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Recruitment, Organisation and Combat Motivation
in the British Army

In 1914 the British army was an imperial constabulary of just 247 000 regular soldiers recruited by voluntary enlistment, backed by 773 000 reservists and part-time soldiers. There were 4,9 million further enlistments between 1914 and 1918. Of those wartime enlistments, 2,4 million took place prior to the introduction of conscription in January 1916, and 2,5 million after it: 1,3 million men were actually conscripted.¹ Conscription had been introduced for the first time since the suspension of the militia ballot (for home defence) in 1831, and for the first time for service overseas since the early eighteenth century. Thus, by 1918, a total of 5,7 million men passed through the British army, equating to 22,1 per cent of the male population of the United Kingdom. This excludes an additional 2,8 million men from the white dominions and from the other British colonies and possessions, 1,4 million of them from India.²

The war compelled the army to come to terms with this unprecedented expansion of a force of citizen soldiers, initially recruited entirely haphazardly. A process of adjustment and adaptation was required of all participants to forge an effective military instrument, yet one arguably founded on the characteristics of British society and popular culture.

Looking first at recruitment, the pre-war reforms of R. B. Haldane had assumed a British Expeditionary Force (BEF) of six infantry divisions and one cavalry division, about 60 per cent of the manpower upon mobilisation drawn from the reserves. Any further expansion would be through the mechanism of the County Territorial Associations (CTAs), the part-time Territorial Force being intended to be ready for overseas service after six months' additional training following mobilisation. During the passage of the Territorial legislation through Parliament, however, Haldane had been forced by opposition to switch the emphasis from overseas service to home defence. No Territorial could be compelled to go overseas unless he had taken the Imperial Service Obligation (ISO) and, by 1914, only just over 18 000 officers and men had done so. Moreover, under constant attack from regular soldiers, who cast doubt on the ability of «amateur soldiers», and from pro-conscriptionists, the Territorial Force was seriously short of establishment.

All was then set aside by the appointment on 5 August 1914 of Field Marshal Lord Kitchener as Secretary of State for War. On home leave from being British Agent and Consul General in Egypt, this great proconsular figure was wholly unfamiliar with pre-war arrangements. Unlike most others, he believed the war would last at least three years. A mass army would enable Britain to become the strongest partner in the entente; able to impose its own terms on enemies and allies alike, provided it was not committed immediately. As Kitchener expressed it, «our Army should reach its full strength at the beginning of the third year of the War, just when France is getting into rather low water and Germany is beginning to feel



Men of the 1/1st Royal Bucks Hussars (TF), photographed upon mobilisation in the King's Head Yard, Aylesbury, Bucks, 4 August 1914. (Bucks Military Museum Trust)

the pinch».³ While Kitchener's prediction was prescient, ultimately it was unrealistic to expect France and Russia to shoulder the burden of continental war indefinitely. Thus, Kitchener remarked sadly of Loos in September 1915, to which two of his «New Army» divisions were committed, that «unfortunately we have to make war as we must, and not as we should like to».⁴

Kitchener's organisational acumen did not match his strategic insight. The Unionist politician, Leo Amery, aptly described Kitchener as a «great improviser but also a great disorganiser».⁵ This was particularly seen in Kitchener's distaste for the Territorials, whom he characterised as a «town clerk's army». Kitchener's attitude effectively spelled the end of the plans to expand through the CTAs, as he resolved to raise his «New Armies» entirely through the War Office. Nevertheless, there was more to Kitchener's reasoning than simple prejudice. There were no actual practical plans for expansion through CTAs, and Kitchener believed they would be swamped by having to train and recruit simultaneously. Similarly, he was reluctant to put pressure on married men to volunteer for service abroad, the Territorials containing not only a high proportion of married men, but also those underage for overseas service. The issue of the ISO was clearly a factor. While between 80 and 90 per cent of many units responded immediately to the call to go overseas, commitments made by some commanding officers proved highly optimistic. In what was to become the 51st (Highland) Division, for example, the 75 per cent acceptance rate officially recorded fell significantly when individuals had to signify their assent on paper. Many Territorials were declared unfit for overseas service. It was also the case that pre-war Territorials could, and did, enlist for home service only until



The 1/1st Bucks Battalion (TF) leaving Chelmsford, Essex for embarkation for France, 30 March 1915. (Bucks Military Museum Trust)

March 1915, and pre-war Territorials could, and did, seek their discharge at the end of their original term of service until May 1916. A further difficulty was that the ISO form Territorials signed specified they would remain with their own units, and could not be subsequently transferred to another. Amalgamating or disbanding Territorial units was also theoretically illegal.

Above all, Kitchener was preoccupied with possible German invasion, against which the Territorials were the principal defence. Despite the Admiralty's pre-war dismissal of concerns, there were genuine fears following the German capture of Antwerp. Earlier, indeed, the regulars of the 4th and 6th Divisions had been kept back temporarily from joining the BEF. Kitchener was eventually reluctantly persuaded to allow Territorials to «fill the gap» in France and Flanders in the winter of 1914/15 before his New Armies were ready to do so. Meanwhile, the failure to utilise CTAs resulted in duplication of effort and competition, both in recruitment and in finding equipment, damaging to both Territorials and New Armies. When voluntary direct enlistment in the Territorial Force ceased in December 1915, some 725 842 men had enlisted in it, or approximately half the number enlisted in the New Armies in the same period.

Unfortunately, too, the raising of the New Armies was almost entirely random: there was no coherent manpower policy until December 1917. Kitchener had no clear idea of how many men might be needed, and never articulated how he had discerned that the war would last at least three years. On 6 August 1914 Parliament was asked to sanction an immediate in-

crease of 500 000 men, Kitchener making his appeal for the «first 100 000» on 7 August. A figure of 70 divisions is usually cited as the ultimate intention but this was not adopted until August 1915, Kitchener having spoken of 30 divisions on 31 August 1914, 46 to 50 on 8 September 1914, and 60 in June 1915. The official figure was adjusted downwards to 62 divisions abroad and five at home in February 1916, and then to 57 abroad and 10 at home in April 1916. In terms of overall numbers, Parliament sanctioned a further 500 000 increase on 9 September 1914, another million on 12 November 1914, and an upper limit of four million men in December 1915. The figure was adjusted retrospectively to five million in December 1916.

What has been characterised as the «rush to the colours» in 1914 was quite arbitrary, and the impact accordingly varied. 15 per cent of all war-time enlistments did indeed take place in the first two months of the war but the response was not immediate. It has been almost precisely dated to the period between 25 August and 9 September 1914. Initial confusion was not assisted by a lack of news from France until the publication in *The Times* on 30 August of the sensational «Amiens despatch» reporting the retreat from Mons. German atrocity stories had also surfaced and on 24 August the highly influential Lord Derby approached the War Office with a suggestion to raise «Pals» battalions of men from the same communities and factories.

Together, these factors accounted for the great increase. Only 51 647 men had enlisted in Britain prior to 15 August 1914, but 174 901 were enlisted between 30 August and 5 September. A total of 179 680 men enlisted in the first week of September, with the 33 204 who enlisted on 3 September the highest recorded for any single day, exceeding a year's pre-war enlistment rate. The most fruitful recruiting period was over by 9 September as the news from France improved, and there were rumours that recruits were suffering discomfort in improvised accommodation. It appeared that men were no longer required, deferred enlistment having been introduced in view of the accommodation problems with men enlisted in the reserve and sent home. The War Office also tried to regulate the flow on 11 September by arbitrary variations in physical requirements.

Enlistment was exceedingly complex with wide regional and local variations. By November 1914, it was reported that, while southern Scotland had produced 237 recruits per 10 000 of population, the Midlands 196 per 10 000, Lancashire 178 per 10 000, London and the Home Counties 170 per 10 000, and Yorkshire and the North East 150 per 10 000, the South West had found only 88 per 10 000, and East Anglia only 80 recruits per 10 000.⁶

Patriotism played its part but other factors were equally important. One was family situation. War Office inefficiency in paying out adequate separation allowances discouraged married men. Others with dependants also took time to put domestic affairs in order. There was a particular link with

employment, possibly as many as 480 000 men losing their jobs by the end of August 1914. Many others were placed on half time in the prevailing economic uncertainty at the outbreak of war. In Bristol, for example, 10 per cent of the work force was laid off in July 1914, and a further 26 per cent placed on short time. In August, the Local Government Board instructed charities to refuse relief to those eligible for enlistment. Nine out of every ten men laid off in the city enlisted, and Bristol's unemployment fell by a full 1,5 per cent.

Significantly, enlistment dropped away rapidly once large government contracts were placed in the autumn for clothing, boots, munitions and other war essentials.

In the case of the South West, the abundance of the 1914 harvest, with small farming owner-occupiers prepared to offer incentives to labourers to remain on the land, contributed to significantly low rates of enlistment compared to the national average. In Cornwall, while extraction industries such as china clay and tin were suffering economic depression from falling prices, the labour force was used to economic cycles of boom and slump, and men appeared prepared to await better times rather than enlisting.⁷ In Scotland, it has been suggested that enlistment might be seen as a continuation of pre-war emigration.⁸

As might be expected, as young men tended generally to enlist before older men there was a direct correlation between average age and enlistment. From the beginning, there was also a degree of protectionism for key workers such as railwaymen and Admiralty employees who were «badged» with war service badges from December. Others enlisted under peer influence, joining because their friends had done so. The most obvious manifestation was the success of the «Pals» battalions, of which 115 were raised including the «Accrington Pals», Glasgow Corporation Tramways Battalion, «Grimsby Chums», and «Newcastle Commercials». Some reasons why men enlisted simply defy categorisation. Some may simply have enlisted on impulse. Sidney Rogerson of the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment recalled his batman enlisted in an alcoholic haze after seeing a friend off to the front, but never recalled doing so, and «when the sergeant comes and claimed» him next morning he was as surprised as his wife was annoyed.⁹

A short war was anticipated. The reality was not only massive casualties, but also competing demands for manpower between the armed forces, industry and agriculture, as the conflict became one in which it was just as vital to out-produce as to out-fight the enemy. The manpower pool rapidly declined, with ever more desperate efforts to comb out every possible fighting man. The effective limit of volunteers was reached by December 1915, by which time it was clear that conscription must follow through a process of exhaustion. But conscription had long been an anathema in Britain. There was a long and agonised debate, the organisational milestones being

the Householders' Returns in November and December 1914, the National Register in July 1915, and the Derby Scheme of October to December 1915. The results of the latter finally forced Prime Minister Asquith's hands. The «Bachelor's Bill» in January 1916 deemed all single men and childless widowers between the ages of 18 and 41 to have enlisted. The wide discrepancies in medical examination and the numerous exemptions granted by military service tribunals resulted in fewer recruits than anticipated. Consequently, conscription was extended to all men aged between 18 and 41 in May 1916. Further extensions saw the combing out of more men, including many previously judged unfit, in April 1917; the conscription of allied citizens living in Britain in July 1917; and removal of yet further occupational exemptions in February 1918. The German spring offensives resulted in the extension of conscription in April 1918 to those aged up to 50, with provision to call up men to the age of 56 if the need arose, and also to extend conscription to Ireland.

In theory, conscription should have equalised the burden after 1916 but as elsewhere conscription was selective. There were always going to be men exempted by virtue of physical fitness, occupation, or even nationality. Medical boards exempted over a million men in the last twelve months of the war despite pressure on doctors to lower rejection rates. Of the 2,4 million men medically examined in 1917 and 1918, only 36 per cent were physically fit for service overseas. Rejection rates reflected pre-war deprivation but, in part, there was also an application of suspect criteria as to what constituted fitness: physical ability was too readily equated with stature. There was also social prejudice with Jews and, especially, Russian Jews automatically rejected as inferior. The military service tribunals that pronounced on claims for exemption have been perceived to be unduly influenced by military demands, and hostile to claims for exemption on conscientious grounds. It is clear, however, that they were ever mindful of local economic vitality, not least in rural areas, consciously mitigating national policy directives, and indulging in their own interpretation of economic interventionism.

Whatever the reasons for enlistment, the effect of what occurred in August and September 1914 was that certain groups were more willing to enlist than others. Seen from the perspective of sectoral distribution of occupation, some in Britain bore a proportionally high share of the military effort. By February 1916, Board of Trade sampling surveys, though not entirely reliable, suggested that whereas over 40 per cent of those engaged in the professions, entertainment, finance and commerce had enlisted, less than 30 per cent of those in industry as a whole, agriculture, or transport had done so. Thus, overall, «men engaged in commercial or distributive trades were in uniform and at risk for longer periods and in relatively larger numbers than were industrial workers, transport workers or agricultur-

al workers». ¹⁰ The cumulative effect of the way in which conscription was applied meant that there was no material change in the social composition of the British army after 1916. Later sampling surveys therefore show each of the occupational sectors remained in approximately the same relationship to one another with regard to the proportion of manpower enlisted in 1918 as in 1916. Variations within particular sectors such as manufacturing also remained unchanged.

Turning now to the adaptation of the army to citizen soldiers, naturally, there was an attempt to divest soldiers of civilian values and «recreate them in the army's image» by inculcating appropriate military values. But citizen soldiers «were not social blanks waiting for the army to write its will upon them». ¹¹ While it was quite feasible for long-service regulars to be conditioned, it was far harder to separate the temporary soldier from civilian values. Initially, civilian perceptions and a lack of familiarity with military disciplinary codes saw unrest in the New Armies, though more trouble was ameliorated by volunteers' patriotic enthusiasm, and the kindness of the public towards them. For many men, however, there was a degree of shock on arrival at camps in the autumn of 1914, and with the lack of equipment and organisation found there. Long hours spent in drill, physical training and route marching were immensely taxing. Problems were exacerbated by wet weather in October and November that badly affected the more exposed camps before huddled accommodation was ready. Equally, existing barracks and depots quickly became overcrowded. Grievances were readily communicated to families, the local press and to MPs. There was delay in issuing uniforms, men still appearing for some weeks in civilian clothes, or the so-called «Kitchener Blue» serge that began to be supplied in late September, and which led to men being ridiculed as looking like postmen, tram guards or convicts. Broomsticks and poles substituting for rifles were commonplace.

While the war clearly exposed men to experiences very different from those at home, it could never sever the link of a citizen army with civilian life, nor could it eradicate the social or regional diversity that had existed in civilian society. At the same time, the nature of civilian life was not unhelpful. Wartime bonding was often a continuation of the kind of social links familiar from workplace, schools, youth organisations, societies, and clubs. A sense of community and social cohesiveness was well engrained through the shared experience of adversity, and a spirit of mutual support epitomised by such organisations as the friendly societies. There was also a predisposition in British working-class popular culture that made light of hardship. It might be characterised as a phlegmatic acceptance of fate or sheer bloody-mindedness, but was commonly observed with a sardonic, vulgar humour. This ideally complemented the significance of the small «primary group» in maintaining morale, groups in any case sharing hard-

ship, a common culture and a particular language of service slang. In the same way, the increasing division of the army into specialisms reproduced the small-scale nature of much of British industry, where even larger enterprises routinely divided men into work gangs. Men were used to making life bearable, and were well suited to the challenges of war, relying on civilian values and not those of the army to see them through.

Whatever the increased pressures of the modern battlefield, morale and fighting spirit could still be built upon traditional military remedies: the appeal to patriotism, religion, or honour; good leadership; discipline; rewards such as medals; good medical, and adequate leave, arrangements; efficient administration; realistic training; rest; and palliatives like the rum ration, or cigarettes in appropriate measure. There was also the appeal to the regiment and its identity, as characterised by the rallying call of Lieutenant Colonel Elstob on 21 March 1918, «The Manchester Regiment will hold Manchester Hill to the last.» Similarly, there was the notice in Mansel Copse cemetery on the Somme, «The Devons held this trench, the Devons hold it still.» Divisional loyalties were also increasingly cultivated.

The majority of soldiers' accounts hardly mention religion but it was one of a number of «coping strategies» by which men adapted to the dangers of active service including the calculation of risk, humour, superstition, and «a highly positively biased interpretation of the trench environment» by which men tended routinely to overestimate their chances of surviving death or mutilation. A kind of fatalism kept men inured to violent death. Perseverance – «sticking it» – was a military version of a shared ideal of courage in British culture that transcended class, gender or national divisions.¹²

Not unexpectedly, the maintenance of morale was of crucial significance to General Headquarters (GHQ), which used the relatively crude indices of the incidence of trench feet, «shell shock» and crime. Trench journalism was also monitored. Compared to German trench newspapers, those of the BEF had less emphasis upon justification of the war since the British felt «little need to prove to themselves that they were fighting a defensive and just war».¹³ Compared to French and German trench newspapers, mostly serious in tone, those of the BEF displayed an unrelenting humour and, often, mock defeatism. The emphasis was primarily on the unit as a community steeped in a common culture across the social divides as reflected in shared jokes, sporting interests and entertainments, itself persuasive of a way of life worth fighting for.

More useful information on morale was derived from surveying the results of censorship of the extraordinary quantities of service mail. This amounted, by 1916, to 12,5 million letters and 875 000 parcels a week. In all, the army shipped 320 409 tons of mail to the BEF between 1914 and 1918. The balance in men's letters between self-censorship and self-ex-

pression is problematic. There were certain matters such as sexuality and bodily functions that were rarely mentioned. Often, the content was platitudinous, aimed at consolation towards, or reassurance of, the civilian recipient. Unfortunately, few British censors' reports have survived. Those that do suggest that «bread and butter» issues were dominant. Indeed, food generally has been identified as a central obsession. The initially relatively generous ration scale could not be sustained. There was a downward trend from September 1914 onwards with particular reductions in protein and fats. Not unexpectedly, the army operated within the boundaries of contemporary nutritional science, and there was only partial awareness of a healthy diet. Accordingly, boils, sore gums and bad teeth were frequent occurrences.¹⁴

Military crime invariably rose after heavy casualties with particular problems during the first winter of the war, following the near destruction of the old regular army during First Ypres, and during the winter of 1917/18 following Passchendaele. Absence without leave and drunkenness remained relatively high throughout the war but self-mutilation was not a significant problem. There was something of a collapse of morale within the Fifth Army during the opening of the German spring offensive on the Western Front in March 1918, although the figures available for sickness, crime and discipline for it between April 1917 and March 1918 show little signs of any serious morale problem. Even the experience of Passchendaele had not dented the continued belief by British soldiers that they would ultimately triumph. Consequently, in March 1918, many fought on until surrounded or overwhelmed. Fortunately, logistic support generally remained functioning, and sufficient reinforcements were fed into the battle to ensure a wider collapse did not occur.

There were some instances of collective indiscipline, the best-known being the events at the «Bull Ring» base camp at Etaples between 9 and 15 September 1917 although it has been exaggerated in popular accounts. The disturbances were due to poor food and accommodation, and the failure of elderly officers to keep in check NCOs, who subjected new drafts and men returning from convalescence alike to an unnecessarily brutal training regime. A series of demonstrations was held after a military policeman shot into a crowd and killed a soldier: subsequently, one man was executed, and ten received terms of hard labour.

Mutiny is not necessarily an appropriate description of all forms of collective disobedience towards military authority. Some might be better characterised as strikes, particularly when involving citizen soldiers. There is usually little evidence of the kind of external political motivations often alleged by the authorities. A mutiny in the 36th (Ulster) Division in September 1915 was primarily due to a mistaken belief that men would be sent overseas without prior home leave, while that in the 49th Brigade of the

16th (Irish) Division in April 1918 was a result of being broken up to reinforce other brigades. The «Indianisation» of the 10th (Irish) Division in the Middle East in 1918 was due both to the need for experienced soldiers in France, and also to the high rate of malarial disease within the division. It was not due to any perceived fears of political unreliability. Nor had the 1916 Easter Rising had any discernible impact on Irish units.¹⁵

Compared to the French, British troops had less leave, while dominion contingents got better pay than British soldiers. Nor were the French harassed behind the lines while «at rest» in quite the way British troops were. The French were largely spared the «bull», of which British trench newspapers routinely complained. Nor did the French pursue the «active front» policy of British trench raiding, which did have some beneficial impact provided raids were well planned, but a negative one if not.

Working class soldiers, however, both accepted and expected the imposition of discipline because, in British society, the working class routinely extended deference, which was not regarded as subservience, to social superiors in return for paternalism. It has been suggested that paternalism might be better characterised as «maternalism» given the tendency of officers and men to nurture each other since, for example, the batman cared for his officer, and comrades looked after each other.¹⁶ Dispersal certificates of demobilised officers suggest about 36 to 39 per cent of British officers were lower middle or even working class in origin by the end of the war, but were just as imbued with the traditional paternalistic approach to other ranks. It was also the case that, whatever the social origin of an officer, the differentiation between officer and ordinary soldier reinforced the continuity of social conventions. Paternalism tended to create something of a culture of dependency among British soldiers, but also mitigated the harsher aspects of the disciplinary code.

An extensive British welfare network of divisional and regimental canteens, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Salvation Army and Church Army rest huts, provided a variety of recreational activities, as did the proceeds of comfort funds raised by the public at home. The cinemas, music hall and other concerts, and bathing parties so often mentioned in British memoirs do not figure in those of the French. In Britain, troop entertainment was organised by the YMCA and, from 1917, by the Navy and Army Canteen Board. Overseas, the YMCA and the army itself were responsible. Bizarrely the YMCA even sponsored folk dance centres behind the lines though most soldiers wanted the music of commercial mass urban culture familiar from the gramophone, public house and music hall. There were also the divisional sports meetings, the boxing tournaments, horse shows, football and cricket matches which, incidentally, provided men with an opportunity to embarrass officers without incurring penalties. Football in particular became officially accepted as institutionalised rest.

There were large numbers of trade unionists in the rank and file but they rarely figured in wartime disturbances. It is significant that the list of grievances in the twelve-point petition drawn up by the Soldiers and Workers Council established among units stationed at Tonbridge Wells in Kent in June 1917 – the only other such councils were at Birmingham and Swansea – was not only almost entirely concerned with mundane issues of daily military life, but also equated grievances with the rights of the citizen. It has been described, indeed, as displaying «pre-eminently the voice of the respectable working man».¹⁷ Disturbances at Shoreham in September 1917 were prompted by poor rations, the higher pay of Canadians stationed nearby, and the cancellation of leave trains to Brighton to save fuel. Some attention had been given in earlier years to using chaplains and the YMCA to begin a kind of low-level patriotic instruction. A more formal educational scheme was authorised in February 1918, although not finally implemented until August, by which time the restoration of mobile warfare both limited its effect and its necessity. Trade unionists did emerge much more prominently in the demobilisation disturbances in January 1919. The beginning of demobilisation on 11 January brought the protests rapidly to an end.

Compared to trade unionists, surviving regulars continued to appear prominently in wartime disturbances and suffered a disproportionate number of wartime executions. Under the provisions of the British Army Act, a total of 346 men were executed during the war, of whom 291 were serving with British regiments. In some respects, the application of discipline was harsher in the British than other armies. The British had 27 capital offences in their military code compared to just 11 in the German army, and two in the French army, but the British civilian criminal code was also harsher than that of many continental states. Only 10,8 per cent of death sentences actually imposed by British courts martial on white soldiers were confirmed. Nearly 40 of those executed had previously been sentenced to death once, and two twice previously. Others had previously served, or had had suspended, sentences of imprisonment for capital offences. Although it has been argued that the process was biased against Irishmen, colonial labourers, and those deemed mentally degenerate or «worthless», it should also be noted that standards in the conduct of courts martial differed little from those in pre-war civil courts. It is also the case that there was a decreasing use of the death penalty with the conscious revival in the field, especially among British units serving in Italy, of the concept of «pious perjury» to mitigate the recourse to capital punishment as the army became more dependent upon conscripts.¹⁸

Other than mutiny or the disintegration of an army under the pressure of enemy action, the most obvious sign of military collapse was desertion or mass surrender. Surrender could be distinctly risky given the propensity

of soldiers to kill rather than take prisoners. Approximately 397 000 British soldiers were captured during the war, around 177 000 of them on the Western Front. While most of the latter were captured in March 1918, the highest proportion of British troops surrendering rather than fighting to the death actually occurred in 1914. As with casualties generally, the fluidity of mobile warfare was more likely to lead to men being cut off and under less supervision than more static warfare. Pre-war regulars and especially recalled reservists were also probably less well prepared for the intensity of conflict than more intelligent, better educated and better prepared wartime volunteers. The near collapse to apathetic surrender of the 1st Royal Warwicks and 2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers at St Quentin on 27 August 1914 is well known.

Viewing the military experience in the Great War as a whole, it could be argued that, for those not actually maimed physically or mentally by the war, wartime service had neither an overtly positive nor negative impact. The post-war literature of disillusionment that appeared between 1928 and 1935 represented only a small fraction of the extensive British creative writing that emerged from the war, only one fifth of which was the work of combatants. The British army's post-war recruitment was relatively buoyant, providing little evidence of any immediate revulsion against matters military. If wartime expansion had little impact on the army as an institution in the longer-term, and whatever the haphazard process by which expansion had occurred during the war itself, citizen soldiers imbued with civilian culture had proved equal to the challenge of conflict.

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