once their shipbuilding and personnel training programmes reached maturity. It should also be recognised that the Allied naval effort was aided by European countries whose governments and armed forces took refuge in Britain upon defeat by Germany between 1939 and 1941. The so-called Allied navies in exile were quite small upon arrival in British ports but soon grew to become significant individually and collectively. Ships from the Polish, Norwegian, Netherlands, Free French, Yugoslav, and Greek navies were operationally integrated into the RN and provided valuable reinforcements to the Allied fleet.

In addition to these independent navies, two other European countries had small numbers of naval personnel operating from Britain. Belgium and Denmark are generally not thought of as being contributors to the Allied fleet as their personnel did not form part of an independent national navy serving alongside the RN. Instead, for different and somewhat unusual reasons, both countries had small numbers of its citizens volunteer to serve in specially created national branches of the RN.

The purpose of this paper is to explain and document the Belgian national branch of the RN during and immediately following the Second World War and thus fill a small gap in the naval history literature. It argues that the British made the logical decision to create a Belgian naval force. After a short literature review, the paper considers the British approach to incorporating the European navies in exile into the Allied fleet. The paper continues with a concise account of the evolution of Belgian naval forces before and during the war. It concludes with an assessment of the British decision to create a special branch for Belgian volunteers.

The RN's operations during the war have been thoroughly analysed in naval history literature but not surprisingly, the tiny Belgian component is omitted from the coverage. Prominent studies such as Stephen Roskill's multivolume series *The War at Sea* does not mention the Belgian naval volunteers nor does Corelli Barnett's *Engage the Enemy More Closely*.[1] Books with good coverage of the Battle of the Atlantic might mention by name the two 'Flower' class corvettes that were manned by Belgian crews, but those ships could just be listed as RN ships without indicating the nationality of the crews.[2] Reference books that describe warships during a time period or by class of ship typically list the Belgian corvettes as being Belgian-manned but without providing much if any context for why Belgians were aboard British warships.[3]

The one source that goes beyond just mentioning ships and addresses the broader circumstances of the Belgian volunteers is *Navies in Exile*. However, the book mentions the Belgians in general terms only due to wartime security concerns and comprises just two pages of text.[4]

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[1]Stephen W. Roskill, *The War at Sea*, 4 vols., (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1954-1961); Corelli Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely,* (London: W.W. Norton, 1991).

[2]Jürgen Rohwer, *Chronology of the War at Sea 1939-1945,* (London: Chatham Publishing, 2005).

[3]Robert Gardiner, ed., *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1922-1946,* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980). The Belgian corvettes are not listed as Belgian-manned.

[4]A.D. Divine, *Navies in Exile,* (New York: Dutton, 1944), pp. 212-213.

Several studies have examined the Belgian exile population in Britain during the war, and these books contain a chapter about the Belgian armed forces.[5] Since the Belgians in the RN were technically not part of the Belgian armed forces, and were much smaller than the army, treatment of Belgian naval personnel in these sources is brief.[6]

Taken together, these English-language sources about the RN and the Belgian exile community in Britain during the war years say little about the Belgian naval volunteers. Even sources on this topic published in Belgium in the French or Dutch languages are few. Essentially, the story of the Belgian volunteers in the RN has not yet been documented in English beyond the briefest of references.

The British Approach to Working with the Exile Navies
Following Germany's invasion of Poland, Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. Poland's navy was very small and was not expected to survive for long in the face of overwhelming German air and naval forces. Britain and its Commonwealth partners expected to fight at sea with only French support. However, remnants of the Polish Navy did reach Britain: three destroyers sent out of the Baltic Sea days before the German invasion; and two submarines that evaded German patrols to reach Scotland after further resistance in the Baltic was futile. Polish naval commanders and other personnel who escaped Poland via bordering neutral countries also arrived in Britain. The RN assigned a liaison officer to the Polish naval headquarters in London and sent small liaison staffs to individual Polish warships to evaluate the ships and ensure effective communications.

The German campaign of 1940 overran Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, and ended with France's capitulation in June 1940. Britain's harbours subsequently filled with foreign ships seeking refuge. Instead of having a handful of Polish warships fighting alongside the RN that could be managed on an improvised

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[5]Robert W. Allen, Jr., *Churchill's Guests: Britain and the Belgian Exiles During World War II,* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2003); Hubert Baete (ed.), *Belgian Forces in United Kingdom 1940-1945,* (Brussels: FNAC Brigade Piron, 1994); Luc De Vos, 'The Reconstruction of the Belgian Military Forces in Britain 1940-1945' in Martin Conway and José Gotovitch (eds.), *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain, 1940-1945*, (New York: Berghahn, 2001), pp. 81-97; Chantal Kesteloot, 'Belgium in Exile: The Experience of the Second World War,' in Vit Smetana and Kathleen Geaney (eds.), *Exile in London: The Experience of Czechoslovakia and the Other Occupied Nations, 1939-1945*, (Prague: Karolinum, 2017), pp. 20-31.
[6]For a brief account of the Belgian units that served within the Royal Air Force, see Alan Brown, *Airmen in Exile: The Allied Air Forces in the Second World War,* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000), chapter 6.

basis, the RN now had to deal with the more numerous remnants from the Norwegian, Netherlands, and French navies. The German push into the Balkans in 1941 brought additional ships from the Yugoslav and Greek navies to British-controlled ports.

The RN, rather than create an ad hoc arrangement with each exile navy involving the existing naval attachés, instead established a new entity to oversee its formal relationship with these exiles.[7] Initially known by the title Naval Assistant (Foreign) to the Second Sea Lord, a retired Admiral, Gerald Dickens, assumed responsibility for these navies in July 1940. His office provided an advisory and communications channel between the RN and the leadership of each independent exile navy. In March 1942 Dickens' title was changed to Principal Liaison Officer, Allied Navies (PNLO). Dickens was relieved as PNLO in January 1943 by Vice Admiral, later Admiral E.L.S. King, who remained in the role until the early postwar period.

Each one of the six exile navies was an independent service fighting under their national governments, which were based in London. Operational control of the exile warships was exercised by the RN, and the British supply system provided fuel, ammunition, spare parts, and provisions. The individual navies handled personnel assignments, promotion, discipline, pay, and other internal matters. During the early years of the war the British signed broadly similar defence agreements with most of the exile governments that defined the terms of this bilateral military cooperation.

The RN sought to expand and modernise the exile navies. This began with the ships that reached Britain in 1940, many of which were obsolete, in need of repair and antiaircraft weapons, and modern electronics including radar and sonar. As the Allied navies proved themselves and recruited more personnel, and British shipyards expanded production, the RN transferred destroyers, escort vessels and submarines to the exile navies. Some of these ships were transferred upon completion while others had previously served in the RN. Additional ships loaned by the United States to the RN or seized from French forces that had refused to join the Free French movement were also transferred temporarily. Patrol boats and minesweepers were obtained in the short term by the requisitioning of civilian small craft used for fishing and whaling and then converting them to warships.

The RN liaison system with the exile navies expanded beyond the PNLO office to include the placement of a small number of RN liaison staff to each warship of

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[7]Mark C. Jones, 'Friend and Advisor to the Allies Navies: The Royal Navy's Principal Liaison Officer and Multinational Naval Operations in World War II,' *Journal of Military History* 77, 3 (2013), pp. 991-1023.

minesweeper size or larger.[8] Each one was headed by a junior officer and consisted of signalmen, radio operators, and coders to ensure the vessel could communicate effectively and securely with British forces. The RN officer was the ship's British Naval Liaison Officer (BNLO). In some instances, the RN also temporarily transferred additional enlisted men to these ships when the exile navies were short of electronics specialists: radar and sonar; key engine room personnel; and on minesweepers a wireman to handle the specialised sweep equipment.

The RN system of working with small but independent national navies using senior liaison officers attached to British and Allied headquarters plus liaison staff placed aboard individual warships was suitable for those European exile governments that arrived in London with a functioning navy. In the case of Belgium which had no true navy before the war, the British would have to come up with another approach.

The Evolution of Belgium's Naval Forces 1830-1940
Between the country's independence from the Netherlands in 1830 and the end of the Second World War, Belgium did not have a true navy for decades at a time. Perhaps this was a function of its rather short coastline, about 65 kilometres or 40 miles. Belgium's independence and neutrality was recognised and guaranteed by the 1839 Treaty of London whose major power signatories included Britain, which with the USA possessed the world's largest navies before the Second World War. With such a short coastline, a nearly landlocked colonial empire in Africa, and a guarantee of its independence by a neighbouring state with a large navy, it is understandable that Belgians demonstrated little sustained interest in possessing a navy.

An 1861 decision by the Belgian parliament not to fund the country's Royal Navy (*Marine Royale*) resulted in 1862 in the government abolishing the navy and replacing it with a maritime force called the State Marine (*Marine d'État*). Its role was to police the Schelde River. During the First World War Belgium created a naval force called the Detachment of Torpedo Boats and Marines (*Détachement de Torpilleurs et Marins*). Renamed the Corps of Torpedo Boats and Marines (*Corps de Torpilleurs et Marins*) in 1923, this body was dissolved on 31 March 1927 as a cost-saving measure.[9]

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[8]Mark C. Jones, 'Not Just Along for the Ride: The Role of Royal Navy Liaison Personnel in Multinational Naval Operations during World War II,' *Journal of Military History* 76, 1 (2012), pp. 127-58.
[9]Pascal Deloge and Jean-Marc Sterkendries, 'Une histoire de braves marins et de petits navires: la marine Belge en Europe,' *Revue Historique des Armées* 206 (1997), pp. 111-22.

Belgium's maritime force now consisted only of several disarmed First World War naval vessels of British and German origin, manned by civilian crews of the State Marine and used for fisheries protection duties. As geopolitical tensions worsened in the 1930s, Belgium created a new entity called the *Corps de Marine,* or *Marinekorps* in Dutch, to be activated in time of war. This force was part of the Belgian Army and its officers were mostly army reservists with civilian maritime professions. In 1939 Belgium declared neutrality and on 15 September 1939 partially mobilised the *Corps de Marine* to enforce that neutrality. The *Corps de Marine* now included several pilot vessels on loan from the State Marine, trawlers requisitioned from civilian owners, and miscellaneous harbour craft. Most of its ships were stationed at Ostend.

Germany attacked Belgium, the Netherlands, and France on 10 May 1940. German forces advanced so rapidly that the Netherlands surrendered on 14 May and Belgium on 28 May. Before Belgian forces surrendered, the government took steps that later proved valuable in allowing a Belgian naval force to be created. The day after the German invasion, the Belgian Shipping Advisory Committee (BSAC) was created at the Belgian embassy in London.[10] This entity had oversight of all Belgian vessels that remained outside German control.

> On 17 May 1940, the entire Belgian fishing fleet (507 vessels) had been requisitioned by the Belgian government and ordered to evacuate the coast. The old fleet had been seized and destroyed by the Germans in 1914, but by 1940 a new one had come into being, up to date, well equipped and motorised. Fifty percent of the ships arrived at British shores, from which one half were assigned to the fishing trade, and the remainder taken into service by the Royal Navy.[11]

As German troops occupied Belgium, *Corps de Marine* vessels sailed to France, arriving at the naval port of Lorient by 13 June. As the situation deteriorated in France, the *Corps de Marine* ships moved farther south along the French Atlantic coast, to Le Verdon and then St Jean de Luz, keeping ahead of German forces.[12] Once France surrendered, the Belgian ships sailed for Portugalete, Spain (near Bilbao) and were

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[10]Georges Billet, 'La Royal Navy (Section Belge): l'écho de l'Amirauté Britannique (1),' *Neptunus* 55, 303 (2012), pp. 69-75. This article is an excellent chronological overview of the RNSB 1940-1943. Complete issues of *Neptunus* can be downloaded as PDF files from the catalogue of the Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee, www.vliz.be/en/catalogue. Accessed 5 October 2024.

[11]Kesteloot, 'Belgium in Exile,' p. 23.

[12]Jasper Van Raemdonck, *Het Belgisch Marinekorps 1939-1940,* (Erpe: De Krijger, 2000).

interned there on 26 June. One ship, the pilot vessel *MLB16,* also referred to as *Pilote 16* or *P16*, reached Britain as it had different orders than the rest of the Belgian ships. This ship was taken over by the RN as HMS *Kernot.* The *Corps de Marine* had ceased to exist with the Belgian surrender and the internment of most of its ships in Spain.

The government of Prime Minister Hubert Pierlot initially turned down a 20 June 1940 British offer to evacuate to London. Instead, it chose to remain in France where it focused on repatriating displaced Belgians. One minister who had reached London, the Minister of Public Health, Marcel-Henri Jaspar, made a radio address on 23 June urging Belgians to continue the fight.[13] The Belgian government eventually changed its mind about evacuating to Britain, and once it did arrive in October 1940, it showed only moderate interest in developing a navy. The Belgian government was prompted to act by the interest of Belgian mariners who reached Britain as well as the desire of the RN to create a Belgian naval force.

Belgians Join the Royal Navy
One Belgian in Britain who decided to fight on was Victor Billet (Figure 1), an officer of the State Marine whose ferry boat *Prince Philippe* was at Southampton in July 1940.[14] Billet believed that Belgium should create a naval force and approached the Belgian government with the proposal. Since the Belgian government was still in France, Billet contacted the Pierlot government's representative in London, René Boël of the BSAC. Initially Boël proposed the reestablishment of the *Corps de Marine* but was generally in favour of creating a new Belgian naval force. Billet, frustrated with the Belgian government's limited interest in creating a Belgian navy, approached the RN about Belgians serving in that force.

With no Belgian navy in British waters, the British government could have directed Billet and the 350 men who had already expressed a desire to serve in the RN to join the Belgian merchant marine, army, or air force.[15] Instead, the British government demonstrated creativity and flexibility by permitting the Admiralty to devise an alternate solution to the absence of a Belgian Navy.

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[13]De Vos, 'The Reconstruction of the Belgian Military Forces in Britain 1940-1945,' p. 83.

[14]Georges Billet, *Le Combat du Lieutenant Victor BILLET: Fondateur (méconnu) de la Marine militaire belge,* (Middelkerke: J.M.P.-Trends, 1999). The author is the son of Victor Billet.

[15]Deloge and Sterkendries, 'Une histoire de braves marins et de petits navires,' p. 113.

Figure 1: Lieutenant Victor Billet, RNVR. The photograph was taken between 21 October and 5 December 1940 while he was the liaison officer for the first contingent of enlisted volunteers training at HMS Royal Arthur at Skegness, England[16]

Admiral Dickens, the British officer in charge of liaison with the exile navies, accepted a proposal from Billet in late July 1940. Dickens favoured the establishment of a Belgian naval force, to be created by Belgians joining a special Belgian section of the RN. He sent a proposal to this effect to Boël in early September 1940. In early October 1940, Boël shared the Dickens proposal with key Belgian government officials including Camille Gutt, whose cabinet portfolios included the ministries of finance and communications, and Gutt's chief of staff, André Van Campenhout. Gutt was the important decision maker as before the war, the *Corps de Marine* was part of the Ministry of Communications and not the Ministry of National Defence. Whatever form the Belgian naval force took, it would be administratively part of Communications.[17] Since Gutt held several cabinet portfolios, his chief of staff Van Campenhout was the person to whom British officials regularly turned to regarding naval matters.[18]

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[16]Courtesy Nicole Billet.

[17]An overview of the administrative structure of Belgian maritime activities, both military and civilian, in the United Kingdom is found in War Heritage Institute (hereinafter WHI), Brussels, Belgium, inventory VI/155, *Régie de la Marine, Activité des Services en Grande-Bretagne, 1940-1944*.

[18]The regular correspondence in English between Van Campenhout and Dickens or his staff member H.S. Moss-Blundell can be found in the WHI inventory VI/58-144. This untitled inventory of about 200 pages contains correspondence of the

While the Belgian government slowly came to support a Belgian naval force, the British were moving faster with their creation of a special Belgian section of the RN. The establishment of an entire administrative division within the RN for foreign volunteers was without precedent and was a novel arrangement.[19] Victor Billet had been given approval to recruit a small number of Belgians for naval training, and these men were sent to the RN's basic training unit HMS Royal Arthur at Skegness, England.[20] The first group started their training in October 1940 and was quickly followed by two more. The authorisation to recruit was limited in that crew members of Belgian merchant ships were not permitted to join and so keep the Belgian merchant marine at full strength. Since few personnel of the *Corps de Marine* had reached Britain, that left fishermen as the nucleus of a new Belgian naval force. Another source of volunteers was the State Marine.[21] Some fishermen initially served aboard civilian Belgian vessels contracted to maintain barrage balloons or carry out other harbour duties but then gradually were recruited into naval service.[22]

Belgians wishing to serve as officers joined the RN with professional mariners receiving a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) and other volunteers commissioning into the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.[23] The original Belgian officers of the RNSB

Administration of Marine of the Ministry of Communications between August 1940 and June 1944. Most of the documents concern the RNSB but some relate to the State Marine, merchant marine, and fishing fleet. There is an overwhelming emphasis on personnel matters, typically the shortage of men and British requests to transfer men to the RNSB.

[19]The UK National Archives (hereinafter TNA) ADM 1/29379 *Award of Belgian Medaille Maritime to Belgian personnel in Section Belge of Royal Navy*. Admiral Dickens' successor as PNLO, Vice Admiral E.L.S. King, was involved with decision making about whether to permit the Belgian government to award a good conduct decoration to eligible Belgian sailors. In the docket on this topic that circulated among Admiralty offices, he wrote on 13 January 1944 that '… there never has been within the Royal Navy, a Section composed entirely of foreigners.'

[20] J.-C. Liénart, "La 'Belgian Top Division' de la Royal Navy en 1940," *Neptunus* 45, 267 (2002), pp. 126-28.

[21]Naval Historical Branch (hereinafter NHB) S. 6751 Belgium. This fact sheet is a reprint of S.4151 of March 1965.

[22]Georges Billet, 'La Royal Navy (Section Belge): Les rapports R.N.S.B. (II),' *Neptunus* 55, 304 (2012), pp. 144-49.

[23]TNA ADM 1/17298, *Details and appointments of foreign personnel serving with the Royal Navy during World War II*. This file contains biographical information and reasons for offering or declining to make appointments for officer candidates. Most of the applicants were Belgian or Danish.

were commissioned into the RNVR in late 1940 and then, because they were all professional mariners, transferred on 30 September 1941 to the RNR. Enlisted men belonged to the newly established Royal Navy Section Belge (RNSB). The name chosen was done to avoid using Belgian Section, which when abbreviated to RNBS, could be confused with the Royal Naval Patrol Service (RNPS) that also had some Belgians within it.

Figure 2: The first Belgian contingent at HMS Royal Arthur. Victor Billet is the fourth man from the right in the bottom row. The two wavy stripes on his uniform sleeve indicate he is a lieutenant in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve. Note the Belgian flag behind the top row of sailors and the twin flags within the life ring.[24]

While the RNSB's enlisted personnel could be recruited from fishermen whose trawlers were taken over by the RN, officers were a different challenge. Some officers were available from the personnel of the State Marine after several of the ferry boats of the Ostend to Dover line were requisitioned by the RN for use as troop carriers for amphibious operations. A large group of officer candidates came from the State Marine's sail training ship *Mercator*. Forty cadets were on the ship in May 1940 while it was in Brazil on a training voyage. These men were sent to British officer training programmes and were eventually commissioned into the RNR.

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[24]Courtesy Nicole Billet.

The RN released an Admiralty Fleet Order on 3 April 1941 that announced the creation of the RNSB and explained how the force would be recruited, trained, promoted, assigned to units, and paid. All Belgian enlisted men were formally assigned to the Devonport Port Division though they lacked their own depot.[25] Belgian enlisted men also had an official number that included the letters SB (e.g., D/SB/….). The RNSB was a small force at the start and it lacked men with true naval experience as well as lacking enlisted men with vital skills in gunnery, signals, radar, and sonar. The lack of trained men required that vessels manned by the RNSB have a mixed British-Belgian crew until such time as Belgians could be trained to replace British personnel. On the first ships loaned to the RNSB, the commanding officer was British with the other officers being British or Belgian.

Since the RNSB was part of the Royal Navy, the senior leadership of Belgian naval personnel was provided by British officers in command of various shore bases, flotillas, and ships. Prime Minister Pierlot appointed Georges Timmermans as Senior Officer of the RNSB. Timmermans had been captain of the State Marine ferry *Prinses Astrid* during the German invasion. As Timmermans held various appointments on British ships and shore stations rather than commanding the RNSB, his position was more symbolic than substantive. Timmermans served as the senior officer of the RNSB for the remainder of the war.

Operations of Belgian Naval Ships and Personnel 1941-1945
The first vessel with a primarily Belgian crew was the ex-French submarine chaser HMS *Quentin Roosevelt* which began training in early 1941. In January 1942 the ship reverted to British manning so the crew could be assigned to other Belgian manned ships. Belgians also crewed the small patrol boats HMS *Electra II*, *Phrontis*, *Raetia*, and *Sheldon* that had been British fishing trawlers before being requisitioned by the RN.[26] The last vessel was HMS *Kernot*, the former pilot vessel *MLB16* that escaped from Belgium to Britain in 1940. *Kernot* served as an examination service vessel for ships entering Liverpool harbour. The patrol vessels were assigned to ports scattered around Britain but most were assigned to Liverpool at some point.

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[25]TNA, ADM 182/106, *Admiralty Fleet Order (AFO) 1379/41 – Royal Navy (Section Belge) Reports*.
[26]R. Planchar, 'Shipslist 177 Royal Navy - Belgian Section 1941-1946,' *The Belgian Shiplover* 69 (1959), pp. 178-79.

Figure 3: HMS Kernot – Liverpool – 4 April 1942. The Belgian Minister of Communications Camille Gutt and Admiral Percy Noble, Commander in Chief, Western Approaches are shown disembarking from the examination service vessel HMS *Kernot.* The officer about to step on the ramp is thought to be Admiral Gerald Dickens, the PNLO.[27]

While the RNSB fell under the administrative purview of the Belgian Ministry of Communications, within the RN it was overseen by the PNLO, Admiral Dickens, who worked actively to encourage the Belgian government to create a naval force of its own. Dickens wrote:

> Particular attention is drawn to the very satisfactory development of the Section Belge, built up out of somewhat crude material. Reports received are full of praise of the men. The officers, who have not yet commanded their men, are still an unknown quantity, but it is believed they will be adequate, especially the junior officers late of the Belgian sailing Training ship 'MERCATOR,' who are completing training at Dartmouth and Greenwich and who will then do Gunnery courses.[28]

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[27]©IWM A8287.
[28]TNA ADM 199/779/M 0217/42, quarterly report on Allied navies dated 12 January 1942.

In addition to the RNSB, there was another Belgian military force operating at sea. While some of the Allied navies including the Dutch and Norwegians provided gun crews for their merchant ships, the Belgians in November 1940 chose to create a separate force called the Belgian Marine. The Belgian Army loaned men to the Belgian Marine who were trained at the RN's Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships (DEMS) facility in Liverpool.[29] Belgian Marine personnel wore British naval uniforms with a cap tally marked 'Belgian Marine' and they wore 'BELGIUM' shoulder tabs. The Belgian Marine was disbanded at the end of the war.

Figure 4: Belgian Marine sailors, Liverpool 30 April 1943, DEMS Training. Note the sailors' caps on the table with the ribbon 'Belgian Marine' although they are not all wearing the 'Belgium' shoulder tabs. [30]

As recruiting efforts gathered momentum and officer candidates completed their training, the RNSB possessed more officers and men than were needed to man the few ships crewed by the RNSB. Belgians serving in the RN were assigned to various ships and shore commands.[31] A few Belgians even served in the aviation and submarine

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[29]The "Belgian Marine" Detachments 1940-1945. www.be4046.eu/BELMAR.htm. Accessed 11 August 2024.

[30]©IWM A 16377.

[31]Henri Anrys, *Congé pour mourir: Les Belges dans la Royal Navy,* (Brussels: Pierre de Méyère, 1975). See p. 462 for a list of Belgian ratings assigned to British ships up to September 1944. This source also has two lists of personnel who joined the RNSB: before and after the liberation of Belgium.

branches of the RN.[32] The dispersion of Belgians within the RN became a challenge for the Belgian government when it tried to distribute newspapers, cigarettes, and other morale-boosting items to its sailors. The Belgian government had to ask for British assistance in locating Belgian personnel.[33]

Victor Billet, who pushed vigorously for a Belgian naval service and in the process antagonised his government, served as a Lieutenant RNR with various British naval units including the destroyer *HMS Brilliant* and motor torpedo boats. After transfer to Combined Operations, he took part in the disastrous amphibious raid at Dieppe on 19 August 1942. Billet was assigned as a naval liaison officer to a Canadian army unit aboard Landing Craft Tank (LCT) 159 and was reported as missing in action.

One aspect of Belgian society that could have been a problem for the RNSB was the cultural divide between the Dutch speaking Flemish population and the French speaking Walloon population. One source indicates that deck sailors were often Flemish ex-fishermen while sailors filling skilled rating positions such as coders and signalmen were often Walloons. This source indicates the trend for sailors of certain ratings to be from the same language community was not a problem.[34] Since the RNSB was part of the RN, officially it was an English-speaking service and the presence of British officers and enlisted men on board ships necessitated that English be used for all orders.

While Belgian personnel serving in the RN were technically not members of the Belgian government's armed forces, they did not lose their Belgian identity. In January 1942 ships manned by the RNSB were authorised to fly both the Belgian national flag and the British naval ensign.[35] This was a most unusual accommodation granted by the British government. The uniform worn by Belgian ratings and petty officers had a tab reading "BELGIUM" on both shoulders. Officer uniforms for Belgians did not include this tab or any other indicator of nationality.

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[32]Details of the appointments of Belgians serving as officers in the RN can be found in the RN's Navy List. Volumes for the years of both world wars are searchable by name or ship and can be found on the website of the National Library of Scotland: https://digital.nls.uk/british-military-lists/archive/93506066. Accessed 5 October 2024.
[33]WHI, inventory VI/58-144, letter of 16 July 1942 from H.R. Rueff to H.S. Moss-Blundell.
[34]Allen, Jr. '*Churchill's Guests,*' p. 136.
[35] TNA, ADM 182/109, *AFO 99/42 Royal Navy (Section Belge) – Flag*.

Figure 5: A Belgian radio operator with 'BELGIUM' shoulder tab[36]

The RNSB manned, either partially or fully, five patrol vessels during 1941. While each vessel crewed by another navy, no matter how small, helped the RN carry out its many and varied responsibilities, the RNSB small craft were unlikely to encounter the enemy often. To take the fight to the Germans, the Belgians needed bigger ships designed for active service. As was done for most of the exile navies, the British provided 'Flower' class corvettes to the Belgians. These ships were ideal because of their small size, simple construction, and similarity to commercial fishing or whaling vessels.

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[36]Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)/KBMA-ARMB, Antwerp, Belgium, AS.1970.059.016.

Figure 6: Crew members on a corvette standing atop the depth charge racks with the British naval ensign and the Belgian national flag in the background.[37]

The RN allocated two corvettes to the RNSB in early 1942. HMS *Godetia* was manned by the RNSB in early February 1942 upon completion. HMS *Buttercup* followed in April 1942. The two vessels had similar careers, spending much of their time in the North Atlantic escorting convoys. Both had a British commanding officer at first with Belgians taking command in 1943.

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[37] Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)/KBMA-ARMB, Antwerp, Belgium, AS.1970.059.013.

Figure 7: Lieutenant Commander M.A.F. Larose, RNR, served as the commanding officer of HMS *Godetia* from February 1943 – December 1944.[38]

A detailed operational history of HMS *Buttercup* shows that the ship was assigned with *Godetia* to operate in the Caribbean from June to December 1942.[39] *Buttercup* protected convoys from Trinidad to Key West and was then moved to the Guantanamo to New York route. Beginning in January 1943, *Buttercup* operated between Newfoundland, either Argentia or St. John's, and Liverpool. With occasional refit periods, this North Atlantic duty lasted until March 1944 when the ship was withdrawn to prepare it for use during the 1944 Normandy invasion. *Buttercup* returned to North Atlantic convoy duty from September to November 1944. The Belgian crew left the ship in December 1944 as the crew was needed to help clear the coast of newly liberated Belgium of mines and operate the country's ports.[40]

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[38]©IWM ART LD 4976. *Portrait of Lieutenant-Commander M A F Larose* by Stephen Bone. Medium: chalk.

[39]P.M.J. van Schoonbeek, 'Korvet (III),' *Neptunus* 32, 214 (1987), pp. 21-41. The author was an officer on HMS *Buttercup* 1943-1944.

[40]NHB *HMS Buttercup: Summary of service 1942-1945*. Ship's history (S7969) prepared July 1970. Imperial War Museum LBY [X]SH.93.
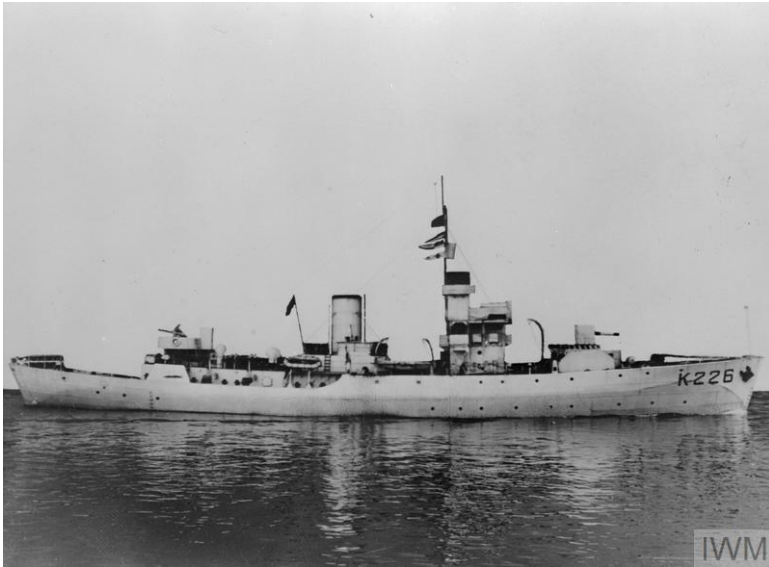
Figure 8: Flower Class corvette HMS *Godetia.* The absence of a background suggests the image of the corvette was altered by a censor to remove clues about the ship's location. Note also the ship's pennant number and the false bow wave painted on the hull to mislead an enemy about the ship's speed.[41]

HMS *Godetia* (Figure 8 above) served in the Caribbean between June and December 1942. Switching to the main trans-Atlantic routes in January 1943, *Godetia* was part of the escort for convoy SC-122 in March 1943. *Godetia* was involved in the scuttling of another escort vessel protecting SC-122 when the minesweeping trawler HMS *Campobello* sprang a leak during bad weather. *Godetia* provided the depth charge needed and took off the crew. In September 1943 while escorting a convoy from Gibraltar to Britain, the ship was attacked by German aircraft but without damage incurred. *Godetia* also participated in the Normandy invasion of June 1944 and reverted to British manning in December 1944 for the same reasons as did *Buttercup*.[42]

In June 1942 and a few months after the corvettes were transferred to the RNSB, the Belgian and British governments signed an agreement regarding their military cooperation. The Belgian armed forces were defined as consisting of the army and air

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[41]©IWM FL 6058.
[42]NHB *HMS Godetia: Summary of service 1942-1945*. Ship's history (S9624, revision of S6750) prepared December 1979. Imperial War Museum LBY [X]SH.202.

force. Article 4 concerning the RNSB mentions in a few sentences the Belgian volunteers joining the RN and the vessels loaned to the RNSB.[43]

The RN also sought to expand the RNSB beyond its original patrol vessels and corvettes. At one point it envisioned the RNSB manning four corvettes, four patrol boats, four motor gunboats, and an examination vessel.[44] This plan was not realised because of the chronic shortage of personnel. Admiral Dickens regularly sought to persuade the Belgian government to allocate more men to the RNSB. The Belgian government made the occasional small transfer, most notably in December 1942 when it agreed to release all seamen serving in the army. This affected about 100 men with merchant mariners returning to that service while fishermen were sent to the RNSB.[45] This was supplemented by small numbers of men who escaped from occupied Europe.[46]

One area in which the RN needed assistance from the exile navies was in minesweeping and keeping British coastal waters clear of German mines laid by surface ships, submarines, and aircraft. The RNSB was well suited to add minesweeping to its portfolio of tasks in that many of its personnel were former fishermen experienced in operating small craft in coastal waters. Admiral Dickens, in a letter to Van Campenhout, characterised the British decision to substitute minesweepers for motor gunboats by saying, 'This arrangement would seem very suitable as your fishermen would take to minesweeping splendidly and also the Engineers are better with Diesel engines than with steam.'[47]

In May 1942 RNSB personnel manned its first motor minesweeper, *MMS-188*.[48] This was a 255-ton, 119-foot vessel with a crew of two officers and sixteen other ranks. While the commanding officer was Belgian from the start, the crew was mixed. This

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[43]TNA, ADM 199/615/M 07753/42 *Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Belgian Government concerning the Organisation and Employment of the Belgian Armed Forces in the United Kingdom, London, June 4, 1942*.

[44]WHI inventory VI/58-144, letter of 10 February 1942 from Van Campenhout to Dickens.

[45]WHI inventory VI/58-144, letter of 10 December 1942 from Van Campenhout to Dickens.

[46]Bernard Wilkin and Bob Moore, *Escaping Nazi Europe: Understanding the Experiences of Belgian Soldiers and Civilians in World War II,* (London: Routledge, 2024), pp. 34-35, 112.

[47]WHI inventory VI/58-144, letter of 4 February 1942 from Dickens to Van Campenhout.

[48]Louis Petitjean, '118e Flottille,' *Neptunus* 15, 2/3 (1968), pp. 8-25. The author was the senior officer of the flotilla.

ship was joined in July 1942 by *MMS-191* and both served in the 118th Minesweeping Flotilla at Aberdeen and then at Harwich. In March 1943 the commanding officer of *MMS-188*, Lieutenant L.F.R.E. Petitjean, was appointed senior officer of the flotilla. Another pair of ships, *MMS-187* and *MMS-193,* became Belgian manned on 1 October 1943, and was joined by a third pair, *MMS-43* and *MMS-77,* on 1 February 1944. In September 1944 with Belgium partially liberated, the flotilla moved from Harwich to Ostend. The 118th Minesweeping Flotilla was active clearing Belgian waters throughout 1944 and into 1945, also spending time off the coast of the Netherlands. On 1 August 1945 the RNSB gained four more motor minesweepers, *75*, *89*, *189* and another of the larger 126-foot variant, *1020*.

In the first week of September 1944 Allied troops liberated some of Belgium's key cities including Brussels, Antwerp, and Ostend. With the arrival of the 118th Minesweeping Flotilla at Ostend, the RNSB began to establish a presence in its homeland. With the two corvettes reverting to British manning, the former crew members of those ships could be used to man additional minesweepers and operate the liberated ports. Belgium was declared liberated on 2 November 1944. Later that month Belgian personnel moved from the Devonport barracks to a new shore base, HMS Royal Edmund II at Ostend.[49] Once Antwerp was liberated, the RN established a base there, HMS Royal Athelstan. Now concentrated in Belgium, the RNSB was busy clearing the region's coastal waters of mines. Ports were filled with wrecks that needed to be raised or demolished, and mines and unexploded ordnance had to be neutralised. Naval personnel helped run the ports and provided security at a time when it was vital to bring in material to continue the war in northwest Europe.[50]

The Belgian contribution to the Royal Navy during the war was recognised by the Admiralty in a 9 May 1945 signal sent to the major commands in which Belgian personnel were then serving.

> Following for Belgians serving with the Royal Navy. Now that the end of organised resistance in Europe has denoted the triumph of Allied Arms, the Board of Admiralty desire to express their deep admiration of the heroic

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[49]TNA, ADM 182/124, AFO 7011/45 *Section Belge – Transfer of Responsibility*.
[50]For personal accounts of service in the RNSB and numerous photos, see Johnny Geldhof, *De strijd op zee in 1940-1945 verteld door de Royal Navy Section Belge,* (Oostrozebeke: Groeninghe, 2000). The text is in Dutch only. See also Johnny Geldhof, *Royal Navy – Section Belge 1940-1945 in Focus,* (Oostrozebeke: Verraes, 2002). This book contains many photos of sailors of the RNSB contributed by veterans or their families. The text is in French, Dutch, and English.

services to the Allied Cause which have been rendered by Belgian Officers and Ratings serving with the Royal Navy.[51]

The wartime maximum number of RNSB personnel was 90 officers and 400 enlisted men.[52] Deaths while on active duty with the RNSB totalled just six men between 1942 and 1944. These included Victor Billet plus another officer, one warrant officer, and three enlisted men. Some of the men lost were serving afloat while others were killed in Belgium by enemy fire.

In November 1945 the Belgian government decided to recruit an additional 1,200 men for the RNSB, and they were sent to Britain for basic training.[53] The expansion of the RNSB in 1945 encountered difficulties. While there were more enlisted personnel, the lack of officers and senior enlisted men prevented more ships from being transferred to the RNSB. Additional ships could have included motor minesweepers but the RN also considered destroyers and sloops.[54] At the same time as these new recruits were under training, the Belgian government assumed financial responsibility for RNSB enlisted men on 1 October 1945 and officers on 9 November 1945.[55]

The liberation of Belgium and the return of RNSB personnel to their homeland raised questions as to both the future of the RNSB and Belgium's need for a navy. It was a matter that had already emerged during the war. Admiral Dickens had asked Van Campenhout as early as 1941 for an indication of the Belgian government's position regarding an independent navy.[56] By September 1945 a proposal had been made to the Belgian government to establish a navy to be called the *Marine Royale*.[57] At this time the RNSB had about 70 officers and 1,400 enlisted men of whom 200 were vehicle drivers. In late January 1946 the Belgian Council of Ministers approved a decree law establishing a Belgian navy. This new force was officially established on 1 February 1946 as the *Force Navale*. Personnel immediately transferring from the RNSB to the *Force*

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[51]WHI, inventory VI/145-154, *HMS Buttercup*, image 146.

[52]NHB, S. 6751 Belgium.

[53]Baete, *Belgian Forces in United Kingdom,* p. 192.

[54]TNA ADM 1/18274 *Section Belge Royal Navy: future employment, disposal & financial arrangements, conference held 27.07.45 at PNLO Office, Devonport.*

[55]Ibid.

[56]WHI inventory VI/58-144, letter of 14 May 1941 from Dickens to Van Campenhout. Dickens sought an unofficial indication of Belgian intentions so that if the Admiralty asked Dickens about this, he would not be caught off guard.

[57]Anrys, *Congé pour mourir,* p. 23.

Navale totalled 160.[58] Senior officer of the RNSB Georges Timmermans was appointed Commodore of the *Force Navale* on 19 February 1946.[59]

Belgian personnel of the RN were expected to become the nucleus of the new Belgian navy. Recruitment was slow at first with under 200 men and 25 officers having volunteered for the *Force Navale* by mid-February 1946.[60] Most Belgians serving in the RN were already stationed in Belgium, the exceptions being men under training. Those men were to be sent to HMS Royal Edmund II at Ostend upon completion of their courses. By late March 1946 the RNSB had been disbanded but close ties between British and Belgian naval personnel continued into the early postwar era.

Conclusion

The RNSB overcame the near total absence of a Belgian prewar navy upon which to draw for senior leaders, personnel, and a sense of tradition. Initially tepid Belgian government support for the idea of a Belgian naval force was overcome by the energetic campaign of Victor Billet who sought Belgian and then British support for his cause. The assistance of Admiral Gerald Dickens as PNLO was vital in creating a Belgian branch within the RN in 1940. Belgian personnel of the RNSB began by manning five small patrol vessels in 1941 before exchanging them for two corvettes in 1942. The value of the RNSB crewed corvettes was shown in late 1944 in the reluctance of the Western Approaches Command to release the crews, even though they were badly needed in Belgium for minesweeping and other duties. The Admiralty had to make it clear to Western Approaches Command that they would not reconsider the order to decommission *Buttercup* and *Godetia*, as valuable as they were to the North Atlantic escort force.[61] Belgian motor minesweepers helped keep the Harwich area free from mines before moving to Ostend upon that city's liberation. In 1944-1945 other RNSB personnel reopened the country's ports including Antwerp which was badly needed to support the flow of supplies to the Allied armies then pushing into Germany.

Without an existing Belgian navy in 1940 to act as the nucleus of an expanded force as was the case for the other European Allies, the RN could have told the early Belgian volunteers to join their country's merchant marine, army, or air force. Instead, the RN demonstrated administrative flexibility and a willingness to depart from tradition by establishing a national branch for Belgians within the Royal Navy. The second officer

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[58]J.-B. Dreesen, 'Beknopte chronologie van 50 jaar Zeemacht,' *Neptunus* 39, 245 (1996), pp. 149-56.

[59]Section Classified Archives, Belgian General Information and Security Service, Brussels. *Curriculum Vitae Commodore Georges Timmermans*.

[60]TNA, FO 371/59878 *Formation of a Belgian naval force*.

[61]Fold3.com, *Admiralty War Diary*, 17 November 1944, image 301317628.

to serve as PNLO, Admiral E.L.S. King, characterised the RNSB as an entity in 1944 in an inter-office docket.

> [T]here is no Belgian National Navy which Belgian subjects in this country could join and no National Naval organisation which could have administered them, and apart from technicalities, the Belgian Section is really a Belgian National force which, it is contemplated, may in the future form the nucleus of a Belgian Navy…[62]

In response to Admiral King, the Admiralty civilian administrator A. Offé wrote, 'The Section Belge is in a quite special position as a separate section of the Royal Navy, and represents as nearly as possible in the circumstances the Belgian Royal Navy.'[63]

The RN made a logical decision to offer support to the Belgian effort to create a naval force. First, though the RNSB did not exceed 500 men and a handful of ships during the war, it became an effective reinforcement for the RN and was worth the British effort to establish it. The RNSB also furthered the British objective of making the war effort a truly multinational endeavour.

A second advantage of the creation of the RNSB was that it gave the British far more control over the Belgian naval effort than would have been possible if an independent Belgian navy had already existed. While the Admiralty acted as the Allied decision maker for operational purposes, the European exile navies could request that their ships and aircraft be deployed, or not deployed, to certain areas. British objectives could differ from those of any one European ally, so a degree of compromise was necessary for both parties. In the case of the Belgians, the RNSB was part of the RN and the British had greater flexibility in assigning ships or individual personnel as the RN desired.

The third major benefit of the British decision to create the RNSB was that it allowed the Belgian government to postpone the creation of its own navy until after the war when circumstances were more favourable. For the duration of the war, the RNSB was a very small force with an unbalanced distribution of officers and enlisted men by both rank and specialty. There were far more officers available than needed in proportion to the enlisted men. Personnel were largely veteran mariners but all lacked true naval experience until the inception of the RNSB. Only a few RNSB officers were promoted to the relatively junior rank of lieutenant commander by the end of the war. Of the enlisted men, most were former fishermen who lacked essential naval skills

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[62]TNA, ADM 1/29379 *Award of Belgian Medaille Maritime to Belgian personnel in Section Belge of Royal Navy*, comment on minute sheet dated 13 January 1944.
[63]Ibid.

such as signals, radios, coding, gunnery, radar, sonar, and even marine engineering until trained by the RN. With Belgium under German occupation and no sizeable population of Belgian citizens outside the country, the Belgian naval service had no ability to easily replace losses or expand substantially. In short, there could not have been the establishment of a balanced, properly configured Belgian navy under the circumstances. Once the war ended, these limiting factors could gradually be overcome. Creating an independent Belgian navy from veterans of the RNSB was less of a challenge than having to start from scratch.

The British decision to permit Belgian volunteers to join the RN during the Second World War was certainly a novel arrangement and was one that had substantial benefits for Britain and Belgium. The RNSB was the nucleus of a new Belgian navy established in 1946 that despite name changes exists today and has an important role to play in NATO's defence of the English Channel and North Sea.

Nigeria: Fifty Years After the Civil War

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ABSTRACT
The thrust of this article is Nigeria: 50 years after the civil war. The end of the war in January 1970 heralded an era of measures by successive governments at re-integrating the Igbo and forging national unity. As laudable as the measures are, there exist gaps in many of them between intent and practice. Many people continue to raise concern as to when the Igbo will be truly integrated into Nigeria and the centrifugal forces of ethnic and religious chauvinism tamed within Nigerian society. Using primary and secondary sources, this article concludes that true re-integration of the Igbo remains a mirage and to avert another civil war, successive leaders need to demonstrate genuine commitment to patriotism and national unity.

Introduction

The Nigerian Civil War, from 6 July 1967 to 12 January 1970, followed the attempted secession of the former Eastern Region of Nigeria as the self-proclaimed Republic of Biafra.[1] Nigeria, a colonial creation by the British, consists of a predominantly Muslim North and mainly Christian South.[2] At independence in 1960, Nigeria had a three region political structure Northern, Western and Eastern Regions with the last two making up Southern Nigeria.[3] In terms of ethnicity, the Hausa and Fulani dominate the North while the Igbo and Yoruba are dominant in the south-east and south-west, respectively.[4] Ethno-religious rivalry and tensions characterised relations between the

[1]O. Obasanjo, *My Command: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War*, 1967-1970, (London: Heinemann, 1980), p. 350.
[2]P. C. Lloyd, "The Ethnic Background to the Nigerian Crisis", in S. K. Panter-Bricks (ed.), *Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to the Nigerian Civil War*, (London: Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 1-6.
[3]Ibid., pp. 1-12.
[4]Ibid., pp. 1-12.

major ethnic groups even before independence.[5] Indeed, ethno-religious divisions and tensions were common amongst the majority ethnic groups in almost every sensitive national issue.[6]

Ethno-religious tensions intensified following the January 1966 coup masterminded largely by military officers of Igbo extraction.[7] Some key politicians from the north were killed in this coup while their counterparts from the south-east were spared thereby giving the impression that the coup was ethnically biased. The coup was foiled and Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, an Igbo, became the Head of State; and his ascension ushered in military rule in Nigeria. The counter-coup of July 1966 organised by military officers from the north, eliminated Aguiyi Ironsi who was later replaced by Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon.[8] Several other military officers from the south-east were also killed in the counter-coup.[9] This was closely followed by the mass killing of civilians from the former Eastern Region who were resident in the north which prompted a mass exodus of the survivors back to their region of origin.[10] As these events were going on, attempts at making peace between the leadership of the former Eastern Region, headed by Lt. Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, and the Federal Government under Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon, later Major General Yakubu Gowon, collapsed.[11] Following failed attempts to broker peace between the two sides, Ojukwu declared the Republic of Biafra. With this declaration, the stage was set for war between the new state and the Federal Government. The war was fought in five main phases.[12]

Perhaps no other conflict in Nigeria has generated as much interest and documentation as this war. Indeed, the amount of literature on it keeps growing by the day. The majority of these studies deal with the causes of the war, the trajectory and the impact.[13] This article focuses on the aftermath of the war in terms of attempts

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[5]E. A. Ayandele, *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society*, (Ibadan: University Press, 1974), pp. 130-142.

[6]Ibid., pp. 130-143.

[7]J. O. Akintunde, "The Demise of Democracy in the First Republic of Nigeria: A Causal Analysis" *Odu*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1967, pp. 1-13.

[8]O. Ikime, *History, the Historian and the Nation: The Voice of a Nigerian Historian*, (Ibadan: Heimann, 2006), pp. 300-305.

[9]O. Ikime, *History, the Historian and the Nation,* pp. *300*-305.

[10]A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Source Book 1900-1970*, Vol. 1, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 48-49.

[11]Ibid., pp 48-49.

[12]O. Obasnajo, *My Command,* pp. 1-35.

[13]See, for instance, G. O. Olusegun, "Constitutional Development in Nigeria 1816-1960", in O. Ikime (ed.), *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, (Ibadan: Heinmann, 1999), pp.

not only to re-integrate the Igbo and other Easterners, but also to create and strengthen institutions that promote national identity fifty years after the conflict. These efforts are intended to avert a recurrence of secession. To execute this task meaningfully, it seems appropriate at this juncture to explain the methodology adopted in amassing data for this study.

Methodology
Information used in writing this article came from primary and secondary sources. For primary sources, the authors of this article and their research assistants engaged and conducted oral interviews with the proceedings recorded in an electronic device. Unstructured and structured interviews were adopted in eliciting information from respondents. The former approach was used by our research assistants in engaging interviewees, mostly young school leavers, on the basis of random sampling technique. High profile interviewees were carefully identified considering their strategic positions in Nigerian society. The interviews held with high profile interviewees were structured, properly scheduled and executed by the authors because of the positions of the individuals involved. In all, five hundred interviews were conducted in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria and Abuja, the nation's capital. The age-range of the young school leavers was between eighteen and twenty years, and locations of interviews with them were popular tertiary institutions in the geo-political zones of the country and Abuja. Preference was given to students in their first year of study because they had just left the secondary school system where attempts at inculcating national values in students are rigorous.

In the case of secondary sources, the authors consulted a wide range of relevant materials sourced from private and public libraries and government establishments. The authors subjected the information in both sources to scrutiny and cross-checking for authenticity before use. With the methodology explained, the paper now focuses on the measures put in place to re-integrate the Igbo and ensure a unified Nigeria fifty years after the civil war.

Post-Civil War Era
Nigeria since the end of the civil war remains a country in search of unity. This search largely informed the Gowon administration's policy of Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation popularly known as the 3Rs.[14] An attempt will be made to discuss

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253-7; P. C. Loyd, "The Ethnic Background to Nigerian Crisis", pp.1-27; O. Obasnajo, *My Command, pp*1-35.

[14]See Appendix 'Document No. 37 The Dawn of National Reconciliation; Broadcast to the Nation on 15 January, 1970 cited by T. N. Tomuno, "Introducing Men and Measures in the Nigerian Crisis", in T. N. Tomuno & Atanda (eds.), *Nigeria Since*

the 3Rs policy in relation to the Igbo presently beginning with the concept of reconciliation.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation as a concept has been defined by Albert as the process by which people who have been separated or have had psychological hatred for each other begin to work together after judiciously addressing the issues that brought about their hostility and differences.[15] Reconciliation is a post-conflict exercise, the main object of which is to prevent a relapse of hostility between former adversaries. The end of the civil war and the declaration of 'No Victor, No Vanquished' by Yakubu Gowon meant that the Nigerian polity was set for peace which the end of the war made it imperative that the former warring parties be reconciled. Reconciliation was to follow a practical step-by-step approach. To achieve this, the Federal Military Government (FMG) of Nigeria at the end of the civil war declared that: '… we must recommence at once, in greater earnest, the task of healing the nation wounds.'[16]

To the Gowon-led administration, reconciliation meant reunification of brothers, and the granting of amnesty to all those assumed by Nigeria to have been misled.[17] It was also to guarantee equality, safety, and security of lives and property in every part of Nigeria in all spheres of lives. Therefore, reconciliation in post-civil war Nigeria entails reuniting the Igbo and other Easterners with the rest of Nigeria on the basis of the safety and security of lives and property, as well as equality in political rights. All this was the reconciliation component of the 3Rs policy. What then has been the practice of it? A few cases may be cited to illustrate the government's commitment or lack of it to the idea of reconciliation.

The first case is the freezing of the assets of the Igbo and other Easterners in 1970.[18] This Federal Government decision tended to run counter to the whole idea of the reconciliation Gowon declared would be pursued. As some of the author's interviewees noted that 'by ordering the freezing of the assets of former Biafrans, the

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Independence: The First Twenty-Five Years: Government and Public Policy, (Ibadan: Heinmann, 1989), p. 291.

[15]I. O. Albert, "The Myth, Reality and Challenges of Nigerian Reconstruction with Ndigbo", in E. E. Osaghae (ed.), *The Nigerian Civil War and its Aftermath,* (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Limited, 2002), p. 308.

[16]T. N. Tomuno, "Introducing Men and Measures in the Nigerian Crisis", p. 291.

[17]General (Dr) Yakubu Gowon, "No Victor, No Vanquished: Healing the Nation" (Convocation Lecture Delivered at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Formerly Anambra State University, Igbariam Campus, 25 March 2015), p. 6.

[18]Chukwu Ogor, 77years, Retired Civil Servant, interviewed in Enugu, 15 April 2020; Charles Ndubisi Anake, 79years, Businessman, interviewed in Enugu, 17 April 2020.

government was sending a clear signal that it was just paying lip service to the idea of reconciliation.[19] Another case worth examining here is the twenty pounds flat fee refund policy. By this policy, the sum of twenty pounds was given to any former Biafran who wished to exchange his old currency.[20] Like the freezing of assets, the twenty pounds flat rate policy, did not help the reconciliation programme as some Igbo people viewed it as government attempt to stop them from recovering from the economic devastation of the war.[21]

Yet another case worth mentioning is the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree or Indigenization Decree Policy promulgated in February 1972 and to come into effect in April 1974.[22] The legislation was planned to give Nigerians more access to surplus income of businesses, shift foreign investment to highly technical areas and promote indigenous businesses. Commenting on the indigenization Decree, P. Achuzie notes that 'the policy was laudable as it sought to enhance the income generation capacity of Nigerian enterprises, but the timing was inauspicious in terms of the interest of the Igbo who were at the time financially too weak to take advantage of it'.[23] Many other Igbo informants share Achuzie's view.[24]

There was also the issue of abandoned property that needed resolution after the end of the civil war. During the war, the Gowon regime had set up Abandoned Properties Committees in various states of the Federation to manage the properties left behind by the Igbo, and prevent them from being vandalised.[25] These committees collected rents on the houses and other property on behalf of their rightful owners and ensured that the property remained in good condition.[26] After the war, attempts by the Igbo to reclaim their property had varying degrees of success across the states largely because the claimants were required to tender proof of ownership, and where they

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[19]John Okoro, 82years, Entrepreneur, interviewed in Awka, 5 October 2020; A. Anozie, 79years, Retired Banker, interviewed in Onitsha 15 October 2020.

[20]A. Duru, "Dangerous Memory", in C. J. Okorie (ed.), *The Nigeria Biafra War, Genocide and the Politics of Memory,* (New York: Cambridge Press, 2012), p. 245.

[21]Mathew Ogbonna, 82years, Retired School Teacher, interviewed in Umuahia, 8 December 2019.

[22]P. Obi-Ani, *Post-Civil War Political and Economic Reconstruction of Igboland: 1970-1983,* (Nsukka: Great AP Publishers Ltd., 2009), pp. 111-112.

[23]P. Achuzie, 82years, Entrepreneur, interviewed in Onitsha, 9 October 2019.

[24]Everitus Enosike, 85years, Retired Teacher, interviewed in Enugu, 12 October 2019; James Ekeriowu, 79years, interviewed in Enugu, 14 October 2019; Daniel Chimezie 78years, interviewed in Abakaliki, 11 November 2019.

[25]P. Obi-Ani, *Post-Civil War Political and Economic Reconstruction of Igboland,* p. 111

[26]Ibid., p. 111

could not, such property was forfeited to the state.[27] However, in the South-Eastern and Rivers States which were carved out of the now defunct Eastern Region, anti-Igbo sentiments may also have played a role in forfeiture of property by the Igbo.[28] The point to note is that the two states were home to minority ethnic groups who complained of Igbo domination in the pre-civil war era.[29] Therefore, for the ethnic groups in the two states, the war liberated them from Igbo oppression, and they naturally would want to work against attempts by the Igbo to reclaim their property.[30] In any case, after the initial resistance to some Igbo house owners' claims, about 177 abandoned houses in Calabar, the capital of South Eastern State were released to their Igbo owners following their showing proof of ownership.[31] There was no change of mind on the part of Rivers people on the issue.[32] The abandoned property issue remained unresolved until the ousting of the Gowon regime, and the succeeding regime of Murtala Mohammed which resolved it by asking state governments to pay the affected Igbo property owners a flat rate of 500 Naira a year on every building confiscated as rent arrears for a period of five years from 1970 to 1975.[33] Such rent arrears were paid to Igbo property owners who had not during the period recovered their property.[34] The Federal and State Governments were also allowed to purchase some of the property concerned on a compulsory basis for official use.[35] The remainder was to be sold to the indigenes of the states who were required to pay a fair price to the respective owners.[36] What seems clear from the narrative on Igbo assets and abandoned property is that in some cases, the people were not fairly treated by either the Federal or the State Governments.

Reconstruction

The end of the civil war left the eastern part of the country with severely damaged physical infrastructure which required reconstruction. For this reason, reconstruction was made part of the Federal Military Government's 3Rs policy. The scale of destruction has been aptly captured by a report as follows: "The main theatre of the

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[27]Ibid., p. 111

[28]Joseph Okonta, 86years, Retired Civil Servant, interviewed in Port-Harcourt, 10 January 2020; O. Bassey, 83years, Retired School Teacher, Interviewed in Calabar, 13 January 2020.

[29]J. Okonta.

[30]J. Okonta.

[31]*The Renaissance*, February 25, 1974, 16.

[32]J. Okonta.

[33]P. Obi-Ani, *Post-Civil War Political and Economic Reconstruction in Igbo Land*, p. 100.

[34]Ibid., p. 100.

[35]*Daily Times*, March 14, 1967, p. 3.

[36]Ibid., p. 3.

Nigerian Civil War, the East Central State, Igboland, emerged from the conflict with a severely battered economy. Battered were the state's industries, schools and public utilities and even the basic economic infrastructure. In both the public and private sectors, the picture was the same, one of ruin and devastation".[37]

Given the level of wartime devastation in the region, reconstruction after the conflict was perceived by the Gowon regime as one of the strategies for re-integrating the Igbo and other Easterners into Nigeria. Reconstruction in this study, therefore, entails the process of rebuilding what has been damaged or destroyed. The worst hit infrastructure were the communication facilities. Trenches had been dug in the middle of roads and bridges blown up. Railroads, telephone and postal services, airport and electrical installations were badly damaged. Private transport services suffered damage and neglect owing to a lack of maintenance during the war.[38] Obi-Ani observes that 'post-war reconstruction in Igboland had strong communal self-help effort input'.[39] Similarly, some of the authors' interviewees state that "the bulk of reconstruction work in Igboland after the civil war was largely undertaken by the Igbo themselves and not by state and Federal Governments'.[40] Thus, like reconciliation, the government did not meet the expectations of the Igbo in the aspect of reconstruction. It remains to be seen how the government performed in terms of the rehabilitation component of the 3Rs policy.

Rehabilitation
Rehabilitation simply means to rebuild or restore in good condition; to restore someone or a group to a former state; to bring something back into a good state.[41] The civil war experience left the people of Nigeria, especially people from the eastern part of the country where the war was more acutely felt, with mixed feelings. While the non-Igbo speaking part of the East considered it the end of a tragedy and hoped for a better tomorrow, some Igbo, especially the elite had ill feelings and were filled with fear of the unknown and of an uncertain tomorrow.[42] It was against this background that the Gowon regime introduced the policy of Rehabilitation to restore the confidence of Easterners in Nigeria.

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[37]East Central State Ministry of Information and House Affairs, *Progress in Re-construction*, (Enugu: Government Printer, n. d.), p. 1.

[38]P. Obi-Ani, *Post-Civil War Political and Economic Reconstruction in Igbo Land*, p. 53.

[39]Ibid., p. 53.

[40]P. Azubuike, 79years, Retired Civil Servant, interviewed in Aba, 22 January 2022; D. Amadi, 77years, Retired School Teacher, Interviewed in Aba, 23 January 2020.

[41]A. N. Thomas, *Beyond the Platitude of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconstruction in Nigeria: Revolutionary Pressure in the Niger-Delta,* (Pennsylvania: Clerian University Press, 2007), p. 56.

[42]S. C. Ukpabi, 80years, Retired Lecturer, interviewed in Enugu, 4 March 2019.

After the end of the war, the Gowon regime had promised a general amnesty to all the Igbo people, especially the public servants and armed forces personnel who had been involved on the Biafran side. However, this was not to be, the government reneged on its promise of an unconditional restoration of the former Biafra working people to their previous posts, citing some reasons including, among others, not creating a situation in which it would appear that secession had paid.[43] Non-restoration of Easterners to their former posts in Nigeria after the war was a negation of the policy to rehabilitate former Biafrans. Rehabilitation entails many elements including restoration of Easterners to their previous posts, the return of abandoned property to the bona-fide owners, and the repair of infrastructure damaged during the civil war. But as shown already, the performance of the Federal Government in all these areas fell short of the Igbo expectations raising doubt as to the government's seriousness in following its 3Rs policy.

The 3Rs policy is akin to the post-conflict peace agreement in Rwanda. In Rwanda, the Arusha Accords paved the way for reconciliation between the Hutus and the Tutsi ethnic groups.[44] However, unlike the 3Rs policy in Nigeria, which was entirely the initiative of the Federal Government, the post-conflict peace agreement in Rwanda was an outcome of negotiations between the parties to the conflict. However, in terms of the spirit and content, there are similarities between the Rwandan peace agreement and the Nigerian 3Rs policy.

There are also other formal policies and programmes that can be seen as outcomes of the civil war and aimed at promoting national unity and averting another secession. They include reforms in the education sector, state creation, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme, and the Federal Character Principle. In discussing these measures, attempts will be made to indicate the extent to which the interest of the Igbo is served. We begin with reforms in the education sector.

Reforms in the Education Sector
As with the 3Rs policy, Nigeria since the civil war, has been confronting centrifugal forces by using the agency of Western education in the belief that education has the

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[43]J. I. Elaigwu, *Gowon: The Biography of Soldier Statement*, (Ibadan: West Books Limited, 1986), pp. 142-143.
[44]Ervin Staub, "The Challenging Road to Reconciliation in Rwanda". *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, Vol. 2(1), 2014, pp. 505-517.

potential to foster national unity and development. Fostering of national unity through education is not unique to countries worldwide.[45]

The first major step taken by the Government to make education serve as a tool for national unity was the 1977 National Policy on Education. The policy was intended to ensure access to education by children across the country which would enable them to develop an outlook that would transcend their immediate communities.[46] The 1977 Education Policy was revised in 1981, and an aspect of the 1981 policy was the adoption of the 6-3-3-4 system which allows a child to spend six years at the primary level, three years at the junior secondary school level, another three years at the senior secondary level, and four years at the tertiary level.[47] Under this system, History was replaced by Social Studies, Government, and Civic Education at the primary and junior secondary school levels on the grounds that the three new subjects would cater for all aspects of History.[48] The removal of History from the basic education curriculum meant that a rigorous study of the subject was lacking in the school system until a child attained the senior secondary school level. Consequently, students tended to avoid History at the senior secondary and even tertiary levels. Thus, the school system turned out people who knew little or nothing about Nigeria's past.

Also worthy of note among the pro-national unity reforms in the education sector is the National Pledge. The Pledge was entirely the initiative of Felicia Adebola Adedoyin who published it in one of the country's national dailies under the title Loyalty to the Nation Pledge.[49] At the time, Nigeria had no National Pledge and Felicia Adebola Adedoyin who was already familiar with such a policy during her schooling abroad, thought it worthwhile to sensitise the Nigerian public and government on the desirability of such a policy.[50] Her effort paid off when the then Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo on learning about it modified it, and then in September 1976

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[45]D. C. Woolman, "Educational Reconstruction and Post-Colonial Curriculum Development: A Comparative Study of Four African Countries; *International Educational Journal*, 2(5), 2001, pp. 27-46.

[46]Federal Republic of Nigeria, *National Policy on Education*, (3rd ed.) (Lagos: Nigeria Educational Research and Development, 1981), pp. 7-14.

[47]Ibid., pp. 14-18.

[48]Ibid., pp. 14-18.

[49]F. A. Adedoyin, "Loyalty to the National Pledge", *Daily Times*, 15 July, 1976, pp. 12-14.

[50]B. O. Adenekan, "Domestic Policy of Olusegun Obasanjo Regime, 1976-1979" (Unpublished B.A Project, Department of Political Science, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, 1994), pp. 27-31.

issued a decree for its adoption within the school system because of its potential to foster national unity.[51] The lyrics of the National Pledge are as follows:

> I pledge to Nigeria my country
> To be faithful, loyal and honest
> To serve Nigeria with all my strength
> To defend her Unity and uphold her
> Honour and glory.[52]

The second National Anthem of Nigeria also deserves discussion here as an instrument for forging national unity. The first anthem composed by a British expatriate, Lillian Jean Williams with the title 'Nigeria we hail thee' was adopted at independence in 1960.[53] After the civil war, the first anthem was severely criticised and agitations for it to be changed were rife. The basis of criticisms and agitations was that it was deficient in pro-unity lyrics.[54] The then government response was to hold a national competition in 1978 for the purpose of choosing the best entry.[55] At the end of the exercise, the committee chose entries from five winning contestants and fused them to make one national anthem.[56] In 1978, the second national anthem replaced the first one and has two stanzas, the first is,

> Arise, O compatriot, Nigeria's call obey
> To serve our father land
> With love and strength and faith
> The labour of our heroes past
> Shall never be in vain
> Serve with heart and might
> One nation bound in freedom, peace and unity.[57]

In the school system, the National Anthem is sung at assemblies followed by recitation of the National Pledge. Both are aimed at inculcating in children the spirit of national consciousness and patriotism in a highly plural society like Nigeria.

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[51]Federal Republic of Nigeria, *Nigerian National Anthem and Pledge,* (Lagos: Government Printer, 1918), pp. 2-3.
[52]*Daily Service*, 10 June, 1978, pp. 1-2.
[53]Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[54]B. O. Adenekan, "Domestic Policy of Olusegun Obasanjo Regime 1976-1979", pp. 40-42.
[55]Ibid., p. 42.
[56]Federal Republic of Nigeria, *Nigerian National Anthem and Pledge,* pp. 2-3.
[57]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The reforms in the education sector discussed in this article were and still are geared towards building a sense of Nigerianness in the children. Random interviews conducted by the authors with 120 school leavers between the age of 18 and 20 years, and at popular tertiary institutions in the six geo-political zones of the country, revealed that about 90% of them did not see themselves first and foremost as Nigerians but as members of their ethnic nationalities, while 10% of the interviewees indicated their Nigerian identity first, and this apparently because they were children of cross-cultural marriages, a background which makes encourages them to feel a sense of Nigerianness. A few examples can illustrate this point. For example, at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, when one was asked who he was, he said 'I am Musa Audu, a Hausa from Kano State'; another from the same University responded, 'I am Aliyu Yaro, a Fulani from Adamawa State'.[58] Similarly, at the University of Ibadan, the same question elicited the same response. One, for example, said 'I am David Alabi, a Yoruba from Ekiti State'.[59] Yet another from the University of Nigeria Nsukka, responded to the same question with, 'I am Charles Okonkwo, an Igbo from Enugu State'.[60] Interviewees of cross-cultural marriages responded to the same question differently. For example, one at the Federal University of Abuja responded to the same question as follows: 'I am Peter Eboji, a true Nigerian',[61] implying that his parents came from different ethnic backgrounds.

The outcome of the interviews would seem to suggest that the pro-unity reforms in education are not having as much impact on the school leavers as had been expected. Indeed, for most of the school leavers interviewed, the National Anthem and the Pledge were mere routine rituals within the lower school system. This is surprising after twelve years of familiarity with the reforms in the lower school system - the primary and secondary schools – where one would have expected the school leavers to be imbued with a sense of Nigerianness. The seemingly minimal impact of the reforms can be explained in terms of the effect of the ethnic and religious chauvinism prevalent in Nigerian society on the school leavers. Such societal divisive influences tend to dilute the values of national consciousness and patriotism the children are taught within the lower school system.

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[58]Musa Audu, 20years, student, interviewed in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 23 May 2019; Aliyu Yaro, 19years, student, interviewed in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 23 May 2019.

[59]David Alabi, 20years, student, interviewed in University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 10 July 2019.

[60]Charles Okonkwo, 20years, student, interviewed at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 07 July 2019.

[61]Peter Eboji, 19years, student, interviewed at University of Abuja, Abuja, 20 June 2019.

Creation of States

The creation of states began with the Gowon regime, but the need for it existed even before Nigeria's independence. In 1957, the colonial authorities set up the Willink Commission to look into the minority fears of domination by the major ethnic nationalities, namely, the Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Igbo in the East, and the Yoruba in the West.[62] After a nationwide tour, the commission confirmed the minority's fear of domination, but stopped short of recommending the creation of additional states.[63] Thus, it was that at independence Nigeria had three regions. The defunct Mid-Western Region was carved out from the then Western Region in 1963.[64] In the pre-civil war crisis, the Gowon-led military government, apparently for strategic reasons, announced on 29 May 1967 the creation of a twelve state structure and the abolition of regional government. Gowon created the twelve states partly to address the minority question and partly to secure the support of the minority groups in Biafra for Nigeria.[65]

The twelve state structure was followed by the creation of more states by subsequent military regimes. Seven, eleven and six under the Murtala Mohammed, Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha regimes in 1976, 1987, 1991, and 1996, respectively.[66] Thus bringing the number of states in the country to thirty-six. Far from putting to rest the issue of marginalisation, state creation has remained a national issue as each round of state creation has given rise to a new set of demands by ethnic groups. This has left many wondering if the creation of more states is really the solution to the vexed issue of marginalisation which tends to undermine national cohesion and stability. Also, state creation has resulted in structural imbalance within the polity as some parts of the country appear to have been favoured over others. The Igbo control five states, the Yoruba six, and Hausa-Fulani seven, while minority groups in the south and north have six each, which suggests discrimination against the Igbo [67]. Similarly, no Igbo has been president since the end of the war, even though they have been active in the political scene like other major ethnic groups which have produced presidents more than once

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[62]O. Babalola, "History of State Creation in Nigeria", *Dawn Commission*, February, 2016, 2-6, http://dawncommission.org. Accessed 12 July 12, 2019.

[63]O. Babalola, "History of State Creation in Nigeria", pp. 2-6.

[64]Ibid., pp. 2-6.

[65]Ibid., pp. 2-6; Kelvin Etta, Retired Professor, interviewed in Calabar, 10 February 2020.

[66]O. Akinwumi, "Before We Set the House Ablaze, Let Us Consult Our Oracle" (Inaugural Lecture, Keffi, Nassarawa State University, 2009), pp. 20-27.

[67]Tom Lodge, "Conflict Resolution in Nigeria after 1967-1970 Civil War," *African Studies*, 77:2018, LB, DOI:1080/20020184.2018.1432125.

since the end of the civil war. If no Igbo has been president since the end of the war, it raises a suspicion of bias as has been suggested.[68]

The criteria used by the military regimes in state creation is unknown. Assuming that population was the overriding factor in the exercise, one wonders why, for instance, the Yoruba, the demographic rival of the Igbo, have more states than the Igbo. Since states form the basis of financial allocation from the Federal Government, it does mean that the Igbo are disadvantaged. Little wonder that the Igbo have time and again called for the creation of another state in the South-East geo-political zone.[69] But such calls have often fallen on deaf ears, thereby creating a feeling of being discriminated against by the federal authorities. In a Channels Television programme, John Nwodo expressed this sentiment bluntly when he asked 'how can you achieve national integration when a segment of the country, the Igbo, are discriminated against in virtually all spheres of our national life?[70] It should be noted that discrimination in any form is not conducive to national unity.[71] The discussion of state creation suggests that the Igbo are yet to be genuinely re-integrated into Nigeria. We now proceed to examine National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme and National Unity
The NYSC Scheme was initiated by the administration of Yakubu Gowon as part of its measures to forge national unity after the civil war. The scheme was established in 1973 for the promotion of national unity and the development of Nigerian youth and Nigeria into a great and dynamic economy. The scheme entails the young graduates of tertiary institutions below the age of 30 years compulsorily serving in states other than their own for one year. Inter-tribal marriages and other forms of social interaction amongst NYSC members speak to the 'usefulness of the scheme as a

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[68]J. D. Smith, *A Culture of Corruption: Everybody Deception and Population Discontent in Nigeria*, (New Jersey: Princeton University, 2010), p. 21; and A. Amadi & Mai-Bornu, "Democracy, Separatist Agitation and Militarised State: Repose in South East Nigeria", *Review of African Political Economy,* DOI:10.10801030562442023.2174846.
[69]C. Oputa, *Human Right Investigation Commission of Nigeria, Report,* Vol. 3, 2002, 55758 http://www.nigerianmuse.com/nigeriawatchpoputal. Accessed 21 September 2024; see also John Nwodo, President General of *OhanaezeNdigbo*, Igob Socio-Cultural Association called for restructuring of Nigeria which includes state creation on Channels Television on Monday, 7 October, 2019.
[70]John Nwodo.
[71]Abba Moro, 63years, Senator, interviewed in Abuja, 21 January 2021; Victor Ndoma-Egba, 65years, former Senator, interviewed in Abuja, 15 January 2021.

vehicle for national unity'.[72] Although the circumstances and realities of today's Nigeria such as some corps members influencing their posting to states of their own choice and joining the scheme with faked academic credentials, but with insecurity and unemployment conspiring to dilute the essence of the scheme at inception, the spirit of the programme remains alive and well.[73] The next measure to consider in government efforts to forge national unity is the federal character principle.

Federal Character Principle

One of the strategies adopted by government after the civil war was the enshrinement of the Federal Character Principle (FCP) in Nigeria's 1979 and 1999 Constitutions.[74] In keeping with the FCP:

> The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner to reflect Federal Character of Nigeria, and the need to promote national unity and also command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall not be predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies'.[75]

To drive the FCP, an organisation called the Federal Character Commission was established in 1996.[76] The Federal Character Commission works out an equitable formula, subject to the approval of the President of Nigeria for the distribution of all cadres of posts in the civil and public service of the Federation and states, the armed forces, the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies and corporate bodies owned by the federal and state governments.[77]

As laudable as the federal character policy appears, it has been observed that there exists a wide gap between intent and practice. P.O. Okolo, for instance, notes that the appointments made under late President Umaru Musa Yar-Adua reignited the perception about the applicability of FCP because the appointments tended to tilt in

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[72]Brigadier General Shuaibu Ibrahim, 47 years, Director General of National Youth Service Corps, interviewed in Abuja, 16 December 2019. Also, there is a general belief among Nigerians that the scheme is a veritable tool for forging national unity.
[73]Brigadier General Shuaibu Ibrahim.
[74]The *1979 Constitution and 1999 Constitutions*.
[75]Ibid., Section 14, sub-section 3 of the *1999 Constitution*
[76]H. Shinkafi, 56 years, Acting Executive Chairman, Federal Character Commission, interviewed in Abuja, 15 December 2019. See also, Federal Character Commission, *Handbook*, (Lagos: Government Printer, 1918), pp. 2-5.
[77]Ibid., p. 3.

favour of a particular section of the country namely, the northern segment.[78] The same is true of the Muhammadu Buhari-led administration whose appointments were largely pro-north.[79] Based on these claims, it would appear that Nigeria has not been consistent in the enforcement of the policy. The FCP like other pro-unity measures are formal in nature; but there are also informal measures that foster national unity.

Informal Pro-Unity Measures
Apart from the policies adopted by successive Nigerian leaders since the end of the civil war to strengthen the federation and prevent a repetition of secession, there have also been informal ways of conflict management. One such informal approach is presidential rotation whereby the leadership of the country rotates between the northern and southern segments every eight years.[80] Since the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, attempts have been made to uphold the principle beginning with the second presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, a Yoruba southerner, followed by Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, a Fulani northerner. However, Yar'Adua died before completing his first term and was succeeded by Goodluck Jonathan, an Ijo southerner and Vice President at that time.

Goodluck Jonathan ruled for a term of four years to complete Yar'Adua's four years, and handed over power to President Muhammadu Buhari, a Fulani northerner who ruled for eight years. In keeping with the rotational principle, we now know where the seat of power went in the south, as presidential elections were held over a year ago. It is noteworthy that no Igbo southerner has been president since the end of the civil war.[81] There fact that the rotation principle has not constitutionally been sanctioned, makes it more susceptible to manipulation. [82]

The funeral of Odumegwu Ojukwu, the former Biafran leader, provided yet another opportunity for the Nigerian leadership to explore an informal way of managing conflict. The event came on 12 March 2012, at Nnewi, during the Presidency of

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[78]P. O. Okolo, "Influence of the Federal Character Principle on National Integration in Nigeria", *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, Vol. 4, No. 6, June (2014) pp. 121-132.

[79]Tom Lodge, "Conflict Resolution in Nigeria after 1967-1970 Civil War," p.15.

[80]C. O. Udeh, O. O. Augustine & O. E. Chris-Santus, *International Journal of Innovative Legal and Political Studies*, 11 (2), April-June, pp. 59-72.

[81]The narrative on presidential rotation is based on the knowledge and observation of the happenings in Nigeria by the writers of this article.

[82]Mathias Ogbonna, 82 years, Retired School Teacher, interviewed in Umuahia, 8 December 2019; H Yerima, M. Ibrahim and I. Terwase, "Peace and Conflict Resolution: Agitation and Zoning of Presidency in Nigeria". *Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6 (2), 2016, pp. 167-171.

Goodluck Jonathan.[83] Ojukwu was accorded a state funeral attended by dignitaries from across the country including President Goodluck Jonathan, several members of the then federal executive council, the Governors of the South East and South-South geo-political zones, and the Nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka.[84] Ojukwu's state funeral and the attendance of high profile dignitaries including Goodluck Jonathan from across the country were a positive gesture of reconciliation.

The approaches to conflict management since the end of the civil war relate to both military and democratic regimes. There has been a difference in approach between the two regimes. Military regimes institutionalise policies and programmes initiated by them with appropriate legal backing. This has not been the case with approaches by democratic regimes. Indeed, the democratic regimes approaches have, so far, remained informal. How can this difference between the two approaches be explained? One explanation may be the military operating a command structure approach to governance during their incursions into politics. In such a structure, the commander, in this case the Head of State, has a wide latitude to make things happen with little or no delay. The adoption of this form of governance may account for the legal backing given to all the policies initiated under military regimes.

Democratic regimes, on the other hand, are by their nature subject to lengthy processes of legislation, even if the president has a military background. And in a country as factionalised, on ethnic and religious grounds, as Nigeria, it is hard for federal legislators to reach consensus on sensitive national issues. It could also be argued that since the military regimes approaches were initiated by war veterans who know what war entails, the military leaders would be more committed to the sustainability of policies that would prevent a recurrence of war. Federal legislators, most of whom have no military background, may not have the same level of commitment to peace as military leaders. Moreover, a large proportion of the federal legislators were not even born, or at best were in their infancy during the civil war, and have no familiarity with the history of Nigeria due to the relegation of the teaching of History into the background within the school system.[85] For close to four decades, as noted earlier, they would not appreciate the necessity for the kind of legislation that fosters national unity and would prevent a repetition of secession. These informal measures supplement formal pro-unity measures. But to what extent have these

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[83]Fidelis Mbah, BBC News, "Report on Ojukwu Funeral", 2 March, 2012; and Tony Edike, "Ojukwu Funeral," *Vanguard*, 2 March, 2021, p.1.
[84]Tony Dike, I; B. Anosike 79years, Retired Civil Servant, interviewed in Nnewi, 18 December 2019.
[85]O. E. Tangban, "History and the Quest for Unity in Nigeria", *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, Vol. 4, No. 5 (2014), p. 379.

measures impacted Igbo re-integration and national unity? The answer to this question lies in an examination of recent social and political environment.

Recent Social and Political Environment in Nigeria
A close look at the recent socio-political environment of the country indicates some of the pre-civil war conditions. For one thing, ethnically and regionally aligned political parties dominate the political landscape despite attempts at forming a few parties with a semblance of a national outlook. During the Second Republic, 1979-83, for example, political parties that emerged were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) whose stronghold was in the North; Nigeria's National People's Party (NPP) seen as an Eastern Nigeria Party though it had some support in Plateau and Rivers States as well as Lagos; and the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) which was dominant in Western Nigeria and had an ethnic leaning.[86] This trend of ethnic and regional-based politics has continued since the Second Republic. Also, ethnic chauvinism has continued to rear its ugly head in almost every sensitive national issue in the post-war period. For example, such issues as national census, control of power at the centre and the restructuring of the country have caused intense ethnic rivalry within the country.[87] Unlike the pre-civil war era, this post-war ethnic rivalry has given rise to ethnic militias and pressure groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in south-eastern Nigeria, the *Odua* People Congress (OPC) in South-western Nigeria, and the *Arewa* Youth Movement (AYM), a pressure group, in the north.[88] These ethnic militias and pressure group see themselves either as the military wings of, or as the mouthpiece for the ethnic groups or region they represent.[89] There are also frequent cases of militancy in the Niger Delta, and ethno-religious and farmer/herder conflicts across the country in the post-war period.[90] However, some of these centrifugal forces like the militancy in the Niger Delta, the farmer/herder tension, and ethno-religious conflicts are unrelated to the war.

For the Igbo, the post-war era has been a period of frustration arising partly from poor implementation of the 3Rs policy and partly from discrimination against them with respect to sensitive national issues. As one of the authors' respondents aptly put it, 'we are back in Nigeria today after the failed secessionist bid only to be treated like second class citizens contrary to assurances of fair treatment at the end of the war; it

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[86]Joseph Wayes, 79 years, Former President of the Senate in the Second Republic (1979-83), interviewed in Abuja, 12 December 2019.
[87]Joseph Wayas.
[88]O. E. Tangban, "History and the Quest for Unity in Nigeria", p. 374.
[89]Ibid., p. 374.
[90]A. N. Thomas, *Beyond Platitude of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation*, p.56.

pains'.[91] Many Igbo share this feeling. Some are even of the view that the resurgence of Biafra agitation is due in part to the mismanagement of the Gowon's 3Rs policy.[92]

This renewed Biafra agitation has hurt peace and security in south-eastern Nigeria with cases of kidnapping and even killing.[93] It is hard to say when and how the agitation will end in the absence of concrete political efforts, beyond a kinetic security approach by government that address their concerns. Amidst this agitation, there is a semblance of peace in the country, provided one overlooks threats such as terrorism, insurgency, banditry, militancy and farmer/herder conflicts that are unrelated to the civil war and are, therefore, not discussed in this article. Some of the post-civil war events suggest a replication of the issues that played out in the pre-civil war era, and which threatened the unity of the country.

Nigeria's post-civil war experience seems to suggest parallels to post-war reconciliation in Rwanda. In Rwanda, it has been observed that government has made considerable progress towards promoting ethnic harmony and national unity, but 'ethnic prejudice, mistrust, perceived and real discrimination continue to plague the country and hence the possibility of relapsing into violence remains real'.[94] This claim suggests that in Rwanda, both in principle and practice, government is giving ethnic nationalities therein a sense of belonging even though on inter-group relations, unspoken animosity persists. In Nigeria, however, there seems to be a disparity between government intent and practice in reconciliation. Thus, the Igbo, for example, are yet to be truly re-integrated as the discussion above indicates. Also, as in the pre-conflict era, ethnic and religious chauvinism persists in Nigeria's post-war period leaving many wondering if Nigerians have learned any lessons from the civil war.

Conclusion
This paper has examined Nigeria in the fifty years after the end of the civil war. The war resulted from many factors including ethnic and religious chauvinism, ethnic-based polities and so on. The war was fought in five phases resulting in huge damage to lives and property including public infrastructure. The end of hostilities ushered in a period of attempts by successive governments at re-integrating the Igbo and other Easterners, and fostering an overall national unity. First was the Gowon's 3Rs policy aimed at re-integrating the Igbo. Though laudable in intent, the implementation of the 3Rs policy

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[91]Patrick Ndukwe, 79 years, Retired Civil Servant, interviewed in Abakaliki, 17 January 2020.

[92]The *Guardian*, "Failure of Gowon'S Three Rs, Cause of Separatist Groups", 08 June, 2017, pp.1-2.

[93]James Anosike, 56 years, President Nigerian Union of Journalists, Enugu Chapter, interviewed in Enugu, 18 November 2020.

[94]Ervin Staub, "Challenging Road to Reconciliation in Rwanda," p. 294.

was poor. The other measures include reforms in education, the National Youth Service Corps Scheme, the Federal Character Principle, and the creation of additional. These measures have potential for fostering national unity if they are properly implemented, but there have been challenges with their implementation resulting in some groups notably the Igbo being discriminated against. Also, there is the problem of negative societal influences which tend to dilute the positive impact of some of the measures on national unity. Some of the events in the post-war era suggest replicas of the forces of disunity which contributed to outbreak of the civil war. Finally, an unquestionable commitment to patriotism, and national unity by successive leaders is seen as the only viable option to avoid a repetition of secession.

Astonishingly Accurate British Intelligence in the American War of Independence

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ABSTRACT

An unsigned, undated document among the General Sir Henry Clinton Papers at the University of Michigan William C. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan, demonstrates that the British possessed remarkable, accurate intelligence on the Continental Army's order of battle and command structure. Curiously, Crown officers added derogatory nicknames denoting their understanding of the senior Rebel generals' predominant character traits. Neither the senior general assessments nor the command structure intelligence led to sustainable battlefield advantages. Still, it aided unit identification during General Howe's Spring 1777 New Jersey campaign and may have contributed to the British victory at Brandywine later that year.

Introduction

Despite Commander-in-Chief George Washington's attempts to sustain operational security, British generals possessed timely, accurate, and actionable intelligence on the composition and leadership of the main Continental Army before the 1777 campaign season. Embedded in the purloined Continental Army information were scornful but potentially insightful characterisations of the most senior Rebel generals. An undated document in the General Sir Henry Clinton Papers at the William C. Clements Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan, contains the fruits of British espionage. The report demonstrates the British Army's remarkable intelligence-gathering prowess as its generals planned their summer attacks.[1]

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[1]*William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan*. Sir Henry Clinton Papers. Vol. 29, folio 31, Undated and uninscribed Military Intelligence.

The one-page undated manuscript documents the main Continental Army's order of battle, including forty-four regiments, arranged in ten brigades and five divisions of Washington's main army without noting sources or a transmittal letter. Soldiers from the middle and Chesapeake colonies comprise the Rebel forces, including regiments from Virginia (17), Maryland (7), Delaware (1), Pennsylvania (14), and New Jersey (5).

State	Number of Regiments	Number of Brigades	Number of Divisions	Notes
Virginia	17	4	2	
Maryland/Delaware	8	2	1	
Pennsylvania	14	3	1	
New Jersey	5	1	1	Division Includes 5 PA regiments
Total	44	10	5	

Figure 1: Continental Army Organisation and State Composition[2]

Colonels led regiments, brigadier generals directed four to five regiments in a brigade, and major generals commanded two brigades. The intelligence has minor gaps, including two unnamed brigade commanders. However, the remaining brigade and division commanders are correctly named.

The intelligence is not in Clinton's handwriting but a secretary's script. The uninscribed and undated document raises several key questions: Why was it important? When was it written? What were the sources? How accurate is the intelligence? Were the characterisations of the senior American generals accurate and valuable to the British commanders? Was the information advantageous?

In 1776, British Commander-in-chief General William Howe thoroughly thrashed the Rebel armies in a successful campaign to capture the strategic New York City and its vital harbour. Faced with the need to reconstitute the Continental Army, the Continental Congress recruited replacement soldiers and named six new major generals and sixteen brigadier generals. As Howe faced a new foe, he needed accurate intelligence on the opposition's command structure and leadership. While found in a second-in-command's files, it is implausible that such a valuable document would not have been shared with Howe. Therefore, the document found among General Clinton's papers likely provided critical intelligence in planning and conducting the 1777 campaign.

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[2] *William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.*

The American brigadier and major general commissioning dates establish a timeline for drafting the British view of the Continental Army's organisation and leadership. Thomas Conway joined the Continental Army on 13 May 1777, and Washington ordered Benjamin Lincoln to join the Northern Army on 24 July 1777.[3] Therefore, based on the promotion and commissioning dates, a British secretary likely drafted the document between 13 May 1777 and 24 July 1777.

On 21 May 1777, Washington completed a reorganisation of his forces and sent a secure communication to John Hancock, the Congressional President, with a copy of his new order of battle and command structure. Washington adds a telling postscript,

> I need not suggest to Congress the necessity of keeping our Numbers concealed from the knowledge of the public. Nothing but Good face & false appearances have enabled us hitherto to deceive the Enemy respecting our Strength.[4]

Washington appended to the Hancock correspondence a detailed chart of the order of battle, leadership of each unit, and number of soldiers. He issued a general order informing the army of the new command arrangement a day later.

Despite Washington's warnings, it is possible that ranging British units intercepted the letter or that an informant obtained the information from a Congressional source. The British intelligence information is written in the exact order as Washington's 21 May 1777 enclosure to Congress and portrays the regiments, brigades, and divisions and their associated commanders. However, there are notable differences. The British intelligence lacks the regimental troop levels and the names of the two brigadiers commanding the Maryland line. Additionally, the British believe that Hazen's Canadian Regiment was attached to the Maryland line, but Washington's order assigns them to Brigadier General Peter Muhlenberg' Virginia regiments. Spencer's Additional Regiment is connected to the New Jersey Line versus Washington's placement with the Pennsylvania troops. Despite these minor command structure exceptions, the British intelligence information is remarkably accurate and could be helpful on the battlefield. However, the Washington-Hancock correspondence is not likely the intelligence source as the British document lacks troop strengths, which certainly would have been added to the British intelligence if available.

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[3]George Washington et al., *The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), Vol. 10, p. 385.
[4]Washington et al., *The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series*, Vol. 9, pp. 491–93.

Other high-probability British intelligence sourcing alternatives are not dispositive. Major General Charles Lee, a Crown prisoner who was socially active among the British officer corps, could have been a source as he possessed intimate knowledge of the Continental Army at the time of his capture. Some historians labelled Lee a traitor for drafting a purported plan for the British to win the war, and one might think he was an intelligence source. However, the British could not have obtained the highly sensitive information from Lee, as he became a captive before Major General Benjamin Lincoln transitioned from the Massachusetts militia to the Continental Army and did not know about the units assigned to the new major general. Another possibility is that the Rebel troop dispositions were among Lincoln's military papers garnered by the British in a Bound Brook, New Jersey raid. Nathanael Greene described the loss: 'This is a great misfortune as it will inform the Enemy of many disagreeable circumstances.'[5] Lincoln's captured correspondence could have contributed to the development of the British document. Still, intelligence analysts would have to gather additional information, such as Thomas Conway's new appointment, who appeared on the British document but had not joined the Continental Army before the New Jersey raid. Additionally, Washington did not finalise his order of battle and leadership reorganisation until a month after the Bound Brook skirmish. As with most eighteenth-century intelligence, discerning secretive sources is challenging due to the lack of contemporary documentation.

Intelligence reports, especially those detailing military units, are typically dry, matter-of-fact, and without humour or witticisms. Curiously, the British intelligence officers added derisive or cutesy nicknames for the five major generals, Lord Stirling (William Alexander), Benjamin Lincoln, Adam Stephen, John Sullivan, and Nathanael Greene, while simply listing the last names of the brigadiers and colonels.[6] Although seemingly frivolous, the nicknames might provide British commanders insights into the perceived battlefield actions and leadership capabilities of the Rebel generals.

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[5]US National Archives, *Founders Online,* "To John Adams from Nathanael Greene, 13 April 1777, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-05-02-0087. Accessed 19 January 2025. [Original source: *The Adams Papers*, Papers of John Adams, vol. 5, *August 1776–March 1778*, ed. Robert J. Taylor. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, pp. 152–153.]

[6]While William Alexander's claim to a Lordship is dubious, commanders on both sides referred to him as Lord Stirling. The remainder of this paper will follow the convention of his peers and the British intelligence document and refer to William Alexander as Lord Stirling. For an example of a contemporaneous appellation, see Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782 with an Appendix of Original Documents*, ed. William D Wilcox (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 24.

The characterisation of Lord Stirling as drunken is the most derogatory and potentially the most insightful assessment. Lord Stirling's prodigious alcohol consumption was well-known among associates and the British military. While a captive after the 1776 Battle of Brooklyn, Lord Stirling dined with William and Admiral Richard Howe, who witnessed his alcohol consumption personally. Primarily due to his over-imbibing, the self-purported Lord would not live to celebrate the war's end in 1783. While correctly characterising Lord Stirling's guzzling habits, the British don't mention the heavy drinking of two other major generals: Virginian and Washington critic Adam Stephen would be dismissed from the Continental Service a few months later for being drunk on the Germantown battlefield; and John Sullivan would survive the war but also die of alcoholism at an early age.[7]

British intelligence labelled newly commissioned Major General Benjamin Lincoln 'Lincoln So, So.' The sole British combat experience with Lincoln was a lopsided raid on his exposed position at Bound Brook, New Jersey. Rebel sentries failed to alert Lincoln's command of the attacking British, and only his quick thinking saved his unit from being overwhelmed. However, the Grenadier Lieutenant John Peebles characterised the action as a rout,

> The light infantry and jaegers drove them [Rebel picquets] with precipitation…and they took to their heels as many as could get off … their Genl. Lincoln escaped very narrowly.[8]

Lincoln's inability to detect the attacking British and organise an effective defence may have led to the 'So, So' characterisation.

British intelligence officers added a generational spin in coining appellations for the three remaining major generals. In the intelligence document, the British referred to Adam Stephen as 'Granny Stephen', the oldest among the commanding generals. While Stephen was fifty-nine and twenty-five years older than Nathanael Greene, there is no contemporary evidence that the people regarded the Virginian as limited due to his age. Furthermore, British generals had first-hand experiences with Stephen, he

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[7]Reports that Adam Stephen, an intrepid veteran of numerous battles and skirmishes dating back to the French and Indian War (1756-1763), was drunk on the Germantown battlefield should be taken with a grain of salt. Washington disliked Stephen from before the war and distrusted his battlefield judgment. Unlike confirmed alcoholics John Sullivan and Lord Stirling, Stephen led a highly productive post-war life, founding Martinsburg, West Virginia, and living to the age of seventy-three.

[8]John Peebles and Ira D. Gruber, *John Peebles' American War: The Diary of a Scottish Grenadier, 1776-1782*, 1st ed, Publications of the Army Records Society, vol. 13, (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998), p. 109.

exchanged testy letters with Brigadier General William Erskine over alleged British brutalities against a wounded officer, which should have directly informed the British about his backbone and assertiveness.[9] Three months later, Stephen attacked a British outpost at Piscataway, New Jersey, demonstrating an uncommon aggressiveness without Washington's approval. While daring, the British viewed the attack as a complete failure. A Hessian officer observed 'a disorderly attack' in which the Americans continually exposed either their right or their left flanks' and had to 'fall back with great loss.'[10] This action tarnished the British view of Stephen. Still, no opposing officer belittled him as a granny. Stephen's authoritative biographer describes him with non-geriatric terms such as outspoken, reckless, flamboyant, creative, exhibiting probative views and having an odd intellectual flair.[11] These traits do not comport with meaningful age-related physical or intellectual declines. The British likely referred to Stephen as granny simply due to his relatively old age.

Next in the generational line is John Sullivan, who the intelligence report labels 'Mother Sullivan.' British commanders possessed first-hand knowledge of Sullivan's personality and abilities, having captured him during the Battle of Brooklyn in August 1776. A Hessian colonel concluded with high praise that Sullivan was a 'man of genius.'[12] Later, Howe convinced a naive Sullivan that he could find a peaceful solution to the conflict if Sullivan would transmit his intentions to Washington and Congress. Accepting Howe's proposition, Sullivan agreed to carry a peace conference offer to Congress in exchange for parole. While the British commanders may have believed that Sullivan was gullible and easily influenced, there is no surviving record that they thought he exhibited any maternal traits.

Nathanael Greene is the last in the family trilogy, whose British intelligence appellation was most likely 'puppy'. Greene was the youngest of the group at thirty-four, and one of the least experienced generals. However, the handwriting is indistinct and appears only to have a single p as shown below)

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[9]Letter from George Washington to John Hancock, February 5, 1777, George Washington et al., *The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), Vol. 8, pp. 249–53.
[10]Harry M Ward, *Major General Adam Stephen and the Cause of American Liberty* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), p. 169.
[11]Ward, p. 245.
[12]Charles P. Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution - John Sullivan of New Hampshire* (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 40.
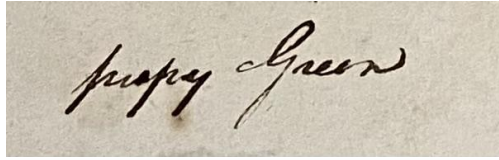
Figure 2: Signature of Nathaniel 'pupy' Greene.[13]

There are several alternative interpretations. such as husky, frisky, or fishy, but each of these suffers from a k and h not cursively going below the line. Another option is limpy, as Greene had a deformed leg, but the third to last letter does not appear to be an m. A more probable clue might be that people uttered puppy to insult one another in the Revolutionary Era, as historian Joanne B. Freeman has demonstrated.[14] Further, the British observed Greene's sophomoric generalship, including his failure to plan the defence of Brooklyn properly and for leaving soldiers stranded at Fort Washington to be killed or captured. Therefore, given the context, the puppy interpretation makes the most sense.[15]

Perhaps the British intelligence officers omitted the most striking observations that the American generals lacked military acumen and were unproven. Only Stephen possessed any pre-war combat experience, albeit on a small scale. All the Rebel generals were new to their responsibilities and commands, having served less than one year, Congress had appointed most of them to their current positions within the last few months, and only John Sullivan and Nathanael Greene had been in their commands since the previous summer. Despite Sullivan's and Lord Stirling's first taste of large-scale combat during the battle of Brooklyn, it was an untested group that the British dubbed with derisive nicknames.[16]

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[13]University of Michigan William C. Clements Library.

[14]Joanne B. Freeman, *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018), p. xvi.

[15]The author wishes to thank Leif Ulstrup for assistance with an AI chatbot, which pointed to 'puppy' as the most correct interpretation, and to historians Joanne B. Freeman, Kiersten Marcil, Andrew Wehrman, Matthew Fockler, and Salina B. Baker for handwriting analysis and interpretative suggestions.

[16]On 19 February 1777, Congress commissioned Major Generals Lord Stirling, Adam Stephen, and Benjamin Lincoln, and John Sullivan and Nathanael Greene on August 9, 1776. Congress commissioned five Brigadier Generals on 21 February 1777, including George Weeden, Peter Muhlenberg, William Woodford, John Philip De Haas, and Anthony Wayne. The other three Brigadier Generals were all commissioned in their roles less than a year prior, William Maxwell (23 October 1776 ?? October), Charles Scott (1 April 1777), and Thomas Conway (13 May 1777).

There is evidence that General Howe, based in New York City, utilised this highly accurate picture of the Continental Army's order of battle and leadership structure during the initial stages of his 1777 summer campaign. Howe attempted to lure Washington from his fortified camp in the New Jersey hills into a general action by invading the former colony's Raritan Valley and threatening Philadelphia. Washington failed to take the bait but sent a division to harass the British retreat to New York. On June 26 Howe ordered two columns to attack the probing Rebels.[17] In a dispatch to Lord George Germain, Howe correctly identifies the advance guard divisional commander as Lord Stirling, along with two battalion commanders, William Maxwell and Thomas Conway. The inclusion of Conway is notable because the British had never encountered the recently arrived former French Army officer before this skirmish and would not have been able to identify him on the battlefield visually. During their time in New Jersey, the British reportedly captured three brass cannons, killed sixty-three officers and soldiers, and wounded or captured two hundred more.[18] Howe's after-action report demonstrates that the British accurately understood a portion of the most recent Continental Army's structure, supporting the assertion that the intelligence document in General Clinton's files was actionable and valuable[19].

By June 30 Howe had returned to New York City, and Clinton arrived there on 5 July 1777 and assumed command of New York's defence after Howe sailed with an invasion fleet to attack Philadelphia later that month.[20] Howe likely provided Clinton with the Rebel command intelligence document as part of a garrison turnover process and retained a copy to assist in the campaign to capture the Rebel capital. Howe's decision to travel by sea and the Chesapeake Bay and attack Philadelphia from the south was controversial. The British general believed the only way to end the rebellion was to lure Washington's army into battle to protect the Rebel capital. Once he destroyed Washington's army and captured Philadelphia, Howe believed the rebellion would subside. The implication of this decision was to not support British General John Burgoyne's plan to invade from Canada cutting off New England from the other colonies by capturing the vital Hudson Valley. As a result, Howe landed his forces at

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[17]Ira D Gruber, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N.C: The University of North Carolina Press, 1972), pp. 227-30.

[18]Washington's report to President John Hancock confirms Lord Stirling's skirmish with the British but minimises the Rebel losses. George Washington et al., *The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), vol x, pp. 137-38.

[19]William Howe to Lord George Germain, 5 July 1777, K. G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783: Colonial Office Series,* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972), vol. xiv, pp. 127-29.

[20]Henry Clinton, p. 61.

the Head of Elk at the top of Chesapeake Bay and commenced an attack towards Philadelphia.[21]

As with any intelligence, its usefulness degrades over time, and Howe opposed a slightly modified organisation in the Philadelphia campaign. By the time of the opening battle, the Rebel command structure had changed with Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, replacing Lincoln, whom Washington ordered to support the Northern Army under Major General Horatio Gates. Additionally, Washington created a light infantry brigade under the command of Brigadier General William Maxwell and a North Carolina Brigade joined the main army before the Brandywine battle.[22] While potentially helpful, no British officer referenced an understanding of the Rebel army's command structure or order of battle in journals or accounts of the campaign's major clash at Brandywine Creek in September 1777.[23] Omitting intelligence sources from battlefield correspondence to protect the data-gathering operation is not unusual.

Augmenting his command structure intelligence, Howe employed accurate geographic intelligence provided by friendly residents to cross an undefended ford, launching a surprise attack on the American right flank. British forces brilliantly executed a left hook, assaulting the Rebels from an unexpected direction, rolling up the Rebel lines from the side and advancing to their rears. Despite being caught off guard and outflanked, none of the Continental Army's major generals lived up to their British nicknames in the battle.[24] Some observers criticised Sullivan, who faced the initial fury, for incoherently leading his forces. However, most participants credit him for making

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[21]For the most recent scholarship on the 1777 Philadelphia campaign see, Gary Ecelbarger, *George Washington's Momentous Year: Twelve Months That Transformed the Revolution, Vol. I: The Philadelphia Campaign, July to December 1777*, 1st ed, (Chicago: Westholme Publishing, 2024).

[22]For a detailed Continental Army Order of Battle for the Brandywine Battle, Michael C. Harris, *Brandywine: A Military History of the Battle That Lost Philadelphia but Saved America, September 11, 1777,* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2014), pp. 405–10.

[23]William Howe to Lord George Germain, 10 October 1777, Wilhelm Knyphausen to Lord George Germain, 21 October 1777, K. G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783: Colonial Office Series,* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972), vol.xiv : pp. 202-209, pp. 238-241.

[24]While not mentioning the major generals by name, Captain Friedrich von Muenchhausen, aide de camp to General Howe, assessed that 'Washington executed a masterpiece of strategy .... All this done with great speed and good especially good order' in Levin Friedrich Ernst Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side 1776-1778*, ed. Ernst Kipping and Samuel Stelle Smith, (Monmouth Beach, N.J: Philip Freneau Press, 1974), p. 31.

the most of his position despite facing the unexpected British flank attack.[25] On the other hand, British and American battle participants gave Greene's division high marks, and later historians cited the Rhode Island general's quick-thinking and courageous stand against superior forces, as facilitating the Continental Army's unmolested retreat.[26] The divisions under the command of the generational trio and the drunk acquitted themselves with honour in defending against the British general's masterful flanking manoeuvre, which caught Washington unprepared.

Howe's Philadelphia campaign illustrates that intelligence gathering and confirmation were never-ending. The British were fortunate to capture a document outlining the Continental Army order of battle from a fallen Rebel officer during the Brandywine battle. British commanders learned the missing brigade commander names of John Sullivan's division and several other, admittedly negligible, changes. The new document essentially confirmed the British intelligence gathered before the campaign commenced. Additionally, the captured document estimated that there were 12,900 soldiers in the Continental Army, a figure Washington desperately sought to keep from the British generals.[27]

Unfortunately, a nineteenth century fire destroyed Howe's military and personal papers before any scholarly review and publication.[28] As a result, the 1777 document is one of the few pieces of extant intelligence to interpret Howe's military strategy

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[25]For a historiographic view of John Sullivan's Brandywine Battlefield performance, Michael C. Harris, *Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-78,* (Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers, 2023), pp. 296–98, pp. 415–27.

[26]For a British perspective, Peebles and Gruber, *John Peebles' American War*, 133. G. D. Scull, James Gabriel Montresor, and John Montresor, *The Montresor Journals*, Collections of the New-York Historical Society .... 1881. Publication Fund Series.[v. 14] pp. xiv, p. 578. ([New York: Printed for the Society, 1882), p. 417, //catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000012843. Accessed 20 January 2025. For a Rebel perspective, James McMichael, "Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, of the Pennsylvania Line, 1776-1778," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16, no. 2 (1892): 129–59, p. 150, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20083473. Accessed 20 January 2025. For a historian's perspective, 'His [Greene's] skill and valour…enabled the rest of the Republican army to get safe away ….' G.O. Trevelyan, *Saratoga and Brandywine. Valley Forge. England and France at War*, vol. III, American Revolution (Longmans, Green, 1922), p. 232 https://books.google.com/books?id=D7UtAQAAIAAJ. Accessed 20 January 2025.

[27]James Gabriel Montrésor and John Montrésor, p. 518.

[28]Julie Flavell, *The Howe Dynasty: The Untold Story of a Military Family and the Women behind Britain's Wars for America*, First edition (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2021), p. 3.

and battlefield leadership. While preserved in General Clinton's papers, it is hard to believe that Clinton or his secretaries would have withheld this vital information from the Commander's purview. As a result, Howe's knowledge of Washington's army likely provided extra confidence in campaign planning, aided unit identification during battle, and highlighted opposing generals' character flaws or other exploitable weaknesses. The British commander was confident enough in his understanding of Rebel adversaries to conduct a bold incursion into New Jersey and execute a risky flanking manoeuvre at the Brandywine battle. Despite possessing precise intelligence, the British officers were not counting on such inexperienced Rebel generals to command so successfully against a professionally led army. Actionable and accurate leadership and force composition intelligence are necessary and often decisive, but other factors can trump even the most reliable information about the enemy.

The Composition of Army Rum, 1917

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ABSTRACT
The composition of Royal Navy rum is not only a subject of commercial importance but has been the subject of serious examination both online and in a monograph dealing with the history of rum in that service. The composition of British Army rum, on the other hand, has not been seriously examined due to a lack of suitable source material. Using lists drawn up by the Port of London Authority in 1917, a detailed breakdown of the component rums, by place of origin, of the Army's blend is now possible, confirming the impressions of contemporaries that it was not the same as that of the Navy.

The exact composition of the Royal Navy's former rum is considered commercial in confidence, having been acquired by a firm responsible for a well-known brand of 'British Navy' rum in 1979.[1] That said, it is no secret that in 1966, four years before the end of the Navy's daily rum issue, the blend was reported to be 60% from Demerara (British Guiana), 30% from Trinidad, and the remaining 10% from Barbados and Australia.[2] Conspicuously absent from the blend was rum from Jamaica. The reasons given in Parliament in 1933 for its exclusion were cost – it would only be

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[1]James Pack, *Nelson's Blood: The Story of Naval Rum* (Homewell: Kenneth Mason, 1982), p. 128; Matt Pietrek, 'A (Non-)History of Jamaica in British Navy Rum', Cocktail Wonk, 19 May 2020 https://cocktailwonk.com/2020/05/non-history-of-jamaica-in-british-navy-rum.html. Accessed 5 August 2024.
[2]On the composition of the Navy's rum, see Pietrek, '(Non-)History', citing *The Royal William Victualling Yard in Plymouth*, 1966, news film, 8 min., https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-the-royal-william-victualling-yard-in-plymouth-1966-online?play-film. Accessed 20 January 2025. (not viewable outside of the United Kingdom). Pack, understandably chary, provides an older, somewhat different blend (*Nelson's Blood*, p. 86). On the cessation of the rum issue, see Pack, *Nelson's Blood*, pp. 110-120; Richard Moore, '"We Are a Modern Navy": Abolishing the Royal Navy's Rum Ration', *Mariner's Mirror*, 103, 1 (February 2017), pp. 67-79.

considered 'when price permits' – as well as 'owing to its not being liked by men in the Navy'.[3]

The statement about the prohibitive cost of Jamaican rum relative to that from Demerara had also been true during much of the First World War. Market summaries published in the fortnightly *West India Committee Circular*, a trade journal for British West Indian planters that followed the rum trade closely throughout the war, demonstrate that up to 1917 the price of Jamaican was consistently higher than that of Demerara, sometimes fetching as much as double, or even more.[4] Given that the cost of the Jamaican product was cited as a factor in its exclusion from the Navy's rum blend, all the more should it have been kept out of the Army's supply in view of the much greater personnel strength of the latter service.[5] Nevertheless, indications of a Jamaican origin for Army rum are not hard to find. It was widely believed in Canadian veterans' circles that the rum was Jamaican, so much so, in fact, that the Jamaican firm of Myers's advertised its product to them on precisely that basis.[6] A particularly

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[3]Hansard, HC vol. 274, cols 983-984 (15 February 1933); Pietrek, '(Non-)History'. It may be suspected that cost was the real reason, with the notion that Royal Navy personnel disliked Jamaican rum – but that one only! – a rationalisation post facto.

[4]The *Circular* is available for free download, although not all years are represented, at https://westindiacommittee.org/historyheritageculture/archive/west-india-committee-circulars/. Accessed 20 January 2025. On the price differential between Demerara and Jamaican, see, for example, the following from 27 July 1915, which was typical, although no two summaries were exactly alike: 'RUM – Market for Demerara steady, with sales at full previous rates. Quotations are 1s. 4d. for ordinary and 1s. 5d. for special marks per proof gallon. Jamaicas are very firm with values for ordinary 3s. 9d. to 4s. per gallon' ('The Produce Markets' Summary', *The West India Committee Circular* 30, 439 (27 July 1915), p. 348), https://westindiacommittee.org/historyheritageculture/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Circular-1915.pdf. Accessed 20 January 2025.

[5]On the British Army's rum ration, issued to troops of the Dominions and colonies as well, see Brian Bertosa, 'Rum for the Army: Miscellaneous Notes on the Provision of Rum During the First World War', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 102, 409 (2024), pp. 150-159; Tim Cook, '"More a Medicine than a Beverage": "Demon Rum" and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War', *Canadian Military History*, 9, 1 (2000), pp. 6-22, https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1083&context=cmh. Accessed 6 August 2024.

[6]Edwin Pye, 'S. R. D.', *The Legionary* 13, 8 (March 1938), p. 7; Cook, '"Demon Rum"', p. 8; Bertosa, 'Rum', pp. 157-158; Jonathan F. Vance, '"When Wartime Friends Meet": Great War Veteran Culture and the (Ab)Use of Alcohol', *Canadian Military History*, 32, 1 (2023), pp. 23-24,

interesting example comes from the Australian Imperial Force during the war, some of whose members disliked the issue rum so much that they sent off a 165cc sample of it to be tested for the presence of methylated spirits.[7] In reply, the officer commanding No. 12 Mobile Laboratory gave it as his opinion that the sample received consisted of 'Jamaica rum of about 3 years-4 yrs old' and noted that 'for analysis of wines, Rum &c at least <u>one litre</u> should be sent'.[8]

In addition to these more or less indirect examples, evidence much more direct and immediate of the composition of Army rum exists in the Port of London Authority Archive. The context is the little-known announcement by the Admiralty in October 1917 of their intention to requisition all stocks of rum in the United Kingdom under the Defence of the Realm Regulations.[9] At first, a stop was put on transactions involving any rum within the bonded warehouses of the Port of London Authority, including that for the War Office.[10] There was never any question of the Navy confiscating the Army's rum, of course, but the matter was not resolved until 1 November.[11] As part of that process, detailed lists were drawn up of the rum held by the Authority for account of the War Office, including, crucially, the places of origin. This information is summarised in Table 1. The last column, giving percentages of War Office rum by place of origin, is of course by no means synonymous with a documentary source explicitly providing the intended composition of Army rum. On

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https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2122&context=cmh. Accessed 20 January 2025, includes a reproduction of the advertisement. Accessed 6 August 2024.
[7]Australian War Memorial (hereinafter AWM), AWM25 865/2, Correspondence and orders regarding rum issue to troops on active service. Quantity ordered by medical staff and reasons. Ration for men in the trenches, J. Nicholas, Major for Colonel, A.A.M.C., A.D. of M.S., 1 Australian Division to O.C., 12 Mobile Laboratory, Amiens, 13 January 1917.
[8]AWM AWM25, 865/2, Captain M. MacMahon, RAMC (TC), O. i/c Laboratory, Laboratory Report. Rum, 17 January 1917. Underlining in original.
[9]G.R. Rubin, *Private Property, Government Requisition and the Constitution, 1914-1927,* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 113-114;
The London Gazette, no. 30328 (9 October 1917), p. 10406, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/30328/page/10406. Accessed 20 January 2025.
[10]Port of London Authority Archive (PLA), PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, The Traffic Superintendent to The Director of Contracts, Admiralty, 11 October 1917.
[11]PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, The Traffic Superintendent to The Superintendent, India & Millwall Docks, 11 October 1917; PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, The Traffic Superintendent to The Superintendent, India & Millwall Docks, 1 November 1917; PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, [signature illegible] for D. of C. [Director of Contracts], Admiralty to Port of London Authority, 1 November 1917.

the other hand, it must be assumed that the rum broker, E. D. & F. Man, knew their business, and it defies belief that they would have spent money unnecessarily on product whose quantities did not match what was intended to meet the War Office requirement.[12] Until or unless something approximating to an official specification should emerge, this is the closest we are likely to get to the composition of Army rum.

Place of origin	Puncheons[a]	Hogsheads[b]	Gallons	% of total
Demerara	2,397	2	235,020	**53.8**
Jamaica	1,302	0	127,596	**29.2**
Trinidad	197	865	68,611	**15.7**
Natal	43	0	4,214	**1.0**
Cuba	13	0	1,274	**0.3**
Totals	*3,952*	*867*	*436,715[c]*	*100.0*

Table 1: Places of origin of War Office rum held by the Port of London Authority, October-November 1917.

Note: Places of origin, number of puncheons and number of hogsheads provided in sources. Number of imperial gallons and percentages calculated by author.
Sources: Port of London Authority Archive, (PLA), PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, War Office. List of Rum on hand at Rum Department, West India Dock, sheets A, B, C, and D, no date [but discussed in documents as early as 11 October 1917] (first batch); PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, Traffic Superintendent to H.W. Pillow Esq., Contracts Department, Admiralty, C. P. 18598, 30 November 1917 (second, smaller batch).
[a]A type of barrel. '1 Puncheon. 71-126 gals: say an average 98' (PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, Rum [sheet of handwritten calculations], no date). 98 gallons used here.
[b]A type of barrel. '1 Hogshead. 45-70 gals : say an average 57' (ibid.). 57 gallons used here.
[c]In addition to this total, a further 145 puncheons and 14 hogsheads (15,008 gallons) were made over to the War Office by the Admiralty in December 1917, but no places

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[12]Well-known to those familiar with the lore of Navy rum as broker to the Admiralty (Pack, *Nelson's Blood*, p. 128 & p. 189), numerous documents in the Port of London Authority file demonstrate that E. D. & F. Man were the sole rum broker to the War Office as well: see, *inter alia*, PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, H.J. Barlow for Director of Army Contracts to The Chief Superintendent, Docks and Warehouses, Port of London Authority, 2 February 1917.

of origin are provided (PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, [signature illegible], Memorandum, quoting Letter from War Office (Contracts Dept) (Contracts R/5321 (D.C.2)), dated 27.12.1917, 28 December 1917).

Like its naval counterpart, Army rum was majority Demerara, although the proportion was less. Figures for 1916 from the British West Indies show that British Guiana exported 4,386,854 gallons of rum while the next-biggest exporter, Jamaica, exported 1,471,897 gallons, which gives an idea of the preponderant importance of the Demerara distillers to the British rum trade at the time.[13]

The second-largest component of Army rum, confirming the intuitions of so many contemporaries, was Jamaican, known for its strong, distinctive flavour which they were no doubt able to recognise easily.[14] Given the premium normally paid for this attribute relative to Demerara on the open market, it appears entirely counterintuitive that, with respect to the adoption of Jamaican rum, the War Office would go where the Admiralty could not afford to tread. Nevertheless, after the complete cessation of rum imports imposed by the government in February 1917, prices for all varieties of rum skyrocketed, such that by September 1917 'the price per proof gallon of Demerara was between 16s. and 17s. 6d. and that of Jamaica was 16s. 6d.', while the following December saw 'Demerara realising from 44s. to 47s. and the Jamaica between 36s. and 53s. per proof gallon according to age'.[15] It is clear from this that the price advantage of Demerara rum over Jamaican was largely eliminated over the course of 1917, and it is thus suggested that this fact, combined with the wide availability of Jamaican, is likely to be the sole plausible factor that can account for the presence of a normally premium product in the Army's rum.

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[13]'Exports from the British West Indies' [table], *The West India Committee Circular*, 32, 480 (22 February 1917), p. 80, https://westindiacommittee.org/historyheritageculture/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Circular-1917.pdf. Accessed 9 August 2024.

[14]On the distinctive flavour of Jamaican rum, see, among numerous sources on this, Matt Pietrek, 'Days of Dunder: Jamaican Rum's Mystery Ingredient', Cocktail Wonk, 11 March 2016, https://cocktailwonk.com/2016/03/days-of-dunder-setting-the-record-straight-on-jamaican-rums-mystery-ingredient.html. Accessed 9 August 2024. Among the Jamaican rums requisitioned for the War Office were two parcels, one of five puncheons and one of forty-five puncheons, bearing the distiller's mark 'Myers', proving that the company's advertisement (see above, note 6) was no idle boast (PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, War Office. List of Rum on hand at Rum Department, West India Dock, sheet D, no date).

[15]Hansard, HC vol. 90, col. 1634 (23 February 1917); Rubin, *Private Property*, pp. 114-115.

Rum from Trinidad, the third-place British exporter at 554,175 gallons, essentially completed the War Office blend, save for a very small remainder.[16] It is perhaps not surprising that the order of importance of the three West Indian colonies in the blend should happen to match their relative positions in terms of rum exports. Looked at this way, the complete absence of Jamaican rum from the Admiralty's blend is all the more striking.

Natal rum is said to have been strongly disliked by the Navy during the Second World War; assuming it had not changed much since the First, there is little reason to expect that soldiers in 1917 would have held a higher opinion of it, which may explain why it comprised only 1% of the blend.[17] The presence of rum from Cuba, which was of course outside the British Empire, was the subject of considerable controversy. The West India Committee, a London-based lobby group representing British planters in the region, sent a letter to the Colonial Office in August 1917 complaining of what they viewed as excessive Cuban rum imports, noting also in this connection that 'the Admiralty still purchases British rum exclusively, while the War Office usually shows a preference for the product of our Colonies', which was a polite way of pointing out that sometimes the War Office did not.[18] In reply, the Colonial Office informed the Committee, in part, that

> it appears that endeavours have always been made to meet the requirements of the Army and Navy by purchasing rum manufactured within the Empire, and that it has never been the custom to take Cuban or other non-British rum, though occasionally the War Office has been compelled to do so. Of the total quantity of rum purchased by that Department in the twelve months ending June last, the proportion of foreign spirit was only 15 per cent. It is intended that future requirements should be met, as far as possible, from the stocks held in the United Kingdom.[19]

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[16]'Exports from the British West Indies'.

[17]See the amusing anecdote related in Pack, *Nelson's Blood*, p. 107, who informs us, moreover, that Natal rum was dropped from the Navy's blend after the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth in 1961.

[18]'Rum for the Navy and Army', *The West India Committee Circular*, 32, 493 (23 August 1917), p. 324 quoting *in extenso* R. Rutherford and Algernon E. Aspinall, The West India Committee to The Right Hon. Walter Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies, 2 August 1917; 'Rum for the Navy and Army', p. 325.

[19]'Rum for the Forces', *The West India Committee Circular*, 32, 497 (18 October 1917), p. 394 quoting *in extenso* H.J. Read to The Secretary, The West India Committee, 12 October 1917.

THE COMPOSITION OF ARMY RUM, 1917

The reference to 'the stocks held in the United Kingdom', clearly intended here to suggest a future preference for British Empire rum, is more than a little disingenuous. Both correspondents were well aware of the complete stoppage of rum imports to Britain as of 23 February 1917, there being, in the words of Prime Minister David Lloyd George, 'sufficient stores in the country for the Army', such that 'it is absolutely unnecessary to import any more for that purpose'.[20] With no more product coming into the country, the War Office had no choice but to buy henceforward from the stocks remaining on hand in the United Kingdom.[21] Moreover, among those stocks were rums from Cuba, Martinique, Pernambuco (Brazil), Paramaribo (Surinam), Costa Rica, St. John and St. Croix (U.S. Virgin Islands), and even 'imitation rum from Boston', so that the War Office could still have chosen to purchase foreign rum if they had so desired.[22] But it seems they did not.

The figure given in the Colonial Office letter of 15% 'foreign spirit' purchased by the War Office as of June 1917 is in sharp contrast to the inventory of that same department's rum drawn up by the Port of London Authority in October showing only 0.3% non-British rum. Exact percentages at any given time will of course have varied slightly as consignments shipped to the United Kingdom in puncheons and hogsheads were emptied into one of the many large vats belonging to the Authority.[23] For there to have been only 13 puncheons of foreign rum remaining for account of the War Office in October, that department must have completely stopped the purchase of non-British rum sometime prior to this, possibly even in response to the complaint of the West India Committee. In the meantime, normal vatting removed (almost) all of the foreign rum from the stock on hand in puncheons and hogsheads. If this scenario is correct, then the composition of Army rum shown in Table 1 was valid only as of October 1917, but then likely held good to the end of the war, with the exception, of course, of the Cuban contribution. It is speculated that the minuscule component of the blend not covered by the 'big three' British West Indian rum producers may not even have been formally specified, allowing the broker to round out the order with whatever was available.

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[20]Hansard HC vol. 90, cols. 1623 and 1634 (23 February 1917); 'Rum for the Navy and Army', p. 324: the embargo had the grudging support, 'in consequence of the then gravity of the situation', of the West India Committee.
[21]These were considerable, amounting to 12,162,000 gallons as of 6 June 1917: 'The Produce Markets Summary. Rum', *The West India Committee Circular*, 32, 491 (26 July 1917), p. 296.
[22]PLA, PLA/PLA/CEN/1/2/7/1, List of Rum on Hand at Rum Department, West India Dock [104 sheets], no date.
[23]On which, see 'Rum for Troops', *Daily Record and Mail*, 9 October 1914, p. 2, https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk. Accessed 20 January 2025. Giving a combined capacity at that time of 58,500 gallons.

Beyond the unexceptionable expectation that the War Office purchase as little rum as possible from non-British sources, it is not known if there ever was, in fact, a specification for Army rum analogous to the one carefully crafted and scrupulously observed by the Navy. Prior to the unprecedented demands of the First World War, 'Army rum', understood in the sense of the standardised, systematised commodity known to the Navy, may not have existed per se, taking the form rather of whatever could be acquired locally on the civilian market by those responsible for supplies at the level of the battalion, regiment, or depot. Only with the requirement to process millions of gallons for continual shipment across the Channel did the need arise for some form of guidance to those involved in work that for the first time involved the blending of a product specifically for War Office account. Although they were, of necessity, determined in a roundabout manner, the data in Table 1 are offered to the reader as quite possibly the only glimpse we are likely to have of a specification followed by those responsible for blending Army rum.

The Hessian Cloth 'Parajute' of the Second World War

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ABSTRACT
The Second World war in India and Burma was principally a ground campaign, prosecuted in large part with supply by air, both air landing and air dropping. Distance from the UK and other factors required GHQ India develop domestic capabilities to be partially self-sufficient. The war in India and Burma has received much less coverage than elsewhere and there are gaps in what has been published. Coverage of the supply parachute situation, critical to air dropping, is one of those gaps, with official and personal books and articles mostly focusing attention on a failed substitute, the hessian cloth parachute, at the expense of the locally produced and massively successful cotton cloth parachute.

Introduction

The war in Burma was primarily a land campaign, constrained by the lack of naval resources for amphibious operations and hence shaped by mountainous jungles with essentially none of the transportation infrastructure necessary for delivering logistical support. The vast distances between even the most forward supply points and troops in combat, coupled with the enemy's ability to interdict lines of communication on the ground, necessitated the use of aircraft for supply purposes. The absence of forward airstrips drove the requirement to deliver cargo by air, with or without parachutes, depending on the fragility of the supplies involved. Typically, personnel parachutes were manufactured of silk, having the necessary tensile strength and light weight, although nylon came into use during the war. For supply drops, the Royal Air Force's (RAF) pre-war parachutes were mostly personnel parachutes rejected as no longer fit for service, although a few sources also reference linen and cotton parachutes. The breadth and scope of combat operations in Burma, however, made it clear that relying on castoffs past their 'use-by date' was not an option.

British forces in India pioneered the large-scale use of cotton parachutes for aerial delivery of supplies during the Second World War, but severe shortages in British Empire shipping and material resources necessitated local production.[1] With the success of early aerial re-supply efforts for then-Brigadier Orde Wingate's 1943 Chindit operation in Burma, Operation Longcloth, and then British Indian Army operations in the Arakan, demand for cargo parachutes for planned operations in 1944 greatly exceeded projected supplies. While expanding Indian domestic production and also looking to Britain and the United States, British Fourteenth Army leadership started to consider manufacturing parachutes of hessian cloth produced from jute, all locally sourced, as another option. The latter has attracted a disproportionate amount of historical attention in various chronicles of the Burma campaign. Generally, only hessian cloth 'parajutes' are discussed in accounts touching on supply-dropping parachutes. There is virtually no mention to be found in any official, academic, or commercial histories, of the 4 million cotton supply parachutes produced locally in India by the end of hostilities, much less how that capability was created in India, from scratch, resulting in an incomplete narrative of how this aerial supply capability was created.

Perhaps a surprise to some, jute, and what Americans call burlap, was an important wartime material. Locally grown, processed and woven into hessian cloth in eastern India, it had a variety of applications. Foodstuffs such as rice and atta, a type of flour, were double or triple bagged in hessian cloth and free dropped. This was first done by 31 Squadron to help feed refugees walking out of Burma in 1942.[2] Hessian cloth provided a lining and covering for the containers used in supply dropping as well as a wide range of other uses. One of its more unusual uses was for 'bit-hess,' hessian cloth coated in bitumen which was laid out in long sheets to 'waterproof' roads and runways in India and Burma. A post war report claimed that 77 million yards of bituminised hessian cloth were laid in this manner.[3]

The earliest supply parachute mentioned in any official history occurs in 'Air Transport Operations on the Burma Front,' a July 1944 booklet written by Air Staff, HQ Air Command South East Asia, and a year before the war ended. This 28-page publication was issued as a Restricted document 'intended for the information of all officers and

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[1]Gerald White, *The Forgotten Contributor to the Forgotten War: The Cotton Supply-Dropping Parachute of India*, Royal Air Force Museum 2022 Conference, RAF Museum, London, UK, 5-6 September 2022.

[2]The UK National Archives (hereinafter TNA) AIR 27/351, 31 Sq Operations Record Book (from 9 May 1942 onward), p. 46; see also Roger Arnett, *Drop Zone Burma: Adventures in Allied Air-Supply 1943-45,* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Aviation, 2008), p. 67.

[3]W. A. M. Walker, C.B.E., *The Growth of the Jute Industry in India and Pakistan*, Journal of the Royal Society of Arts; London Vol. 97, Iss. 4794, (6 May 1949), pp. 409-420.

flying crews…' In discussing research carried out by the Airborne Forces Research Centre, the authors noted

> Special emphasis was placed upon the use of materials that could be produced inside India, with an eye alike to speed in delivery and to economy in the use of articles imported from overseas. High hopes were for a time placed in the production of jute parachutes which could be cheaply and plentifully manufactured locally, although ultimately it was recognized that they were not sufficiently economical or reliable for regular use until large improvements had been made.[4]

On page 5, there is one reference to '…. folding the cotton or jute [parachutes] fabric' but no mention of such cotton parachutes being sourced in India.

In May 1945, The War Office published 'Notes From Theatres Of War: Burma, 1943/44', in essence a 'Lessons Learned' report separate from, and pre-dating, official despatches published by various senior commanders. In it, the authors wrote, 'Faced with a shortage of supply dropping parachutes, Fourteenth Army turned to the Calcutta jute trade, which responded by producing 'parajutes' which filled the vital gap. The parajutes worked satisfactorily during the dry weather, but in the monsoon they became sodden and ineffective.' [5] The report provided no production or usage figures.

In 1946, South East Asia Command's official public account of the war, 'The Campaign in Burma,' noted: 'Meantime, Fourteenth Army managed with a home-made invention of jute, the 'para-jute.' [6] The statement inferred a wider use of 'para-jutes' than actually occurred, which is particularly surprising given the author's access to South East Asia Command (SEAC) War Diaries and other documentation detailing cotton parachute production.

To date, a few references to 18-foot diameter cotton parachutes have been found. In a 1945 article titled 'Air Supply' published in the US Army's Military Review, Lt Col James I. Muir wrote that 'Ground troops in jungle terrain generally agree that except for special equipment, the 18-foot British cotton parachute is superior to the US 22- and 24-foot rayon chutes for supply dropping .…', he went on to state that:

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[4] Air Staff, *Air Transport Operations on the Burma Front*, (HQ Air Command South East Asia, New Delhi, July 1944), pp. 9-10.
[5] *Notes From Theatres Of War: No. 19: Burma, 1943/44,* (The War Office, London, UK, May 1945), p. 6.
[6] Lt Col Frank Owen, OBE, *The Campaign in Burma*, (His Majesties Stationary Office (HMSO), London. UK, 1946), p. 46.

> During an emergency period at the beginning of [Imphal] operations, parachutes were made of burlap -"parajutes"- and were used to supplement a very short [British] supply; they were inefficient but nevertheless worked satisfactorily enough to carry the theatre over a very difficult period.[7]

An additional reference can be found in a 1946 Army Quarterly article by Lt Col J.R.L. Rumsey of the Rajputana Rifles titled 'Air Supply in Burma'. He wrote 'The 18-foot parachutes became a standardized supply and were produced in large numbers from indigenous resources.' Later he states 'After experience, the 18' parachute became standard; it can drop a load of 180 lb ….' There was no mention of the hessian cloth parachute.[8]

Another official account, 'Wings Of The Phoenix: The official story of the Air War in Burma,' published in 1949 by the Air Ministry, reinforced the 'parajute' narrative. Chapter 3, 'Monsoon 1943: Action In An Interval,' starts by discussing the aerial supply mission and noting that 'Our sole Dakota squadron [31] carried out 1,100 sorties during the monsoon, using 'parajutes', an Indian jute substitute employed during the worldwide parachute shortage.'[9] As the Fourteenth Army did not commence experimentation with parajutes until late 1943, this statement is problematic.

In his 1949 presentation, 'The Growth of the Jute Industry in India and Pakistan,' W. A. M. Walker, C.B.E., briefly mentioned jute parachute production. He stated that: 'At one time a special priority order was placed on a few selected mills for the immediate manufacture, within a few weeks, of 100,000 supply-dropping parachutes fabricated entirely from jute.'[10] He did not elaborate on the various production, manufacturing and storage problems, or hessian cloth's heavier weight and proclivity to absorb water. In 1954, the War Office published Volume 2 of 'Supplies and Transport,' covering operations in India and Burma, from a Royal Army Service Corps perspective, but the study lacks references.[11] In one of the few references to supply dropping equipment, Col D. W. Boileau wrote, 'Thus, when there was a shortage of supply dropping parachutes, the Calcutta jute trade produced "parajutes," which filled the gap; they worked satisfactorily in dry weather, but in wet weather became sodden and

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[7]Lt Col James I. Muir, *Air Supply,* Military Review, Ft Leavenworth, KS, Vol 25, No. 8, (November 1945), pp. 61-67.

[8]Lt. Col. J.R.L. Rumsey, *Air Supply in Burma*, Army Quarterly (AQ) 55, (October 1947-January 1948) pp. 33-42.

[9]*Wings Of The Phoenix: The official story of the Air War in Burma*, (London: HMSO, 1949), p. 32.

[10]Walker, *The Growth of the Jute Industry in India and Pakistan*, pp. 404-420.

[11]There is a rudimentary bibliography in Appendix XIII listing documents and reports collected and archived by the RASC at Aldershot.

ineffective.'[12] Apparently, he quoted but did not cite 'Notes From Theatres Of War: No. 19: Burma, 1943/44' mentioned above.

The more recent official history, 'The War Against Japan Volume III: The Decisive Battles,' was published in 1962. To date, it provides the most accurate recounting of the supply parachute issue. It briefly discusses production of the 18-foot cotton parachute and relegates the 'parajutes' to a footnote, explaining that they 'did not prove to be entirely satisfactory, especially in wet weather; they were thereafter held as an emergency reserve.'[13] Without references, it is not possible to ascertain the sources used as the information presented is not detailed in any other official history. It should be noted that one of the volume's authors, AVM Noel L. Desour, served as a senior air planner on the AHQ (India) staff in 1943 and then SEAC in 1944, and oversaw several JPS papers concerned with supply parachutes and equipment.

Moving from official histories to personal accounts, the story gets only slightly more detailed in Field Marshal Viscount William Slim's widely read, highly regarded, and oft-cited 1956 'Defeat into Victory'. He recalled that demand for supply parachutes for a planned 1944 offensive greatly exceeding the available supply. After discussions with his Major General Administration, Maj Gen A. H. J. 'Alf' Snelling and others, one of his staff approached Calcutta businessmen about producing jute parachutes. Testing prototypes commenced within 10 days and a working model achieved in a month. He also cited the projected cost savings, writing that 'the cost of a parajute was just over £1; that of a standard parachute over £20.' Published eleven years after the war's end, Slim apparently overlooked, or perhaps had forgotten, the role that cotton supply parachutes were playing, and the challenges of ramping up domestic Indian production to meet military needs. As he mentions conferring with Maj Gen Snelling 'and one or two of his leading air-supply staff officers,' it is difficult to imagine that this information was unavailable to him. Again, unfortunately, there are no references cited.[14] Snelling wrote a two-part 'Army Quarterly' article in 1947 but made no mention of the parachute supply issue. Similarly, there are apparently no despatches, papers or memoirs by him or other senior logisticians from Fourteenth Army that might provide the missing details.[15] Nevertheless, given the generally positive assessments of his

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[12]Col D. W. Boileau (Late of the R.A.S.C.), *Supplies And Transport, Vol II*, of the series 'The Second World War, 1939-1945, Army,' (London: The War Office, 1954), p. 58.
[13]Maj Gen S. Woodburn Kirby, et al., *The War Against Japan*, *Volume III: The Decisive Battles*, (London: HMSO, 1962), p. 39.
[14]Field Marshal Viscount William Slim, *Defeat into Victory,* (London: Cassell & Co.,1956; republished as (London: Pan Books, MacMillan, 1999), pp. 224-6.
[15]Maj Gen A. H. J. Snelling, C.B., C.B.E., '*Some Fourteenth Army Administrative Problems*,' AQ Vol 53, No. 2, (January 1947), pp. 219-230 and '*More Fourteenth Army Administrative Problems,*' AQ Vol 54, No.1, (April 1947), pp. 49-65. An interesting read; it is curious

leadership throughout the arduous campaign, Slim retains great authority as a major source on the subject.

In his 1995 work, 'The Forgotten Air Force,' Air Commodore Henry Probert mentions the parajute in passing, noting that they 'were adequate for ordinary supplies and enormous quantities were produced costing just £1 each as opposed to £20 for normal parachutes,' citing figures from Slim's 'Defeat into Victory.'[16] The source for these prices is unclear. A parachute inventory for Akyab and Ramree airfields shortly after the war values cotton parachutes at 42 rupees apiece, or just over £3 at 1945 values.[17] Other sources confirm this amount as the actual cotton parachute production cost.

Michael Pearson, in his 2006 work, 'The Burma Air Campaign' draws upon Slim's 'Defeat Into Victory' and not surprisingly repeats his origins of parajutes account almost verbatim. As noted above, however, Slim did not reference primary sources. Similarly, while Pearson notes monthly parajute production 'increasing from 35,000 to 144,000, with a target of 250,000 per month by end of 1943,' he also provides no source for these figures.[18]

In his 2008 book 'Drop Zone Burma: Adventures in Allied Air-Supply 1943-45', Roger Annett also touches briefly on the parajute narrative. He notes that 'These 'parajutes' were not a long-term success-they were like sponges when it rained-but they filled a short-term gap.' As the official histories and primary source documents show, his is perhaps the least inaccurate assessment to date.[19]

Graham Dunlop, in his excellent 2009 work 'Military Economics, Culture and Logistics in the Burma Campaign, 1942-1945,' echoes Annett's judgement when he writes,

> To make up the anticipated shortfall before full production [of cotton parachutes] was achieved, the Union Jute Company of Calcutta was invited to make hessian sackcloth parachutes, nicknamed 'parajutes' for dropping more robust supplies. Following successful trials, the 14th Army estimated a

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that Maj Gen Snelling never mentioned hessian-cloth parajutes as Fourteenth Army was the prime beneficiary of the supply parachute and initiator of the parajute.
[16]Air Cdre Henry Probert, *The Forgotten Air Force*, (Brassey's, London, UK, 1995), p. 156.
[17]TNA, AIR 203/1478, Salvage, General, ASD Equipment, Memo for 12th Army, Surplus Supply Equipment at AKYAB and RAMREE, MGA ALFSEA, 7 September 1945.
[18]Michael Pearson, *The Burma Air Campaign: 1941-1945,* (Pen & Sword Aviation, 2006), pp. 108 & 138.
[19]Annett, *Drop Zone Burma,* p. 75.

requirement for 140,000 'parajutes' by the end of April 1944. They worked adequately in dry weather, but not in wet, so their use was discontinued during the 1944 monsoon, after which adequate supplies of conventional parachutes became available.[20]

Conclusions

Although more detailed research is needed, the bottom line is that the hessian cloth 'parajute,' while initially showing promise, ultimately failed for multiple reasons. These included: the much greater weight of the parachute, 33 pounds, versus 11 pounds for a Mark II cotton parachute, the uneven quality of the hessian cloth, and numerous production problems. The biggest obstacle was jute's propensity to absorb water which, along with shortages of rot-proofing chemicals, made 'parajute' storage and use, especially during monsoon season, impractical.[21] Multiple SEAC War Diary entries for late December 1944 noted that 250,000 'parajutes' were produced in two batches during February-May 1944 and 'consigned directly to airfields. They have not been successful and 180,000 were still held on airfields at the end of the year.'[22] An 'improved' Mark II hessian-cloth parachute was introduced in late 1944 but, with basic problems still unresolved and the increasing availability of cotton parachutes throughout 1944 and into 1945, most 'parajutes' likely went directly to salvage or disposal. By way of comparison, approximately 4 million 18 feet diameter cotton cloth parachutes were produced in India, with some 3 million employed in the various Indian and Burma campaigns between early 1942 and August 1945.[23]

For as yet undiscernible reasons, the marginally useful hessian cloth 'parajute' still figures more prominently in most written accounts of the Burma campaign than is merited by the facts. The successful production and deployment of the cotton supply parachute was vital to the air supply miracle that was the Burma campaign. The cotton supply parachute story is a largely forgotten component of the forgotten war of the forgotten army.[24]

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[20]Graham Dunlop, *Military Economics, Culture and Logistics in the Burma Campaign, 1942-1945*, (London: Pickering & Chatto, p. 103.

[21]TNA WO 203/3712, Airborne Forces Parajutes; WO 203/850, Air Supply Parachutes Stocks & Requirements.

[22]TNA WO 172/1472, South East Asia Command Diaries, SUPPLY DROPPING, 24 December, p. 68; 28 December, p. 291; 31 December, pp. 498-503.

[23]Government of India Department of Commerce Administrative Intelligence Room, 'Statistics relating to India's War Effort' (Manager of Publications, Delhi, India, 20 February 1947), p. 7; https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-51156611/. Accessed 6 February 2024.

Rémy Ambühl and Andy King (eds), *Documenting Warfare: Records of the Hundred Years War, Edited and Translated in Honour of Anne Curry*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2024. xviii + 401 pp. ISBN: 978-1837650248 (hardback.). Price £110.00.

Professor Anne Curry stands among the leading scholars of the Hundred Years War. From her initial publications of the late 1970s through to the present day, Professor Curry has made an invaluable contribution not only to scholarship on this formative conflict, but the wider entangled histories of late medieval England and France more generally. This wonderful collection seeks to pay tribute to the honorand by exploring three core themes in her research profile: the editing and translating of texts, investigating the mechanics of warfare in the later Middle Ages, and exploring the course of the conflict itself.

General (and indeed specific) overviews of the conflict are not in short supply (the honorand having produced and contributed to a number of them); yet, discussions on the vast corpus of source material pertain go to the war are often lacking. Therefore, this *festschrift* is unique in the sense that, rather than writing research essays on various topics relating to Professor Curry's research, the contributors have instead each taken a previously unpublished primary source, edited and translated it, and provided a detailed commentary on the piece. Broadly speaking, the volume is structured chronologically and the essays examine a variety of documents relating to the conflict from the 1340s through to the eve of the English collapse in the early 1450s. Four of the contributions deal with military indentures. The respective chapters by the editors, Andy King and Rémy Ambühl, explore how these contracts were drawn up by the aristocracy and crown in very different contexts, one in the Anglo-Scottish marches, the other in preparation for a campaign to France. Craig Lambert and Michael Jones both explore how fleets were raised during the conflict. Lambert's contribution offers a fascinating investigation into the mechanics of recruiting a fleet for the aborted expedition of 1450-1; the essay sheds a great deal of light on how the crown was able to marshal considerable naval forces during a period of profound crisis. Jones' essay makes for an interesting comparison and considers the role of the dukes of Brittany in planning a similarly aborted invasion of England in the late 1380s.

Several of the contributions offer masterclasses in how to reconstruct the military careers of particular individuals. Andrew Ayton expertly demonstrates how a prosopographical approach can be used to recover the military activities of Geoffrey Starling of Ipswich and the crew of his ship, the *Magdaleyn*. Adrian Bell, Herbert, Eiden, and Helen Killick's chapter reveals how the records of the Court of Chivalry are an invaluable resource for studying English military culture in the later fourteenth century.

Using the will of William, Lord Borreaux, (who fought at and survived the Battle of Agincourt) as a case study, Michael Hicks offers a window into the neglected world of dynastic and financial concerns and how noblemen often sought to ensure legal and financial protection for their families in the event of their death in battle. Several contributions provide editions and discussions on pardons and violence. Valérie Toureille details a pardon granted to French villagers for the murder of three Welsh soldiers, offering a rare insight into how violence impacted the localities during this period. Justine Firnhaber-Baker explores a similar theme and investigates what a French pardon can tell us about the intersection of royal lordship and noble power during the 1360s. David Simpkin's chapter deals with a pardon issued by Henry V to William Halifax for killing another man. Intriguingly, the pardon reveals a great deal of information on the issue of military discipline and demonstrates how Halifax's impressive military record played an important role in directing the king's decision.

Three further chapters probe the financial dimension of the conflict in more detail. Malcom Mercer edits an inventory of the equipment which Lionel of Clarence took to Ireland in 1361: this source offers an important point of reference for comparing the levels of preparations (and investment) between English expeditions to Ireland and the continent. Dan Spencer's chapter examines an account relating to several military engineers from Germany who travelled to England in 1438 to show-case some of the latest gunpowder weaponry to Henry VI. In another fascinating contribution, Betrand Schnerb explores the trade in horses, shedding light on the various types of horse and the role of the nobility in controlling the trade. Several of the contributors engage with diplomatic records. Guilhem Pépin investigates the ransom of the Gascon lord, Florimont de Lesparre, who was held captive by Juan I of Castile, and what the protracted ransom negotiations intersected with the course of Anglo-Castilian relations. Pierre Courroux's chapter examines the enduring nature of aristocratic power in late medieval France and provides an edition of the famous League of Aire, while Aleksandr Lobanov edits several letters dealing with the appointment of Philip, duke of Burgundy, as lieutenant of north-eastern France in 1429.

The final two essays each explore the theme of chivalry. Chloë McKenzie investigates extracts from the Great Wardrobe account and focuses on the life of Edward III's daughter, Isabella. Her French husband, Enguerrand de Coucy, was forced to resign his English lands and titles, including membership of the Order of the Garter; the chapter demonstrates how Isabella replaced her husband, becoming the first female member of the order, as well as how the conflict more generally shaped the composition of the order during the next century. The final chapter by Adrian and Marianne Ailes examines the quitclaim of Hamelet Smethewyk and what the document can reveal about the ongoing use of French in England during a time of hardening national identities.

Overall, this is a hugely impressive collection and a very fitting tribute to Professor Curry. The introduction on its own provides an excellent overview of the current state of research on the Hundred Years War: this essay (and the collection more generally) will be an obligatory point of reference for anyone undertaking research for the conflict for the first time; indeed, experienced researchers will also benefit from reading it!

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DOI 10.25602/GOLD.bjmh.v11i1.1880

Lynn MacKay, *Women and the British Army, 1815-1880*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2023. 313pp. ISBN: 978-1837650552 (hardback). Price £95.

Harridans or saints? The women who had dealings with the British army during the nineteenth century were typecast as both extremes at various moments across the period, although Lynn MacKay aims to address these social stereotypes in her recent book, *Women and the British Army*. Like many works that examine military history through a gender lens, MacKay's goal is to overturn long-held assumptions about the beliefs and behaviours of men and women during her period of study – assumptions that frequently had their origin in contemporaneous literature and culture. In dissecting these, MacKay reveals women and the army co-existing (sometimes unwillingly) in responsive dialogue, with army officials attempting to shape the roles and responsibilities of soldiers' womenfolk according to the beliefs of the day, and the women not infrequently pushing back.

The most striking part of MacKay's work is the inventory of challenges that the nineteenth-century army wife faced. During this time, army officials were reluctant to allow many soldiers to marry: fears centred on men becoming cautious on the battlefield, as well as the concern that too many wives (and the inevitable children) would become a logistical and economic burden on the army's movements and finances. The army was also concerned with the respectability of the women who were associated with it, although (MacKay's research shows) contrary to contemporary stereotypes, most army wives came from respectable families. Nevertheless, in response to this worry, the few approved army wives – six out of every hundred soldiers at one point in the century – were expected to conform to the structures and protocols of army life.

In the first chapter, MacKay focuses on the relationships between soldiers and women that led to marriage, arguing that most couples did not traverse class boundaries and followed courtship patterns typical of that in which they had been raised. These unions could be pragmatic: MacKay gives the example of one couple where the groom 'was a widower who needed a wife' and the bride a cook who was 'offered a chance to escape the uncertainties of lifelong domestic service employment' (p.22). Other marriages were borne out of circumstance – for example, a soldier finding a wife among the locals where he was stationed. Nevertheless, romance and affection were not unusual components of army marriages; MacKay quotes liberally from letters sent between couples, demonstrating the love and concern that soldiers felt for their wives and children.

Chapters Two and Three continue to explore the experiences of women who married soldiers, examining the reality of life as a soldier's wife, first in the British Isles and then in overseas service. Although these women were subject to army constraints – constraints which may have been partly devised in response to popular stereotypes of the 'drunken harridan' army wife – MacKay is keen to emphasise that many did not passively accept the situations in which they had been placed. Some of this subversive behaviour may have fed into the negative perceptions of army wives; MacKay gives the colourful example of Kate Lawrence, who was arrested after throwing chunks of tripe at two men in the barracks, in response to being scolded for sending her children to school without shoes (p.108).

The fourth and fifth chapters also have thematic similarities, with a focus on the shifting perceptions of army wives among the middle and upper classes, and the impact that this had on the wives themselves. The Crimean War was an important juncture for this change in attitude, as charities were formed for the assistance of wives left behind – in the Victorian imagination, 'deprived of their male protectors' (p.193) – and pressure was placed on the army for more formal provisions to be made for them and their children. Although this new goodwill towards army wives came with certain social expectations (they were expected to be useful and compliant to warrant public compassion), MacKay notes that the wives themselves formed small communities that could push back against army decisions that they found personally detrimental.

The final chapter focuses on sex workers in the British Isles and India. Here, MacKay takes the opportunity to explore the lives of a different subset of nineteenth-century women who were, like wives, also subjected to the army's attempts to regulate their relationships with soldiers. Concerned about levels of venereal disease among soldiers – perhaps between a half and one third of all soldiers were infected at various points during the century (p.239) – sex workers were obligated to submit to regular intrusive medical examinations and, if found to be infected, held in lock hospitals for up to six months, where their diseases would be treated and they would be given moral and

religious instruction. Despite these efforts, however, the women subjected to these enforcements often openly defied army authority, flirting with soldiers on their way to be examined and exhibiting disorderly behaviour when appearing in courtrooms. Meanwhile in India, brothels could mimic traditional domesticity between the sex workers and their family members who lived with them there.

Although the subject matter clamours for more analysis of the familial and professional relationships between women and soldiers – despite the title, MacKay's emphasis is overwhelmingly on the romantic, sexual, and marital relationships women had with soldiers – this is nevertheless a valuable contribution to the field of gender research and the British army. Not only does it contextualise the experiences of the nineteenth-century soldier, it also demonstrates the army's reach, able to meaningfully impact the lives of men and women across society.

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Stefanie Linden, *Beyond the Great Silence: The Legacy of Shell Shock in Britain and Germany, 1918-1924.* Warwick: Helion & Company Limited, 2024. x + 337 pp. ISBN 978-1804514306 (hardcover). Price £35.

As a marginalized group of combat soldiers during the Great War, the legacies of shell-shocked veterans continued to shape the politics of war in the aftermath of the First World War. Historian Stefanie Linden analyses the perception of shell shock in Britain and Germany between 1918 and 1924. In this work, Linden argues that while both British and German shell-shocked veterans experienced similar conditions of warfare on the Western Front, their experiences differed in their respective countries as Britain and Germany interpreted shell shock differently. While recognizing shell shock and its psychological symptoms as early as 1914 and 1915, British medical authorities downplayed the condition after the war as they attempted to look for a physical cause of shell shock or diagnosed shell-shocked veterans with a physical wound, they did not sustain during their service to avoid shame and stigma. In contrast, the shell shock experience in Germany for veterans was vastly different as German doctors rejected the idea of shell shock. Instead, German doctors believed that shell-shocked veterans had a 'psychopathic constitution' due to an inherited weakness (p. 311). As Linden demonstrates, British and German doctors 'cut the link between the war and the

enduring suffering [of shell-shocked veterans' by not recognizing the correlation between their trauma and military service (p. 313).

At the centre of Linden's book is the array of challenges British and German shell-shocked veterans encountered in the years after the war. Whether in Britain or Germany, veterans struggled to reconnect with loved ones, integrate into communities, find employment, and support themselves and their families and even died by suicide. At the same time, such veterans could not overcome their war trauma. Whether admitted to the National Hospital in London or the Charite in Berlin, there was little to no avail that doctors could do to treat the ongoing symptoms for veterans. Eventually, many were discharged from both institutions, regardless of their condition, and lived on the fringes of their respective countries.

While not fighting on the frontlines of the Western Front, Linden also shows that civilians were exposed to the effects of war on the British Homefront and could experience psychological trauma. According to Linden, British civilians could not escape from the war above as German Zeppelins bombed the British Isles, and some civilians displayed shell shock symptoms including anxiety and shaking, as the British populace was fighting to survive for the first time during the war. Meanwhile, as Linden highlights, British women exhibited psychological symptoms including dizziness, fainting spells, and nervous breakdowns as they displayed extreme worry about their fighting sons and husbands. As Liden reveals, 'the traumatic experiences of the war went far beyond the Armistice-not just for the soldiers but also for their close relatives' (p. 155).

Even as shell shock was a hotly debated condition in post-war Britain and Germany, Liden demonstrates that the experience of shell shock during the war advanced the development of psychological medicine in the years after the war. Major Frederick Walker Mott, an outspoken critic of shell shock and British neurologist at Maudsley Hospital, even acknowledged that 'even strong, constitutionally sound men who would have excelled in normal life succumbed to the unimaginable horrors of war, overwhelmed by fear and anger, driven by sheer instinct to survive' (p. 108). As Linden reveals, the Great War was a learning opportunity for psychiatrists to study the inner workings of the human mind while undergoing extreme stresses and strains in war. Doctors experimented with different treatment therapies, consulted their research findings with one another, and favoured a psychological explanation for shell shock over that of an organic model. Even in the post-war years, some British doctors accepted the psychological model of shell shock while many doctors continued to favour an organic interpretation.

To conclude, Linden's text is well-written and a sad tale that explores the marginalization of British and German shell-shocked veterans. This text is highly

recommended for Great War historians, psychiatrists, graduate students, and anyone passionate about military history. Linden's book makes a great contribution to the historiography of shell shock as most of the current literature examines the relationship between combat and shell shock. While other shell-shock scholars examined charitable organizations or lunatic asylums in the post-war years, Linden's book is a great new addition to the historiography due to her extensive analysis of the medical records at the National Hospital and Charite as well as her insight into the politics and cultural aspects of shell shock in Britain and Germany. With the end of the Great War over 100 years ago, the legacies of shell shock have not completely faded from history. While it is used to represent the emotional and psychological suffering of the Great War, the symptoms of shell shock still remain and anyone can become shell-shocked, whether traumatized by war or their everyday lives.

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John Kiszely, *General Hastings 'Pug' Ismay: Soldier, Statesman, Diplomat. A New Biography*. London: Hurst, 2024. xix + 421 pp. 28 B&W illustrations, 4 maps. ISBN 978-1911723202 (hardback). Price £35.

John Kiszely's previous book on the 1940 Norway campaign was a case study into British management of grand strategy and its operational consequences. This fine biography of General Hastings Ismay – he acquired the nickname 'Pug' early in his military career – examines the same subject through a different lens.

For a crisp summary of why Ismay was an important historical figure before, during and after the Second World War, just read the second paragraph of Kiszely's Preface. If Ismay is known at all nowadays, it is for his role in the Second World War as principal military aide to Churchill, particularly acting as intermediary between Churchill as Minister of Defence and the Chiefs of Staff. But Kiszely devotes under half his main text to the war. This is important, because it gives him the space to explore other aspects of Ismay's life and career, as suggested in his subtitle. In particular, he shows how Ismay's early experience – his 'apprenticeship', to quote one of the chapter headings – and successive appointments in the interwar period fitted him almost uniquely for the job he did for Churchill. Two phases of his post-war career were also especially important: his short but significant role in the partition of India in 1947, which he came to see as a shameful failure; and his much more successful time as

Secretary General of NATO from 1952 to 1957. Even after that he was called in twice to advise on the higher-level organisation of defence.

Shining through Kiszely's account is the role of personality and personal relationships in government and command at the highest levels at which Ismay was involved. His post-First World War career was shaped at certain turning points by personal relationships with senior officers. His wife Darry was not only half-American, which must have been a factor in his sympathy for and successful dealings with senior US personalities, but also inherited wealth which gave Ismay considerable independence (as well as an affluent lifestyle). Kiszely sums up his character very thoroughly in his epilogue.

The effect of Ismay's warm and engaging personality appears in many different ways. The most important was his ability to reduce friction between Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff, and between the British and US Chiefs, which could in both cases be intense because of the appalling and lasting strain on such senior figures (and indeed on Ismay himself). As 'the man with the oil can', he was open to accusations that he was simply brushing difficulties aside. This charge was on occasion justified but certainly not always. In a particularly revealing quote, the American Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Al Wedemeyer wrote that his initial view of Ismay as superficial and insincere did him a grave injustice: he came to see that Ismay used his 'charming personality' for constructive purposes and undoubtedly exercised moral courage when required.

So Ismay had more than just charm. He was intelligent, hard-working, devoted to his duty and an efficient administrator. Before the war, he had updated the Government War Book and instituted a lessons-learned study after Munich, both of which measures fully proved their value when war broke out. He was responsible for the administrative aspects of many of the international conferences which became such a feature of Allied grand strategy. He improved the structure of intelligence handling and, rather less expectedly, also took a hand in the control of strategic deception, including Operations Mincemeat ('the man who never was') and Bodyguard relating to the Sicily and Normandy invasions respectively.

Entirely properly, Kiszely is sympathetic to Ismay and admires his achievements. This can sometimes lead him to give Ismay too much benefit of the doubt, but the book is by no means a hagiography. Through detailed research in both primary and secondary sources – note the extensive acknowledgements, footnotes and bibliography – he frequently challenges Ismay's version of events, particularly in the memoirs. Kiszely makes effective use of Ismay's own papers, including earlier and often franker drafts of the memoirs as well as other eyewitness and family accounts. He is well aware of where Ismay got it wrong – an outstanding example being the 1942 Dieppe operation,

detailed in a special appendix. Discussing Ismay's positive views about future relations with the Soviet Union, which lasted a surprisingly long time, Kiszely even comments at one point that 'It could have been Chamberlain talking about Germany in 1938'.

Kiszely generally wears his research lightly. He is good at summarising complex events without getting bogged down in detail, and he writes in a clear, readable and engaging style. This book will therefore appeal to readers with an interest in the Second World War in particular, as well as to specialists and modern-day practitioners. Kiszely retired as a senior officer after a career in the British Army and ends with a heartfelt plea to view Ismay as a role model for serving officers, given his marked ability to 'act in the interests of defence as a whole, to view defence within the context of national and international interests, and to act as an exemplar in politico-military cooperation'.

TONY COWAN
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Tim Cook, *The Good Allies: How Canada and the United States Fought Together to Defeat Fascism During the Second World War*. Toronto: Allen Lane, 2024. 569 pp. (ebook). Price £10.99.

As Canada's leading military historian and Director of Research at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, Ontario, Tim Cook has undertaken his most ambitious task in describing Canadian-American relations during the Second World War. In this work, Cook argues that Canada, under the leadership of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, became a significant partner to the United States, led by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as both countries formed an alliance to protect North America from the Axis powers. With threats on both the East and West Coasts, King and Roosevelt sought to protect their countries' respective coasts. By defending both coasts with the Royal Canadian Navy, participating in the Kiska campaign to oust Japanese forces, sending military units to Alaska, and creating a continental sphere of defence against the Nazis by placing Canadian forces in Newfoundland, Iceland, and Greenland, Canada proved itself to its southern neighbour as a reliable ally in continental defence amid the war with the Axis forces.

As Cook demonstrates, once North America was secured from the fascist threats aboard, Canada mobilized its industries and armed forces to take the fight overseas. As Canada was rich in mineral resources, the nation greatly supplied Britain with food

to feed millions of its citizens, distributed aluminium for the development of aircraft material, powered American factories with hydro-electricity, and contributed to the production of atomic bombs through its supply of uranium. With the home front mobilized King also ensured that Canada supported its American and British allies by participating in Atlantic convoy duties, the invasions of Sicily and Italy, the bomber campaign against Germany, the Battle of Normandy, the Scheldt campaign, and the liberation of the Netherlands from Hitler's armies. Indeed, as Cook rightly articulates, 'Canada h[ad] developed during the war years into a nation of importance' (p.494).

Cook's argument is shaped by his application of primary sources, such as Roosevelt's 1938 speech in Kingston, Ontario. The author's utilization of the speech revealed King's fear of the United States: 'The people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of the Canadian soil is threatened by any other Empire' (p.18). Cook's analysis of the speech highlights that the prime minister feared that Canada could be annexed by the United States if the northern nation could not protect itself from threats aboard. As King navigated the country through a period of uncertainty and external threats, the prime minister worked with Roosevelt and his administration on continental defence, whether through integrating the Canadian and American economies or the creation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in 1940 to discuss solutions securing North America from threats abroad, to ease anxieties in Washington that Canada could 'stand on its own feet' during a world war (p.494).

At the centre of Cook's text is Canada's relationship with the United States and Britain. Cook notes that Canada was a junior partner in the alliance and did not contribute to the Allied grand strategy. King and his cabinet at times were excluded from significant discussions, much to King's frustration and dissatisfaction, with their American and British counterparts. And yet, as Cook demonstrates, Canada still supported its allies in the fight against the fascists and contributed in other ways to the Allied grand strategy, including the deployment of a million Canadian military personnel to multiple theatres of combat and the mobilization of an entire home front. King rightly understood that if Canada did not participate in the alliance system, the 'democracies [of the West] would have suffered' (p.494).

Cook's *The Good Allies* is a fascinating text that tells the Canadian-American narrative of the Second World War. It will make a good contribution to the historiography of the war and bring light to Canada's wartime contribution as the Canadian narrative is often excluded from the American narrative of the war. I recommend that Canadian and American graduate history students, military historians, strategists, politicians, economists, and ordinary citizens read this book to understand how the Canadian-American relationship stood together and survived in the war against fascism. Even today, Canadian-American relationships are still strong, despite some minor

disagreements, and since the end of the Second World War, Canada has stood mostly by the United States to show that it is still a neighbour and ally.

CAMERON TELCH
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Caitlin Galante DeAngelis, *The Caretakers: War Graves Gardeners and the Secret Battle to Rescue Allied Airmen in World War II*. Essex, CT: Prometheus, 2024. xviii + 338 pp. 3 maps. ISBN 978-1163388899 (hardback). Price £25.

Caitlin Galante DeAngelis offers the first scholarly account of the work of a group of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, formerly the Imperial War Graves Commission (hereinafter the Commission) employees and their families. It adds to a growing body of work to explain the Commission's role. Philip Longworth's *The Unending Vigil* (1985) is devoted to the Commission's formation and work commemorating the dead of both world wars. While Robert Sackville-West's *The Searchers* (2021) offers an overview of commemoration of the First World War dead which ties the work of the Commission in with the wider work of remembrance. David Crane's *Empires of the Dead* (2013) is a biography of the Commission's founder, Sir Fabian Ware. Up until now, there has been little discussion of the ordinary men and women who have worked for the Commission.

DeAngelis gives a detailed account of those British who were left behind when the Germans occupied France in 1940. Despite being let down by the Commission, a substantial number played an active part in resistance to the Germans. The author argues that the Commission badly let down its British staff, many of whom were veterans of the First World War who had stayed in France and in effect left them and their families to their own devices. In contrast, those in Belgium benefitted from a carefully constructed evacuation plan which worked well in difficult circumstances. While in France, the Commission's chief administrative officer, Brigadier Prower told his staff to stay put until instructed otherwise by the civil authorities, believing the French Army to be one of the best in the world and likely to repel any invasion. It was a view held by many including Ware. 39% of the French staff were stranded in France, in contrast, in Belgium only 12% suffered a similar fate. Prower was unsuited to his role in wartime and despite telling others to stay put left with his family ahead of instructions from the authorities, omitting to tell his staff he was doing so. In public,

Ware defended the work of Prower but squeezed him out of the organisation because of his shortcomings.

Those left behind, had little support from the Commission, who on legal advice dismissed them. Several of them were interned and DeAngelis offers an account of their treatment. Among those who remained free many set out to resist the Germans. The community they had formed before the war meant there already existed a network which helped them in their work to assist shot down airmen. Not only did they hate the German occupiers but they also had a strong calling to support the British Empire, unlike the wider French population which also hated the Germans but felt let down by the British. DeAngelis illustrates this tale of resistance by focussing on the work of two gardeners, who remained free and the wife of an interned gardener. One paid with his life, one was sent to a concentration camp but survived and one evaded arrest despite their substantial activity to save airmen from arrest. As the war progressed, the Commission's cemeteries served as a symbol of resistance with the population attending funerals of dead airmen and leaving tributes on their graves. This was something the Germans were not able to stamp out.

The author has drawn on a wide range of sources, including the Commission's archives, archives in France, the UK and USA as well as many published and unpublished memoirs. A bibliography would have been appreciated. This preference excepted; DeAngelis's book is an important contribution to the work of the Commission. It tells of the work of ordinary men and women in difficult and dangerous circumstances. DeAngelis is critical of many aspects of the way Commission went about its work in relation to its people left behind in France during and after the war. One could quibble about some of these judgements but as venerated as the Commission is for its work, our understanding of it will not be helped by unquestioning admiration. This is a welcome addition to the historiography of Commemoration. May it also act as an encouragement for others to widen understanding of the Commission's work.

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES (July 2021)

General

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The editors are keen to encourage submissions from a variety of scholars and authors, regardless of their academic background. For those papers that demonstrate great promise and significant research but are offered by authors who have yet to publish, or who need further editorial support, the editors may be able to offer mentoring to ensure an article is successfully published within the Journal.

Papers submitted to the BJMH must not have been published elsewhere. The editors are happy to consider papers that are under consideration elsewhere on the condition that the author indicates to which other journals the article has been submitted.

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Following peer review and any necessary revision by the author, papers will be edited for publication in the Journal. The editors may propose further changes in the interest of clarity and economy of expression, although such changes will not be made without

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The journal welcomes the submission of scholarly articles related to military history in the broadest sense. Articles should be a minimum of 6000 words and no more than 8000 words in length (including footnotes) and be set out according to the BJMH Style Guide.

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Reviews of other types of publication such as web resources may also be commissioned.

The Journal's Editorial Team is responsible for commissioning book reviews and for approaching reviewers. From time to time a list of available books for review may be issued, together with an open call for potential reviewers to contact the Journal Editors. The policy of the BJMH is for reviews always to be solicited by the editors rather than for book authors to propose reviewers themselves. In all cases, once a reviewer has been matched with a book, the Editorial Team will arrange for them to be sent a review copy.

Book reviews should generally be of about 700 words and must not exceed 1000 words in length.

A review should summarise the main aims and arguments of the work, should evaluate its contribution and value to military history as broadly defined, and should identify to which readership(s) the work is most likely to appeal. The Journal does not encourage personal comment or attacks in the reviews it publishes, and the Editorial Team reserves the right to ask reviewers for revisions to their reviews. The final decision whether or not to publish a review remains with the Editorial Team.

The Editorial Team may seek the views of an author of a book that has been reviewed in the Journal. Any comment from the author may be published.

All submitted reviews should begin with the bibliographic information of the work under review, including the author(s) or editor(s), the title, the place and year of publication, the publisher, the number of pages, the ISBN for the format of the work that has been reviewed, and the price for this format if available. Prices should be given in the original currency, but if the book has been published in several territories including the UK then the price in pounds sterling should be supplied. The number of illustrations and maps should also be noted if present. An example of the heading of a review is as follows:

Ian F W Beckett, *A British Profession of Arms: The Politics of Command in the Late Victorian Army*. **Norman, OK: Oklahoma University Press, 2018. Xviii + 350pp. 3 maps. ISBN 978-0806161716 (hardback). Price £32.95.**

The reviewer's name, and an institutional affiliation if relevant, should be appended at the bottom of the review, name in Capitals and Institution in lower case with both to be right aligned.

Reviews of a single work should not contain any footnotes, but if the text refers to any other works then their author, title and year should be apparent in order for readers to be able to identify them. The Editorial Team and Editorial Board may on occasion seek to commission longer Review Articles of a group of works, and these may contain footnotes with the same formatting and standards used for articles in the Journal.

BJMH STYLE GUIDE (July 2021)

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Use Gill Sans MT 10 Point for all article and book review submissions, including footnotes.

Text should be justified.

Paragraphs do not require indenting.

Line spacing should be single and a single carriage return applied between paragraphs.

Spellings should be anglicised: i.e. –ise endings where appropriate, colour etc., 'got' not 'gotten'.

Verb past participles: -ed endings rather than –t endings are preferred for past participles of verbs i.e. learned, spoiled, burned. While is preferred to whilst.

Contractions should not be used i.e. 'did not' rather than 'didn't'.

Upon first reference the full name and title of an individual should be used as it was as the time of reference i.e. On 31 July 1917 Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), launched the Third Battle of Ypres.

All acronyms should be spelled out in full upon first reference with the acronym in brackets, as shown in the example above.

Dates should be written in the form 20 June 2019.

When referring to an historical figure, e.g. King Charles, use that form, when referring to the king later in the text, use king in lower case.

Foreign words or phrases such as *weltanschauung* or *levée en masse* should be italicised.

STYLE GUIDE

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- Should be numbered sequentially with the title below the illustration, figure or table.
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Footnoting:
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Quotations:
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- Michael Howard, 'Men against Fire: The Doctrine of the Offensive in 1914', in Peter Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), pp. 510-526.
- The UK National Archives (TNA), CAB 19/33, Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Sclater, evidence to Dardanelles Commission, 1917.
- Shilpa Ganatra, 'How Derry Girls Became an Instant Sitcom Classic', *The Guardian*, 13 February 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/feb/13/derry-girls-instant-sitcom-classic-schoolgirls-northern-ireland Accessed 20 April 2019.

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